



Better Than 1,000 Words

Bob Fry of the Ft. Madison (Iowa) CC uses "on the spot" photos to show his players what's good and bad about their swings

Busy Bob Fry, professional at the Ft. Madison (Ia.) CC, course supt., club manager, occasional cook and bartender, doesn't have any Oriental blood in his veins but is 100 per cent sold on the old Chinese proverb that a "picture is worth 1,000 words."

A 16-hour a day, 7-day a week workman from early spring until Christmastime, Fry ordinarily is engaged in so many activities that he just doesn't have time for involved discussions or explanations of his pupils' faults or strong points on the lesson tee. The Polaroid camera, he feels, was invented especially for him because he uses it extensively in showing his 160 players, most of whom enroll in his teaching program at some time or other dur-

ing the season, just what they are doing, whether it is right or wrong.

"It's a great thing for the golf instructor," Bob says, "to be able to take a photo, develop it in a minute and show the pupil the point you are trying to put across. It does away with a lot of long winded and confusing explanations. What's more," Fry continues, "it's almost amazing how even rather unathletic people can look at a photo, study a fault, and after being told what is wrong and what should be done to correct it, quickly get straightened out."

Fry's only regret is that Polaroid hasn't developed a motion picture camera for swing sequence purposes.

In shooting his subjects, Bob ordinarily

concentrates on five things: Catching them as they take the club back; at the top; as they start down; at impact; and following through. He, of course, fills in with other aspects of the swing when he feels that it is necessary or helpful. With many players, for example, Fry works at some length to get them properly set up at address, has them hold the pose and then photographs it so that they will always have a photographic record of just what they should do, or the position they should be in, when they step up to the ball.

One of the secrets of taking photos of the swing, Fry explains, is to pose the player in front of a tree or a flagpole or similar object so that a checkpoint is established. With one of these in the background it is easier to explain where the player's arms, legs or body should be in different parts of the swing in relation to the object.

Freedom from Tension

As far as the swing is concerned, the Ft. Madison pro is pretty well convinced after 10 years of teaching, that its actual execution is a secondary thing. "What really counts," he says, "is to get people to the point where they feel free of tension. I work as hard in doing this as in showing them how the club should be gripped, taken back and whipped through. With many golfers, and especially the less experienced ones, I start a lesson simply by having them pick up their clubs and start swinging without regard to footwork, whether or not their heads are bobbing, or anything else. The whole idea is to have them get their muscles warmed up so that they'll be able to whip the club around with a free and easy feeling. Once this is accomplished, the lesson seems to go better."

Ft. Madison is a medium size Mississippi river town, largely supported by the Shaeffer Pen Co. Living here probably is on the easy side, or at least, people find plenty of time to indulge in golf, which is only second in popularity to boating. The club, situated on a bluff overlooking the river, annually plays host to the Southeast Iowa Women's Amateur which attracts about 100 contestants from as far away as Kansas City, Chicago and Dubuque. Both men and women members are strong for tournaments, special events and golf leagues. Just about every cardholding woman player turns out for the regular weekly Ladies' Day and it is rare when at least 75 feminine swingers aren't playing the 9-hole course on Tuesdays. There



Frank Dodge (r), shown with Fry, greatly improved his game when he bought a new set of cut-down clubs.

are two evening leagues and from June through September there usually is some kind of a handicap tournament being held on Wednesday afternoons. Sixteen men play from November through March in a winter league.

Little League Golf

Until 1958, junior play was just about as heavy as the course capacity would permit. But it has slipped off a little in the last two years, probably due to the lure of the Chriscrafts in the river below. However, Fry has had a Little Golf League operating for several years and in 1958 and 1959 interest in it seemed just as great as ever before. Two products of Ft. Madison CC's Junior activity were Mike Phelan and Jack Litvay, mainstays of the University of Iowa golf team.

Two other students of Fry who recently got nationwide attention through articles that appeared in GOLFING are Pete Kern and Frank Dodge. Kern, now 75, never played golf until he was 67, but under Bob's tutelage quickly developed into a player who comes very close on occasions to shooting his age. Pete, a retired insurance broker, plays at Ft. Madison during the summer months and then spends the winter touring the Florida, Arizona and California courses.

Frank Dodge, a midget who measures only 47 inches, was never much of a golfer

(Continued on page 81)



ATTENTION ALL GOLFERS!
The Championship King's and Queen's Courses of
GLENEAGLES HOTEL

Perthshire

offer all that is finest in Scottish Golf.

The hotel's other unique sporting and recreational facilities include a miniature golf course, tennis and squash courts, an indoor swimming pool, a private cinema, and a shopping centre. Dancing.

OPEN EASTER TO THE END OF OCTOBER

Gleneagles Hotel is only 70 minutes by road from the international airport at Prestwick.

Full details may be obtained from the Resident Manager, Gleneagles Hotel, Perthshire, Scotland, or from British & Irish Railways Inc.:

*New York: 630 Fifth Avenue. Los Angeles: 510 West Sixth Street
Chicago: 39 South La Salle Street. Toronto: 69 Yonge Street*

RTC/568A

Better Than 1,000 Words

(Continued from page 36)

mediately noted that Dodge had the swing and the temperament to develop into quite a capable player, but the first thing he needed was a decent set of clubs. The Ft. Madison master talked his protege into investing in a cut-down set of "pro-only" irons and woods, made a few adjustments in his grip and in a short time had him booming 180 yard drives straight down the center and shooting in the 90s, an improvement of 20 or 30 strokes over his previous scores.

One Thing Overlooked

Another of the Ft. Madison swingers of whom Fry is fond of talking is Bob Peoples (shown in the photo (r) with Bob on page 32), the current city champion and one of the state's better amateurs. Peoples is a fellow who only recently took up golf, lives it 24 hours a day and practices anywhere from two to four hours a day. Peoples advanced from a 90 shooter to the 70s in about a year's time. Last year, he played in the state amateur for the first time at the hilly Davenport CC but discovered that his teacher had overlooked one important thing in his education. That was how to play uphill and

downhill lies. The Ft. Madison course, located only a mile from the state penitentiary, is completely devoid of even a hump in its smooth fairways. "I was bewildered," says Peoples, "when I went to Davenport and saw all those hills. I didn't know what kind of a stance to use when I wasn't playing on level ground and as a result I was kind of lost. I didn't do so well in the tournament, but I hurried back to Ft. Madison and Bob Fry quickly straightened me out.

"I guess that was something that Bob just happened to overlook," Peoples says philosophically. "But you can bet that with that camera of his there aren't very many things that he doesn't catch. It's my guess that you'll have to travel a long way from Ft. Madison to find a better teacher."

Apparently, the Iowa PGA section concurs in this opinion. Last year, for instance, members of that group voted Fry Iowa's "pro-of-the-year," and elected him a delegate to the national conference in Clearwater. Bob showed his appreciation by turning around and winning the state PGA Championship. That may be a tip-off that he has that Polaroid rigged to take self portraits to use in studying his own swing as well as those of his pupils.