



(From left) Jerry Barber, Henry Picard, Johnny Farrell, Lawson Little and Tommy Armour.

At PGA Teaching Clinic

There's A Mixture of Instruction and Lore When Old Pros Gather

- The teacher has to take charge — *Armour*
- Keep your mind on your hands — *Barber*
- A good instructor's job is secure — *Farrell*
- Young pros have to make sacrifices — *Picard*
- There's never been a club like the wedge — *Little*

By Herb Graffis

"There are a jillion ways to play golf. Some might be easier and simpler than others. The fewer movements I make the better chance I have of playing well!" So Jerry Barber, whose one of the jillion ways was good enough to win the 1961 PGA championship, told pros at the education-teaching session of the PGA's annual meeting, arranged by Henry C. Poe and Don E. Fischesser.

Tommy Armour, who has earned more money from golf instruction than any other professional, described his way of getting a pupil to understand, absorb and make use of lessons as his contribution to the meeting's probe of golf teaching problems.

Henry Picard, Johnny Farrell and Lawson Little, newly elected to the PGA Hall of Fame, gave their practical views on the teaching, playing and handling of the pro job.

Irv Schloss showed motion pictures taken at the PGA championship last summer as a demonstration of how movies can be employed in golf instruction.

Other slants on the pro job were presented by Charles E. Kemp of Minimax Computing Co., Dallas, who told of a handicap computing service that has been helpful to clubs; Bob McConathy of Paymaster Associates, Milwaukee, showed how forgers raise checks that aren't adequately protected; and Joe C. Dey, jr., executive director of the USGA, outlined the history of the USGA and its method of changing rules.

Armour said that he had taken and paid for hundreds of lessons from such masters as Vardon, Taylor and Douglas Edgar and, possibly because of his experience as a pupil, had learned how to get inside the minds of his own students. Tommy said he doesn't have any set system of teaching, but he does have a defi-

nite policy of taking charge on a lesson tee, just as a doctor or lawyer does with a patient or client.

Umbrella Psychology

Armour emphasized that an accent on psychology is essential in establishing respect and confidence for the instructor and a receptive and responsive attitude on the part of the pupil. Sitting under a gaudy umbrella and using new — or nearly new — balls while giving a lesson is an Armour stage management that Tommy declares has benefitted the pupil by putting him (or her) in the mood of considering the instruction as being a carefully planned procedure rather than a run-of-the-mine routine.

"I sit down while teaching for several reasons," Armour related. "One is that I am lazy and golf instruction is very hard work, exhausting mentally if done correctly. Another is that the pupil has to play without being touched by the teacher; hence it is logical that he learn without my working him like a puppet.

"Before starting, I ask the pupil what specific part of the game he wants to be the objective of the lesson. There's too much for a pupil to absorb in a single lesson that can stretch from driving through the short irons. I never like to give just one lesson unless it is to a very good player. I prefer to start a series of lessons with the short irons. This is so the pupil can acquire confidence, control and a knowledge of the elements of technique easier. Furthermore, the common weakness of the average golfer is in his short game.

"I seldom use the word 'don't.' I give the pupil something specific and positive to think about. When a pupil asks, 'What did I do wrong?' I tell him I don't know, but I can and will tell him what he must do right.

20-Ball Limit

"I do not give half-hour lessons. I never have the pupil hit more than 20 balls in succession. I watch different details in the series of 20 shots then have the pupil stop while we discuss and try to simplify his problem and find solution. Very few golf pupils have natural ability. The instructor has to develop them so their brains can teach their muscles. That is a difficult task in education. It is amplified when a pro, due to the necessity of taking care of all demands for lessons at his club, must cut lesson time to a half-hour and make the lesson too much of a



Christmas is past but Golfdom is willing to share goodies such as this with you, especially if you're winterbound and have no prospect of seeing similar sights for another three or four months. The femininity here is Miss Universe of 1961. The pro, who appears not to be distracted in the least (how can a guy teach golf in such surroundings?), is Joe Kirkwood. The locale is the new Par 3 at the Roney Plaza Hotel in Miami Beach.

kind of a sitting-up exercise.

"There have been no 'secrets' in the progress of golf technique. About 99 per cent of today's method are copied from the way some good oldtimer played. You can't change a player radically. Show him how to improve himself in timing, stance and grip and you work all the miracles that can be expected of a good instructor. That applies to men and women alike.

"The teacher's knowledge and personality," Armour emphasized, "must qualify him to take command of the teaching situation if he is to be effective."

Jerry Barber said that he has improvised his own style as neither his physique nor temperament qualify him to be an expert golfer. He nominated Don January, with whom he played the last 54 holes of the 1961 PGA, as the finest gentleman with whom he has played and related high spots of his championship rounds on the Olympia Fields North course which he pronounced a "magnificent straight ball course."

Of his own game, Jerry said he learned early that pros who grip the club most

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Old Pros Gather to Teach and Talk

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adeptly are the best players. So the first thing he thinks of in playing or teaching is the position of the hands on the club and how well the hands maintain their position.

Part the Hands Play

Barber said that with many pupils the right hand is so strong he has difficulty in getting them to use their left hands. The left hand gets the club up and down past the ball and the right hand hits it as it goes past, Barber told his PGA audience. He said that he stresses holding the club at the roots of the fingers and with fingertip pressure. He added that he teaches his pupils to make the grip firm with the last three fingers of the left hand by locking the club against the heel of the hand.

Anticipating a question that's always asked when he speaks, Jerry said: "As long as you've got to cock your wrists in the backswing why not cock them as you move away from the ball and automatically get the right elbow where it belongs?"

Jerry said he does not emphatically shift his weight onto his right leg in the

backswing. He thinks he keeps his weight evenly distributed but does keep his right leg braced on full shots. Weight must be kept mainly on the left foot in chipping, pitching and putting, Jerry stated. He frequently emphasized the finger grip, remarking that he often makes the error of referring to "hands" when he means "fingers." He added: "If you let your mind get far away from your hands you can't play well."

Another point that Barber stressed was right elbow position and action. He said that sometimes the right arm blocks wrist cocking, but if the right elbow functions correctly, and is subordinate to the left arm, it will be easier to hit the ball well. He remarked that by feel he subconsciously adjusts the club for a hook or slice as the clubhead approaches the ball.

Barber, who spends a lot more time teaching at Wilshire CC in Los Angeles, than he does playing tournaments, urged the club pro to keep up his game by getting out on the practice tee earlier and more often.

Memories Are Short

Johnny Farrell combined a lot of good sense and laughs in telling why the playing star better have a long range ambition of becoming a good instructor. Johnny said that he went to a testimonial

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dinner one time for Babe Ruth and heard the Babe say, "This is nice but what counts is how many will want to shake your hand ten years from now." Farrell recalled that as the defending National Open champion, he started the 1929 event at Winged Foot with 46-48-84. He didn't walk off the 18th green through a crowd of golfers swarming to shake his hand.

Teaching Helps Sales

Farrell reminded his brother professionals: "If you can teach your members and their children your job is secure. Profitable merchandising in your shop is built on the basis of your instruction results. It is teaching and improved scoring that stirs and keeps up interest going at a club."

Johnny got a laugh by giving advice that every experienced pro knows is good. "Don't be too lazy to teach," he said. "You may see a practically hopeless guy coming toward your shop wanting to grab you for a lesson. Your inclination is to duck out but you had better get off your chair and pretend you are eager to see him. About the time you've given up on him he will buy new irons, woods and a bag.

"Get good assistants and you have mul-

tiplied your services and your profits," Johnny finally counseled. He should know. He has trained two sons who are excellent assistants.

Henry Picard once was rated by professional colleagues as being so good that he should have won everything. But the only big one he won was the 1939 PGA title. What the other fellows didn't discover was that Picard was plagued by injuries and arthritis but never let anybody know. The important thing Picard did win was great respect as a player, teacher and gentleman.

Gave Helping Hand

Pic related many experiences about tournaments when he was an early winner on the budding circuit, and he and Revolta were a team hard to beat. Pic said that the oldtimers such as Hagen, Armour and Sarazen were wily and fierce competitors who played shots with their heads as well as with their hands and who, after they'd finished their rounds, would go out on the course and help younger contestants. These veteran stars had more interest in golf and golfers than their own financial returns, but seem

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to have done very well for themselves, Pic noted.

Picard, now located in Cleveland, recalled a time when he was suffering from a back injury, could hardly get the putter moving but was favored with free advice from many 100-shooting well-wishers. Pic smiled and remarked, a little ironically, that he knows full well what Ben Hogan has been going through in recent years. He told of getting out at 5:30 a.m. to practice when he was a kid pro at Charleston, S.C. He is sure that many present day assistants would become fine players if they had the determination and willingness to make sacrifices to work on their games.

Picard analyzed a well handled pro job, probably better than any such analysis that was made at the PGA meeting. He told of the importance of Junior development. At his Canterbury club, kids get as many practice balls for \$1 as they want to hit. Frequent problems of the handicapped system were outlined by him and he gave some answers for easing the headaches that go with handling it. With 325 members and guests playing 25,000 rounds a year, the problem of conducting events and of handling every detail of the

shop and instruction tee requires a lot of help. But committees often want still more personnel on the job. Picard said that even with smart merchandising by the pro department, first class assistants, shrewd buying, close watch of every operation, including golf cars, the pro department can't make nearly the profit members think it makes.

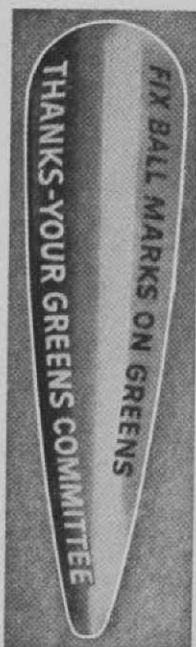
Contrast of Stars

Lawson Little gave a studious analysis of old and new stars, revealing that he had done considerable research both by hearsay and by reading about the older players. Vardon, for instance, was one of his favorite subjects. Lawson observed that Vardon was the first great player to keep the right elbow down and perhaps that was his great contribution to the golf swing.

Lawson expressed the belief that psychology had changed and the current school of stars don't necessarily think a bad round is inevitable.

There can be no doubt about courses being in better condition and probably easier to play now than they were 20 years or so ago, Little said.

The wedge, he remarked, has made it



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much easier to play good golf. He told of buying one of the first wedges, at George Sayers' shop at Merion in 1930 during the National Amateur and finding out that it could become a magic wand. When the wedge design was revised, Little liked the new construction, too, and used it effectively in winning four consecutive U.S. and British Amateurs and the 1940 National Open.

Golfer's Paradise

(Continued from page 26)

Canadian army. In 1956 he joined a syndicate headed by ex-Open champion, Jack Fleck, which purchased the old Brooklands CC near Detroit. When the syndicate sold the property, Weitzel came to Florida during the construction of the Palm River CC at Naples. Later he had a short association with Mahannah at Riviera CC, Miami. From Dec., 1959 until June, 1961, he was supt. at the new Sombrero Yacht and CC, Marathon, Fla.

Les Cottrell, head pro at Grand Bahama, is a member of both the U. S. and British PGA. A Briton by birth, Cottrell was connected with clubs around Boston for several years. He is a retired U. S. Air Force Colonel. After World War II he was

associated with the PGA Dunedin course.

Ordinarily men who know golf well back new courses. Their knowledge lends aid to building and operations problems. But with the Jack Tar head men it is the reverse. Ed Leach had never played golf before 1959. Neither had Charles A. Sammons, chairman of the board of Jack Tar Hotels and its principal stockholder. Ed Hunt's experience was limited. Leach and Sammons took up the game and made a study of it.

"I guess the course made us, as golfers anyway, instead of our making the course," Leach said during one of his recent visits to the property. All in all, he has twelve hotels under his direction, spreading from Texas to California to Lansing, Mich. and down through the Carolinas and Florida.

Future plans call for home sites to be developed on the hotel property which has an overall value of approximately \$12 million. The sites will border the golf course and look out on the Gulf Stream and the Atlantic Ocean.

The course will receive its first big test when a pro-celebrity tournament is held on Mar. 26-28. Bob Toski is in charge of rounding up talent for what promises to be an annual and lavish event.