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Californians Decry Hiring of Outside Professionals

Many qualified assistants discouraged by clubs' practice of going beyond mountains to fill shop vacancies

By PHIL NORMAN

A swell of resentment, verging upon rancor, is mounting in the minds and breasts of Northern California golf professionals. It is directed at country clubs and poses a discouraging threat to native sons who are trying to make their way in the golf business.

The trouble arises in the area of employment, causing Sacramento patriarch Tommy LoPresti to charge:

"If they (the private clubs) don't halt the practice of employing outsiders, they'll chase every last qualified youngster out of the state."

As the long-time professional at the Sacramento Haggin Oaks Club, Tom's opinion is highly respected throughout the Northern California section.

Many Fine Assistants

"We have a host of qualified assistants in the area," says LoPresti. "They comprise one of the finest groups of young professionals in America. It's beyond me why employers believe the grass grows greener on the other side of the mountains."

LoPresti's concern is reflected by such

respected gentlemen as Marvin "Bud" Ward of the Peninsula Club and Eddie Duino of San Jose CC.

The state of agitation has been growing for years, but it reached a new plateau this spring when the plush Burlingame CC on the San Francisco peninsula interviewed more than 50 applicants, calling several local professionals for encores and then extended a welcome hand to Ronald Sathoff of Texas.

Buildup and Letdown

"It's sickening to be allowed to believe you are in the race, then have the plum jerked from your grasp at the last moment," declared one 25-year old teacher with superior credentials.

"I guess there is no other road. I'll have to pack my family, my kit and ka-boodle and search elsewhere for a head professional's job," he said dejectedly.

The young teacher will not be the first. Actions of the clubs have already chased off renowned players like Charles Sheppard, Willie Goggin, Bill Ogden, Rod Munday, Charles Malchaski, Bobby Harris, Bobby Rosburg, Ross Carley and Stan Dudas.

Each one has landed country clubs in

other regions, Harris and Ogden on Chicago's North Shore, where they are included in America's blue book of Class A professionals.

Duino, a respected teacher on the West Coast and winner of the national PGA shop-pro-of-the-year award in 1960, allows as how it does not take a phrenologist to tell that "our boys have as much upstairs as fellows from Texas, Pennsylvania or New York." He suggests that country club directors look in their own areas for an ever increasing number of diamonds in the rough.

Better Presentation

"This is a difficult thing for the PGA to control," Duino continues. "There is little we can do about it directly. We need some way to put our own men in the spotlight so that club committeemen can get a better view of them."

What Duino is calling for is an advertising campaign. He would promote the attributes of shop assistants by word of mouth and stroke of pen.

"We have an active employment bureau and Bill Corbett (Castlewood CC, Pleasanton) is doing a fine job. However, employers to not appear to be making much of his recommendations," Duino observes.

Northern California clubs have imported more than a dozen outsiders to occupy head jobs, dating from more than a decade ago when Marvin Ward, twice winner of the National Amateur, was called down from the state of Washington by the Peninsula Club in San Mateo.

Ward, while readily admitting he once was subject material although now classifying himself as an adopted son, declares:

Recommends Screening

"We should have better screening of local talent. It's a pity that so much of it is going to waste."

The occupancy of the Burlingame position by Sathoff comes hard on the heels of a Sharon Estates (Atherton) announcement that it had retained Dick Lundahl, a native of Utah, as head professional.

Before that, the Olympic Club, site of the 1955 National Open, hired E. J. "Dutch" Harrison from St. Louis; Lake Merced CC took on Bob Gutwein of Pennsylvania; and Sequoyah CC lured away Ted Neist from Missouri, and so on.

"This is not a personal slap at these fellows for all are excellent professionals," explains LoPresti. "But I contend that Northern California country clubs have

This Isn't Confined to California

There's been grumbling in several sections of the country about pro job positions so often going to men from points far distant from the hiring clubs. Discussions have been hotter since the PGA educational program has been stepped up and, theoretically at least, more and better trained pro talent is available in all sections of the country. To what extent (if any) should a club's search for the right man and a pro's search for the right club be a matter of geography? Whether hiring a pro from a far away location is good or bad, or whether anything can or should be done about it has been discussed by pros and club officials many times. This is the first time the subject has come into print.

stars in their eyes. Almost every time some of the members hear that a fellow is winning something back East, they insist on going after him.

"I say that we need a closer association between the Northern California PGA and the sectional golf association in this area."

Go East, Young Man

Pat Markovich, one of the owners of the plush Silverado Country Clubs in Napa County and general manager at the Richmond (Calif.) GC, urges that youngsters with PGA teaching certificates beat the local employers to the punch.

"Go East before you grow stale on the job," advises Markovich, who also recognizes the need for the screening of home grown athletes.

"A professional like a prophet is never appreciated in his own land. He must find open ears elsewhere," points up Markovich. "Ben Hogan of Texas became great as a resident of Hershey, Pa., and Jerry Barber, native of Illinois, found a haven in Southern California.

"There are a hundred examples," continues Markovich, himself a staunch believer that road travel provides the unestimable experience necessary to success.

"The most recent instance I can think
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California Pros

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of was when Bob Rosburg had to pull up stakes in Palo Alto and go to Portland," remarks Markovich.

"Here's a man who won the PGA Championship a couple of years ago! What does a fellow like that have to do to be appreciated in his own back yard?" asks the venerable Richmond pro-owner.

Rosburg was one of those commonly mentioned for the job at the Olympic Club which eventually went to the highly popular Harrison.

But however well founded are the fears of LoPresti, Duino, Ward and Markovich, they can be temporarily allayed. There is no imminent outland invasion. The last check of the section's 143 country clubs showed that all of the vacancies had been filled.

Feeding the Hungry

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frozen for use tomorrow — or next month.

A good example of this built-in flexibility was seen on Wednesday, the last day of the practice rounds. A constant, heavy rain closed the course early in the day. This discouraged many of the spectators, and the 1,000 luncheon guests estimated for the day turned out to be 400.

It was only necessary to leave the frozen food part of the menu right where it had been: in the freezer. It came in handy on Sunday in feeding the spectators who showed up for the Palmer-Nicklaus play-off.

Success of the combination frozen and kitchen-prepared food service operation points the way to more of the same for future special events at golf courses of all sizes.

Grau's Answers

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warding off disease. (Indiana)

A. Where greens have too much clay we advocate thorough aerating followed by incorporating coarse sand without additional soil added. The straight sand fails to create a layer because the aerating procedure destroys any layer that might be made. You will find vertical columns of sand and many new white roots in the holes.

All greens are susceptible to disease in mid-summer. Fertilizer might help if the grass is very hungry and needs plant food. First, I would want to know what you are using and

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