



It's All Free

Pros and Club Managers Should Be Taking Advantage of the 'No Charge' Publicity Offered in Newspapers

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Some of my best friends are golf pros and golf course managers.

They're nearly all nice people, paying taxes, correcting slices, doing great jobs of entertaining and instructing all kinds of people, and otherwise brightening the American sports scene.

But they could be doing a lot better for themselves.

Financially, that is, and in becoming better known to the golfing and social public.

When a man (or woman) opens the usual business like groceries, nails, auto

repair or something similar, he pays good money for newspaper, radio or television advertising. And his hard advertising dollars are budgeted to keep his name and business before the public.

How about the golf clubs, speaking largely of the public courses that are kept alive and prosperous by playing fees?

That Free Ride

Well, golf is a sport, like football baseball, basketball and other sports, and it gets a free ride from most news media.

But it's a rare golf pro who takes advantage of this fact, or to the fullest.

Nearly every metropolitan U.S. newspaper, embracing millions of readers, has a golf column once to three times weekly telling of the golf doings in the immediate area. And TV and radio sports announcers are willing to pass along interesting notes to their listeners.

But more often than not, collecting those notes from pro shop people is a tough job.

In fact it's tougher than collecting eagles

Golf writers always are looking for stories and tips. In the photo, five of them discuss their news sources (or lack of them) at the Masters. They are (l to r): Bob Drum, Pittsburgh Press; Charles Bartlett, Chicago Tribune; Wally Wallis, Oklahoma City Daily Oklahoman; John P. Carmichael, Chicago Daily News; and Bill Tucker, AP, Atlanta, Ga.



Pro-Manager Festivities

At the first pro-manager tourney held at the Hampshire CC, Mamaroneck, N. Y., under the sponsorship of Amstel American Corp., persons shown in the photo above didn't break any course records but they made up for it at the roast beast interval. They are (ll to r): Peter Casella, pres., L. I. PGA; Elmer Voight, pres., Westchester PGA; Mike Turnesa, Knollwood CC pro; Gus Salerna, Hampshire pro; Larry Robinson, N. Y. World Telegram & Sun writer; Sydney B. White of Amstel; Jack Mallon, pres., Metropolitan PGA; and Herb Graffis, *Golfdom* editor. At right, Peter A. D'Angelo (1), Hampshire manager, accepts trophy from White for second low gross score.



to jar news out of most pros and managers.

A conversation between the sports writer and pro, or his assistant, goes something like this:

"What's doing down there?"

"Well, quite a bit of play, but nothing startling. Mrs. Pete Jones broke 130 for the first time—had 129, including six whiffs—but other than that, there's nothing to report."

(The hell there isn't! A new member may have broken the course record that week, a new club president may have been elected, and possibly the course was selected for a Ladies PGA tournament the following fall. But the pro shop boys simply don't think those things are news, or something!)

There's really only one way for the pros and managers to get, and keep, their names before the golfing public.

Write It Down

Have their people write it down, when something interesting happens, on a pad near the phone, so it's available when the newsman calls, usually on the same days each week.

Maybe the item isn't newsworthy but put it down anyway. The newspaper will decide on that.

In summary, the golf course people haven't scratched the surface on this

public relations business. They have a window to the world in the news media, but few are taking advantage of it.

Another thing: Newsmen appreciate items though the piece doesn't involve their source's course. Something may have happened, or is happening, in the way of unusual golf shots, personnel changes etc. at other courses.

If you know about it, pass it along as a tip to the newspapers. They'll run it down. Experienced public relations executives know that columnists appreciate all types of tips, and they remember the people who remembered them, at some future date.

There are exceptions to this failing in pro shop public relations, of course.

I remember one in particular: Fred Sherman, a veteran San Diego County pro who has been associated with several Southern California courses in the past 30 years.

Sherman has had excellent relations with the news boys through the force of his personality, his willingness to work at public relations, and because the news media know they're getting the straight dope when they talk to him.

Golf pros, like the butcher, baker and all the rest, have a product to sell. They have a place to sell it, through the news media—and it's all free.