



Charles Kemp (l), president, and Bill Trombley, vp and sales manager, of the Minimax company, check over handicap sheets in the firm's Dallas office.

*Throw Away Pencils,
Cut Down on Hours*

Computer Takes Drudgery Out of Golf Handicaps

A problem which has tormented professionals and handicap committees for many years has finally been solved. The computation of golf handicaps has long been a necessary but tedious and thankless job. It is a job which all too often has been neglected, a job which has defeated many dedicated committees.

Minimax of Dallas has solved the handicap problem. Instead of pencil, paper, adding machines and long weary hours, it uses the most modern of the giant electronic computers. The same machine which calculates moon shots, designs atomic submarines, and checks your income tax returns now calculates your golf handicap. Working at the fantastic rate of 400,000 arithmetic operations a second and printing absolutely accurate results of these operations at the rate of 600 lines per minute, Minimax calculates handicaps for country clubs, municipal courses and golf associations throughout the country.

Why has Minimax grown from an idea to a nationwide service in less than two years? Look first at the problems inherent in handicapping — then at the Minimax answers to these problems:

44 Hours A Month

The amount of work required to calculate a handicap by old-fashioned methods is tremendous. Dick Forester, professional at Houston CC and national vp of the PGA, says: "We were spending 44 hours a month figuring handicaps. If you figure hours as dollars, we have made a substantial savings at our club using the computer service."

For professional people to spend such time — and it requires that much or more if the job is done right — verges on the ridiculous if there is another way of doing it. With Minimax, the only work required is for someone to post the scores. The posting form is a machine written, alphabetical list. The accuracy of the calculation is important. Every golfer knows the importance of one or two strokes.

Statistical studies by Minimax reveal if 70 per cent of hand-calculated handicaps in a club are correct, the club is doing well. The worst example Minimax has found involves two members of the same club. One member's handicap was eight strokes too high; the other six too low. On the other hand, the odds against the computer making a mistake are literally millions to one.

Earl Stewart of Oak Cliff CC in Dallas says Minicax has meant accurate handi-

caps beyond any doubt. "Minimax service," says Earl, "is the greatest idea since the steel shaft."

Aren't Kept Up to Date

Members of most clubs do not turn in their scores regularly. The reason is that at many clubs the golfer has learned from experience that handicaps aren't kept up to date. With Minimax he knows that every score will be considered. Moreover, he knows that the number of scores he turns in will be printed for all to see. A zero in the "Scores Posted" column is inconsistent with being seen on the course. If two handicapping periods go by with no scores, then two zeros appear; the next time three zeros are registered; then four, etc. It soon becomes obvious which golfers are not turning in scores. Jim Burke, head professional at The Champions Club, says golfers are more diligent in turning in all their scores for handicapping when computers are used.

Hurry-Up Service

What happens at a club if a handicap tournament is scheduled and the handicap chairman has been out of town? Handicaps are needed in a hurry and there just isn't any way to produce them. Minimax can turn them out in twelve hours plus plane time between any city and Dallas. It likes to work on a schedule, but handicaps are calculated at the convenience of customers. If scores are mailed Sunday night, odds are that up-to-date handicaps will be posted in the club on Tuesday morning.

How about the sand bagger? Fortunately, there are not too many, but it only takes one or two to completely ruin a tournament program at a club. Why have a handicap tournament if the winner is known in advance? Can computers make such people honest? Of course not, but they do make it completely obvious to everyone — including the trophy hunter himself — who these people are. You don't have to dig through a notebook or a card file to see if a man is turning in his good scores. The best scores, which determine a handicap, are picked out by the computer and listed opposite the player's name. If he broke 70 last month (or maybe 100) that sixty-something or ninety-something had better appear. The trophy hunter knows his record is publicly displayed.

Shows Complete Record

The Minimax service includes everything a golfer could wish for. The complete record is there. A glance at the mas-



At award banquet of Southern California section of the PGA, held in April at the Riviera CC, Pacific Palisades, Paul Scott and Mac Hunter were cited for their work in the game. Scott (left, above) pro at Griffith Park in L.A. for 27 years, receives section Merit Award from George Lake. Dick Boggs, SCPGA president is in the background. (Below) Hunter (r) of Riviera gets pro-of-the-year award for 1962 from Guy Bellitt.

ter record shows how many more scores must be turned in before a 79, for example, stops affecting a handicap. The best scores which determine a handicap are chosen by the computer from most recent scores, and listed. The number of scores turned in is listed.

In addition every member receives an individual handicap card with each calculation. Printed on this card is the name of the club, date, member's name and handicap; and the pro's or handicap chair-

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Computers Take Work Out of Handicaps

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man's name. This card can be attached either to a golf bag with a plastic holder or carried in the golfer's billfold. Everywhere he goes proof of his handicap goes with him. Minimax calculates either the USGA handicap or the Chicago District Golf Association handicap.

From 217 to 130

There is a human side to the electronic production of handicaps, too. Charlie Kemp, developer and president of Minimax, has watched millions of scores go through the computer. "The worst one so far is a 217 turned in by a lady from one of the Rocky Mountain states. I have been following her career and she is now playing in the 130's", says Kemp.

"We have had two 59's, one by Charlie Coe at Oklahoma City," Kemp continues. "Our key punchers have been told not to punch any score under 66 without asking about it, but with people like Hogan, Nelson, Earl Stewart, Ernie Vossler, Shelley Mayfield, Spec Goldman, Dudley Wysong (who just broke the course record at

Northwood with a 63) on our handicap lists we are queried fairly often. Probably our most consistent golfer is a member at Houston Country Club. He hasn't been above 83 or below 80 in almost two years."

Cost Is Reasonable

It would seem that a service such as Minimax offers would be prohibitive in cost, but this isn't true. At most clubs and associations the members are billed yearly for the service. At the municipal courses players sign up on a subscription basis. According to Bill Trombley, a PGA professional with many years experience, president of Dallas' Brookhaven CC, and vp and sales manager for Minimax, some clubs and associations charge in excess of Minimax invoices and make a profit. Most, however, merely charge the member the Minimax fee. This depends on the number of people involved and the frequency of the calculation. A few clubs pay the entire cost for their members. The Minimax season's fee runs less than a package of golf balls. That's cheap for getting rid of one of golf's king size headaches.

Women's Metropolitan GA Championship will be played at Old Westbury CC, June 24-28.

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