

The Golf Business OUTLOOK

The professionals speak out

The working professional golfer is becoming more and more concerned about getting a fair deal in his relations with clubs and governing committees. Many feel that the clubs are "muscling in" on the pro's rightful domain, especially as concerns golf car rentals, while others want the relationships between pro and club spelled out more clearly. Some have even suggested that professionals should "unionize" in order to wield a more powerful hand in their dealings with committees, members and other areas of club management. Such talk may seem strange coming from golf professionals, but these ideas cropped up often in GOLFDOM's recently completed survey into the activities, status and plans of the pros. A startlingly good 25% response shows that the questions were of sufficient interest for more than 500 of the country's leading professionals to take time to sit down and answer these searching questions. The survey is now being tabulated, and first findings will appear in our September issue.

Abandon organized gambling, urges USGA

In a recent review of USGA policy, William Ward Foshay, President of the association, urges clubs to abandon organized gambling, especially Calcutta pools, in connection with club tournaments. (The appeal was made in the *USGA Golf Journal*.) Mr. Foshay traces the history of the USGA's policy on gambling, starting with a statement of the Executive Committee in June, 1949. This was brought about by the spread of Calcutta pools, some in the \$150,000-\$200,000 range. The high-priced pools attracted gamblers and USGA officials saw this as a potential threat to the game. Then, in 1955, the "Deepdale Incident" prompted a further appeal to clubs. Members of a visiting team playing in an invitation four-ball with handicaps of 17 and 18 were found to have true handicaps of 3 each at home. While most of the clubs which used to hold Calcuttas have abandoned them, and those clubs that had not had Calcuttas before have not instituted them, they have been resumed by a few clubs. Often, the reasoning behind this is that a "small" Calcutta can hurt no one. Unfortunately, the USGA points out, this is not the case. Even in the small, seemingly well-controlled Calcutta, the prospect of winning money has influenced some competitors to "negotiate" for a higher handicap. The USGA says it never has had the intention of taking action against an offending club, but notes that clubs holding Calcuttas may have to purchase a Federal gambling stamp. Worse, the club's exemption from Federal income tax may be jeopardized. Individual players who persistently offend are another matter. They can be declared non-amateurs, refused entry to USGA championships, etc. These penalties, says the association, can and will be enforced.

First computer used in the Open

Computers were used for the first time at the recent National Open to name the leading player in a field of 64 spread over 18 holes. With the push of a button the leader's name appeared on a television screen. The computer also determined each player's average score on each hole, which could be compared to the average score of the entire field, or to another player's average score on each hole. However, the computer was not used to predict the winner. Recapitulation showed that Palmer had "the edge" over the first nine holes and Casper the edge on the second nine.