

The education of a pro

This year, something new has been added to the PGA Business School program—a soft goods seminar, conducted by retailing experts, will be held in New York.

This year the PGA of America has taken a big step in expanding its educational program for its members. In addition to the business schools that have been held each year since 1957, for the first time a special retail merchandise seminar on soft goods will be held in New York City at the Waldorf-Astoria on Monday, March 25.

The PGA is co-sponsoring this new seminar with the Ernie Sabayrac organization. "The timing is excellent, as most professionals in the North will have returned home from their vacations," says Ernie Sabayrac. "It is just prior to the beginning of what looks like a banner year in apparel sales in golf shops around the country."

For the first time golf professionals will have the opportunity to get the newest and most expert merchandising tips from the retailing experts in the field of soft goods merchandising. The benefits have been shown in a recent survey that attributed more than 27 per cent of the average professional's gross income to the sale of clothing and shoes for the golfer. And each year this figure has been rising.

Paul Roth, an independent producer of fashion shows who is also a member of Esquire Magazine's staff, will work with the Sabayrac organization. Paul will produce the entire seminar visually and coordinate the professional retailing experts in this new soft goods merchandising seminar. Various segments of apparel merchandising will be set up on display equipment.

The seminar will begin at 9:00 a.m. and conclude at 5:30 p.m. There will be a luncheon given by Ernie Sabayrac at noon for all those attending the show. The Waldorf-Astoria is offering special weekend rates to those who would like to come into the city for the weekend previous to the show.

As a forewarning, attendance to the show will be limited to the first 300 professionals and their staff members.

Patrick Williams, who is the PGA Education Director, announced that this year all of the five PGA business schools will have the same basic lectures at each of the separate seminars. In past years, each school was run on an area basis.

The PGA also passed a resolution stating that all prospective members had to attend a PGA business school and pass a final examination. The examinations will not be standardized, but will specifically cover the lectures given at each of the seminars.

At each school, which is limited to 125 students, a minimum of 40 hours of instruction is required during the five-day seminar. There will be from 30 to 35 speakers at each school including pros from all over the country.

Some of the subject matter that will be covered will include the following:

- 1) Maintaining a respectable playing ability.
- 2) Golf club repair and design.
- 3) Inventory management.
- 4) Public speaking.
- 5) Golf course design.
- 6) Credit management.
- 7) Relations with members and equipment suppliers.

Max Elbin, PGA president, Bob Creasy, PGA executive director, and Billy Booe, PGA tournament administrator, will speak at all five schools. They will discuss the PGA of the past, present and future, the PGA in operation and the tournament bureau and its activities.

When Jack Nicklaus attended the PGA business school early in 1966, it served the purpose of stripping a year off his golfing apprenticeship thus permitting him to attain a Class A membership in June of 1966. In talking about the school, Jack said, "It's a place where anybody can learn a great deal.

"It is particularly great for the assistant professional even though it helps the young touring pro, too.

"You would have to say it is a great finishing school for the young pro," he adds. "For those who plan to go on tour it familiarizes them with all aspects of what they will face: how the tour operates, what to expect, how they should comport themselves generally and many other facets.

"For the man who expects to devote himself to a club job it deals with all types of techniques: giving lessons, merchandising, club repair and relations with members. It has to be of tremendous value to

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Left, registration in progress at recent PGA Business School. Below, business school session at San Antonio, Texas, where Jack Nicklaus attended. Lower right, Jack Nicklaus with H. Loudermilk, who was then president of the Texas section of the PGA.

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any young professional, giving them guide lines and a real solid basic background. It's difficult to put your finger on specifics, but I know I learned a number of things and I came away feeling that I wished it might have been longer."

There is no question in Jack's mind but what the school is a great step forward for his chosen profession in that it must make for better professionals and, as an end result, more satisfied club members.

"However, there is only time for a guide, or basic background," he explains. "But don't misunderstand me. It gives the young professional a good deal of information that otherwise might take him years to attain. Essentially it's great but, as I've said, I feel that it is too brief and concentrated."

The first of the schools has been held in Florida, at the Colonnades Beach Hotel on Singer Island, from December 11-15. The program coordinator for this first session was William A. Meyers, honorary president of the PGA section of Florida. The advisor was Don Fischesser, pro at Edgewood Country Club, Riverdale, New York.

The second Florida PGA school was held also at the Colonnades on January 14-19. William A. Strausbaugh Jr., pro at Columbia Country Club, Chevy Chase, Maryland, acted as program coordinator and Don Fischesser as advisor.

On February 4-9, the West Coast business school was held at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles. Howard E. Smith, Diamond Bar Golf Course, Diamond Bar, California, coordinated this session, and Lyle Wehrman, the new vice president of the PGA, was advisor.

The fourth school will be held at the Sheraton Hotel, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on March 3-8. Joseph R. Aneda Jr., Newark Country Club, Newark, Delaware, will head this school and Frank Cronin, University of Maryland, will be advisor.

The final school will be held March 17-22 at the Plaza Hotel in Kansas City, Missouri. Program coordinator is Joseph R. Dodich, Meadowbrook Country Club, Overland Park, Kansas. Don Clarkson, Old Warson Country Club, St. Louis, Missouri will be advisor. □

