

Swinging around golf

by Herb Graffis



There's nobody in golf today like the glamorous warrior and sportsman, Tommy Armour, who died in New Rochelle (N.Y.) hospital Sept. 11, two weeks before his 72nd birthday . . . The Silver Scot was born in Edinburgh and won minor amateur championships as a schoolboy before going into WW1 . . . He was badly burned, lost one lung and temporarily his sight, in an early gas attack . . . He regained sight of his right eye . . . He won the French amateur in 1920, came to the U.S. and turned pro in 1924, won the National Open in 1927, the British Open in 1931, the PGA in 1930, the Western Open in 1929, Canadian Open in 1927, 1930 and 1934 and numerous other titles . . . He was pro at Medinah CC and at Boca Raton when it was a private club and had club jobs at Congressional in Washington and Tam O' Shanter in Detroit . . . At Boca Raton in the winter he got \$50 for an hour lesson . . . He raised the standard and rates for golf instruction and got recognition for competent pro instructors . . . His instruction feature "Play Better Golf" ran 11 years for the Chicago Tribune-New York Daily News Syndicate . . . His books, *How to Play Your Best Golf All The Time*, *A Round of Golf with Tommy Armour* and *Tommy Armour's ABC of Golf* set the sales record for golf books . . .

His widow, Estelle, did detailed planning and correspondence that got the tournament circuit established . . . His brother Alexander (Sandy), long in pro golf, also survives him as do his sons, Ben and John and Dr. Thomas Armour.

Split will hurt Players, not club pros

To the golfing public, the Professional Golf Assn.'s split between the home club pros and the touring pros is something like the sex of a porcupine: It is of no interest except to another porcupine.

Since golf is primarily a playing sport, the golf spectator gets the worst deal of any sports customer. He has to run for position, is crowded and corralled in back of ropes, is forbidden to use his camera and pays a stiff admission fee and high prices for food and drinks on the course . . . Sometimes he is barred from the clubhouse of a first class club that is hosting a tournament. Sometimes he sits on a plank bordering a green. He sees perhaps two or three dozen shots by all the contestants in a tournament. He's charged a dollar for parking a long way from the course, gets sunburned, chilled or drenched, and then is sternly rebuked for sneezing by a haughty player. If his club hosts the tourney, he is also expected to sell tickets, devote considerable time to tournament affairs, buy a program and tournament uniforms for both his wife and himself, volunteer his wife to chauffeur players and give up his course for a week.

So you shouldn't expect the Good Provider from Whom all blessings flow to the playing pros to wail in anguish and share the sorrow of performers who have been so badly treated by the PGA that a wandering boy can get only \$5,000 to \$50,000 for four days' work a week. In the past 10 years, 15 underprivileged, touring PGA members have won from \$350,570 to \$981,941. Tough!

The home pros, who established and built the PGA, also built the

golf merchandise market, which accounts for a considerable amount of the star playing pro revenue. With few exceptions now, the playing pro names are on the cheaper store lines of golf merchandise and are even on cheap T-shirts for kids.

Annual revenue at pro shops is 20 times the purse, exhibition and testimonial income of the playing pros. It'll be interesting to see what effect, if any, the PGA split has on the sale at pro shops of goods endorsed by players who have split away from the PGA. Home pros maintain they have far more control of the quality club and ball market than the tournament pros, regardless of how much testimonial advertising is done on what tournament winners wear and the equipment they use. This issue is getting hot.

Nobody's sure what the split is about, and both sides to the mysterious controversy have been secretive, in a little boy sort of way. They didn't know enough about first class business to issue informative publicity, and so missed a chance to make friends among the amateur golfers, who pay the bills, the tournament sponsors and the press. And the split was badly timed. It was announced the day after a sports page feature about the beating the networks were taking on the televising of pro football, and that time is being sold at cut prices. Outside of Shell's Wonderful World of Golf, the Masters and the National Open, golf hasn't had much of an audience rating. So if football's action isn't paying on TV, tourney golfers can't expect to get rich on television.

Now the tournament group has greater responsibilities and risks than before and will be held accountable to the paying public. The home pro's money-making position is unaffected.

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Los Angeles municipal course rates have increased to \$4 for 18 holes and to \$2.25 for nine. The \$4 includes 50 cents for phone reservation and a 50-cent surcharge to pay for new courses . . . Golf car rentals are now \$7, recently raised from \$6. Golfers in Los Angeles howled at the rate hikes, which Mayor Yorty said were required because the city council had cut \$400,000 from the department of recreation and parks' budget.

No need to use federal money to build municipal course at Cody, Wyo. Glenn E. Nielson, chairman of the board of an oil company, and his wife are donating land and paying for the course. They told architect Bob Baldock to give the folks the best.

George Turpie, 88, who died recently in New Orleans where he'd been pro at New Orleans, Audubon and City Park courses, came from St. Andrews, Scotland, in

1898 to join his brother, Harry, who was pro at Glen View Club in suburban Chicago. George went with his brother to Edgewater in the Chicago district and later got his own pro job at Calumet. George had gone with Harry to build the New Orleans CC, but didn't move there until 1915. He was a fine teacher. His daughter Marion was 1928 Women's Southern champion. He is survived by sons George, Jr., John and Thomas S. Sr., and by daughters Mrs. Marion McNaughton and Mrs. H.P. Beardman, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren . . . George played in his first U.S. Open in 1900 at the Chicago GC, which was won by Harry Vardon for whom George caddied when Vardon won the 1896 British Open at Muirfield.

Gerald F. Dearie, superintendent Medinah, Ill., died recently following a bee sting or other insect sting while he was supervising work on Medinah's three courses. He was one of the very

best in every way: as a friend and citizen, a family man, an expert and helpful man in his profession . . . Jerry Dearie went to Medinah from Edgewater in Chicago where he'd been eminently successful. He is survived by his widow, daughters Debora and Nora, son Gerald, Jr., his father, mother and three sisters.

This certainly has been a boom year for irrigation installations at small-town, nine-hole courses. Improved plastic pipes, moderately priced, reliable pumps and fast trenching machinery have cut installation costs . . . Course equipment and supplies salesmen and pro salesmen say some of the layouts changed from sand greens to grass with the new watering and are so far ahead of the old cow-pasture design that they are nearly metropolitan class. But think of the fellow who has to maintain the course with a staff of member volunteer workers or a kid, and a budget of nickles.

Gary Player, telling about winning the 1968 British Open at Carnoustie, said he had his wife bring from Johannesburg a blade putter he used in 1965 when he had a great year. He paid \$50 for the putter in the United States, but didn't say to whom. The seller sure was the Golf Club Merchant of 1965 . . . Two weeks after Tommy Armour won the 1931 British Open at Carnoustie, his winning putter was missing so many putts, he gave it away. He forgot to whom he gave it, but mysteriously the putter turned up in his locker at Boca Raton, Fla., years later when he was pro there.

Big party at Salt Lake City CC honoring Tee Branca for his 25 years as club's pro. Tee has been with the club for 40 years, starting as a caddie under Alex Hutton. Branca's wife and two sons shared in the festivities. A great column on Branca, written by Hack Miller in *Deseret News*, included a cute poem by a woman club member. The lady rated Tee as more important to the club than the first 50 tourney circuit money winners.

You can never tell about kids who win golf scholarships. Some who've won Western GA Chick

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Evans caddie scholarships now are highly successful in business, the professions and sciences, although not ballyhooed in print. Duane Monick, Sparta, Wisc., four-letter athlete, on Luther College golf team, Decorah, Iowa, twice golf champion in his conference, was awarded \$1,000 NCAA post-graduate scholarship to attend University of Iowa medical school.

PGA Seniors championship now is sponsored by Ford division, Ford Motor Company. The pattern of sectional qualification will be unchanged, and Championship will be played at PGA National course January 26-29. Ford is also sponsoring PGA stroke play championship at PGA course, January 6-9. Seniors' purse from Ford is \$40,000 and the stroke play purse \$10,000.

Fred Corcoran was awarded the Walter Hagen trophy for 1968 by Golf Writers Assn. of America and British Golf Writers Assn. The annual award is made to the person who's done most in furthering American-British relations . . . Corcoran is tournament director of International Golf Assn., which began the Canada Cup (now World Cup) international pro team and individual annual championships in 1953. He arranged a Ladies' PGA team tour of Britain and international golf writers' contests in Britain and Ireland and was a tournament bureau manager for the PGA. As manager of Sam Snead, he developed the first playing pro millionaire. He is publicity counselor for the PGA, tournament director of the \$250,000 Westchester Classic and has promotion interests in golf and other sports.

Men who are not very old in golf may remember when FDR won an election on sneers at the "country club" set. Nobody could do that now because the government is involved in the financing of enough country clubs to swing an election. During the past few years, golf courses built with government finances on FHA loans or other sources are in the largest class of new golf projects. Next are courses built in connection with real estate develop-

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discussion, and has continued informally since, would seem to indicate a general trend toward acceptance of the changes in men's wear.

In actual practice, clubs vary widely in what they will now accept. Most draw no hard line in the daytime. Some, including many "prestige" clubs, now permit turtlebacks and Nehru jackets in the evening as well; this is more frequent in the West. A few permit turtlebacks only if worn with full dress evening wear.

It depends on what the members consider "prestige." □

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ments. Private country clubs and privately financed fee courses trail.

Those Big Men you hear or read about as Great Promoters can take lessons from the charming and brilliant businesswoman Carol McCue, who is executive secretary or director of something of the Chicago District GA. President Lennox Haldeman, Ralph Peterson, Merritt Lovett, Bill Pailey, Morton Eldon, Jim O'Keefe and other male officials of the CDGA, when the association's eight-day golf air junkets for Spanish golf were discussed as a service to its members, said, "Let's see what Carol can do." Already 20 of the planned 25 charter plane trips, from October 11 to March 28, are filled. The \$350 price tag includes transportation, hotels, meals and golf. Looks like our Carol has made golf business history. She's not only smart, but very pretty. She arranges the CDGA annual air trips to the Masters.

Arnold Palmer winning the Radix trophy for PGA tournament scoring low average for 1967, and for the fourth time, with a

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70.188 average for 85 official tournament rounds, is a solid indication that the spectacular Arnie isn't over the hill. Hogan won the Radix award five times from 1940 through 1948 . . . Palmer's first win was in 1961. Radix was the greatest pro golf fan we ever knew. (His award is similar to the Vardon trophy of the PGA.) Radix spent more money making long distance telephone calls, and having his secretary spend time looking for jobs for pros, than any other golf amateur.

Again, I've got to say Golf Course Superintendent Reporter edited by Charles Calhoun for Iowa GCSA, does a marvelous job of getting into superintendents' heads stories such as those on Herb Klotz, Ted Smith, Norm Westfall and others. It makes you think you're reading biographies of dedicated artists. □

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