



GOLFDOM SPEAKS OUT

1969: A New Look

We're getting this first issue of the New Year out to you with something of a new look and some changes in format. Having had some three months to soul-search about what we did in 1968, the editorial staff has decided to plunge into 1969 if not exactly at the top of our editorial form at least looking better (we hope) than we did in earlier issues. In editorial parlance it all goes by the name of making ourselves more appealing to you, the reader. We hope you like the changes we've made thus far.

Thus far is a necessary phrase because we still have a few cards left up our sleeve that will be coming your way as the months ahead roll into new and still better issues of GOLFDOM. With that much said about this issue we'd like to leave any further comments concerning it to you who might let us know how you like what we're doing.

Leaving January behind we'd like to say a few well-chosen words about what we'll be doing next month. Perhaps it isn't quite fitting to begin the New Year by talking editorially about the second issue of the year, but we've got something coming along that we feel is so big it just has to have some advance ballyhoo. We could justify that by saying that the editorial mind is constantly thinking one month ahead of itself—about what is going to appear rather than what is appearing. The upcoming February issue will introduce to the industry what we hope will become a continuing fountainhead of golf industry statistics and marketing information. It has become an unfortunate truism of golf that there exists many statistics about the game and very few about the industry.

GOLFDOM has taken on the task of remedying this lack of statistical knowledge and undertaken the job of scouting the industry in an effort to compile meaningful facts and figures about the industry that will aid in bringing an up-to-date perspective to the business side of golf. Our February issue will be the beginning of a series of stories and marketing features that will reflect what we've found out by researching the people concerned with the business of golf.

The scope of such an undertaking, even in its infant stage, is vast and to get the most out of it the help and cooperation of many people is needed. In some of the surveys we've conducted, surveys

you'll be hearing about next month, we queried the first line of the industry—the pros, managers and superintendents—and many took the time to answer our questionnaires. This was all to the good and for their consideration we are eternally grateful. We hope they will continue to be as generous of their precious time in the future.

In other cases, however, we did not get the best of responses. As we said earlier, this is to be a continuing industry study and as such will necessitate a continuing barrage of questions which only you, the experts on the firing line, can answer.

It is only from the people connected with the game that we can get an accurate picture of what's going on in our industry and how it's changing, day-to-day. In another way from the standpoint of enlightened self-interest it is important to all of us to impart as much information as practicable as a way of showing the world at large we are an industry of stature and a large factor in the economic scheme of things, not just a weekend game where a few of the boys get together and whack around a little white ball.

We are a big industry that is getting bigger. We know that country clubs are places that see literally billions of dollars expended each year. But in this very statistical and computer-conscious age the story of an industry is in its facts and figures—what those figures mean in sales dollars, sales units with the added complications of geography, types of merchandise. In other words, it's a big job. Most major industries can tell their story in these terms. Golf, sad to relate, cannot, or rather, until now has not been able to.

Which brings us to our request for cooperation through this year and the years ahead. In the time ahead we'll be sending more questions along to you and in some instances to your members. Answering the questions as quickly and accurately as possible and impressing on your members, when you get the chance, that they should also answer these questionnaires, will be of inestimable value in our fact-gathering chores.

To date you've been doing a great job. Continue to give us a hand that will in turn give you and the industry a hand.