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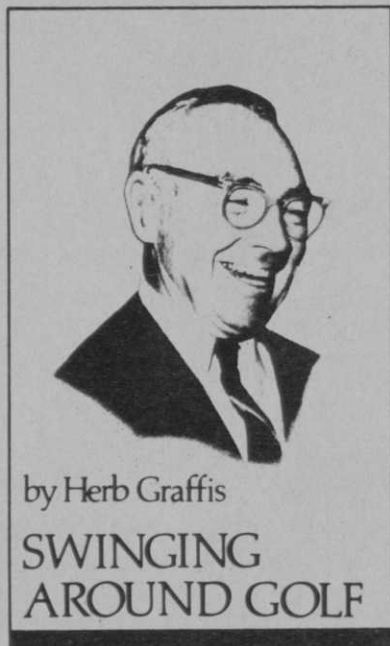
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by Herb Graffis

## SWINGING AROUND GOLF

### Superintendent job insecurity

An experienced superintendent—a good one—looking for a job, writes and comments on the job insecurity of superintendents. There are no figures on average time superintendents, professionals and managers hold their jobs. And there's no way of telling whether the reason for changing is moving to a better job or getting discharged. So the subject of job security in golf is wide open for guesses.

The fellow who wrote me had been on a job at a first-class club for years and seemed to be doing okay on the course with the members. More salary for the needs of a growing family forced him to switch. His new job was at a course where no superintendent had stayed long. Some who'd been on the job said that the best thing the club could do was to plow up the course and start over because of construction mistakes, beginning with the selection of the site. Then, of course, there often was offered the explanation of bad weather. But bad weather happens every few years at every course.

Considering what the superin-

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tendent is up against maybe it is amazing most superintendents stay at their courses as long as they do. However, when weather is adverse, as it was in many areas in 1969, and play, house business and pro shop business are off, the managers and pros aren't blamed and fired.

Something about the superintendent's job that isn't generally realized is that the increasing demands for almost perfect course conditions on private or pay-play courses during all playing weather puts a heavier load on the superintendent than on any other department head. The handicap figures of members rarely have improved much at any club in 25 years, despite pros' greater and better educated attention to instruction, but that lack of improved play is not held against them. Club food and service standards haven't improved noticeably in 25 years. Considering the difficulty of getting first-class chefs and waiters or waitresses and changed eating habits of members, one would hardly expect that the old reputation of fine clubs as gourmet galleries could continue to be maintained.

**Paul Hahn Sr.** and **Paul Jr.** proved themselves to be golf's miracle men by flying around the world on a tour that several times came close to the finale. By the grace of God, luck, guts and resourcefulness the Hahns kept going. When they landed they put on their trick shot performances with superb finesse and aplomb. Galleries were thrilled by the daring, talented team.

The Hahns almost splashed their Piper Aztec into the Atlantic when the navigational equipment failed, had rough times when the starter went bad in remote spots and kept so near to coming down in the Pacific short of Darwin, Australia, that Royal

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Australian Air Force radio operators and rescue fliers were amazed when the plane came in safely and coughed out its last drops of gas.

During the four-month tour the Hahns performed under conditions that most of us would regard as impossible. In 1929 Walter Hagen and Joe Kirkwood made a six-month tour of Japan, Australia and a couple of courses in India, and Joe did his trick shots, but there's been nothing anywhere that's come close to the Hahns' feat.

Arthur Hills of Toledo is architect of the Giant Oak course being built at Temperance, Mich., a few miles north of Toledo. Temperance doesn't sound like a name that fits a golf course site, considering that bar revenue at many clubs exceeds green fees and car rentals and usually makes a larger net profit than any other element of country club operation. But temperance was a political factor in that part of the nation. John Morely, first president of the National Assn. of Greenkeepers, as a young man in Ohio, was secretary of the Temperance Party.

Hills is typical of the younger group of successful architects who got started in golf working for inspiring superintendents. He began as a youngster working for Andy Bertoni on the Meadowbrook course in suburban Detroit. He fell in love with golf courses, studied landscaping, was a fair golfer and wanted to express himself artistically in golf courses.

Tommy Armour said, "I know we've got some great golf architects but where are the great golf courses?" That question bothered me until I realized what architects are up against in handling the problems of land on which they are expected to create masterpieces. Complexities are added when the course is to be used for selling adjacent home sites. □



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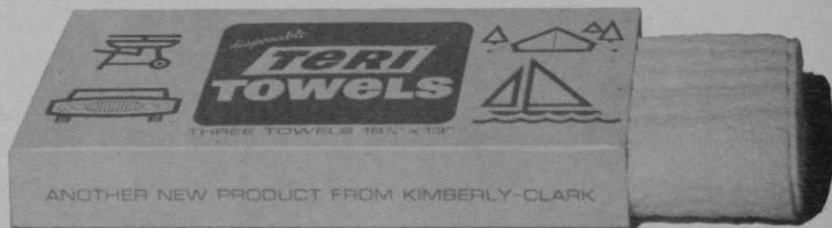
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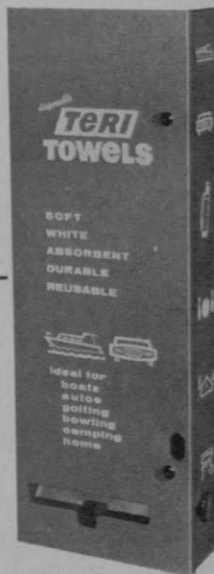
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