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New breed of young professionals

"There is more color among young professionals now than there ever has been before, but the golf writers don't know where to look for the brightest personalities," observed a veteran Chicago amateur, who plays at many clubs in this country and overseas.

"Where? In the satellite tournaments?" I asked.

"No, sorry. Those boys seem to be sad and sour about something, maybe about not being in the big time. I've only seen three minor tournaments. That's enough," the old golf enthusiast commented.

"In the pro shops, at lesson tees and the score tables or boards. They are the assistants. Golf has the smartest best looking crop of comers a business could have."

"Glad to hear that." I certainly was. A few years ago professionals were remarking that too many well-paid assistants wanted to play golf instead of work at it and seemed to regard themselves practically as paid members.

In the past two years a different attitude has occurred among the assistants I've seen and heard about. Maybe the change reflects the overall job situation. Or perhaps the pleasant diligent budding geniuses, who are now assistant professionals, are looking ahead with better clarity than the rest of us.

The American Society of Golf Course Architects at their 1971 annual meeting forecast that the major activity in golf course building was going to be centered in real estate and resort projects. Those operations will need and reward specialized golf management. Who is in better position to develop that ability than a young man in pro golf business? The schools of club management, course management and

pro department, planning and operating, provide basic training that vastly expands the young golf businessman's qualifications.

Recently a real estate man told me of a professional who had been working with him on a golf course residential development for four years. "Our friend and his family have good news. He made more last year than the purses of the first two tournament winners and his tax situation is very nice."

The late O.J. Noer, who probably was the most widely-traveled man ever engaged in successfully applying golf turf research, regretted that turf experts couldn't solve two of the most common faults in golf course maintenance: slovenly housekeeping and poor business management.

I would run into Noer when I was visiting over 100 golf clubs a year and I'd say to him privately, "I knew there would be trouble on this course. It's too sloppy. Somebody ought to tip off the superintendent and chairman. Or maybe they both think the members are slobs and wouldn't know the difference between a properly-groomed course and one that's a pig sty."

Noer declared that a golf course that wasn't kept as neat as a member's home was bound to have more than normal turf trouble because of ignorance and neglect. He also asserted that if officials of some golf clubs allowed the same sloppy sort of operations in their own businesses that were evident on their golf courses, they wouldn't be making enough to afford golf club membership.

The slovenly golf course, I suspect, after considerable examination of figures, costs about 30 per cent more for results than the neatly maintained course. How much of that waste might be spent wisely for a higher salary for a neat superintendent I cannot guess, but certainly money would be

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saved and results improved if the slob factors were decreased.

Massachusetts GA, recently released figures of a survey made in the summer of 1969, which showed that the average superintendent on an 18-hole course in that state made \$12,295 a year. The average chef at clubs in the same area reportedly made \$12,933 in 1969. Did you ever threeputt your knife and fork? Club Management Magazine reports in its May, 1971, issue, a "not scientific

ally conducted study" of 40 golf clubs in the Northeastern states from Virginia to Maine that superintendents "average" \$13,004 a year and chefs \$13,624. Superintendents range from \$8,600 to \$22,000. Rents and other expenses and fringe benefits are not reported in either of the surveys. And golf clubs wonder why they aren't considered models of business management.

Lee Trevino's action in contributing \$5,000 of his \$35,000 first money at Memphis to the tax-exempt charity sponsoring the tourna-

ment was a combination of head and heart that makes a pro star look very good. No other professional athletes are associated with charities as the golf professionals are, both the journeymen and the lesser-known club professionals who give much of their time and effort to playing in fund-raising events and conducting many, such as National Golf Day, Golfers of Ike, Hagen Cancer Fund and innumerable local affairs. The professionals' prize money comes off the top of these charity tournaments, of course, but there's still got to be a field to put on the show.

Golf professionals have a tradition of being more charitable than other professional athletes. The first thing the Professional Golfers' Assn. did after its organization in 1916 was to inquire into the needs of Johnny McDermott, the first homebred National Open Champion. The pattern for the PGA's benevolence was set by the St. Andrews' Society, an organization of Scots which was the first charitable society in the United States.

Nobody, professional or amateur, in golf can take much of a bow for making contributions to tax-exempt welfare and educational causes. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce says that until May 10th this year every cent the "average" American made was needed to pay Federal, state, local and other taxes. From that time on, it looked especially hard for deductions.

Sectional GCSA news bulletins and superintendents' personal reports indicate that this summer college and high school student vacation labor has been more abundant and valuable than for many years.

"Golf" by Gary Wiren, published by Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., is a concise volume in a series of sports primers. It is most useful for a beginning golfer. Wiren, a Class A PGA professional, formerly sports events manager and athletic publicity man for the University of Oregon, has given the simple right answers to the questions of the beginning golfer—man or woman—who wants to graduate from TV watching to playing. Most golf books are over-written to the extent that they discourage the golfer who is looking for fun. This one isn't. It gets to the points. □



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