

BUILDING BLOCKS TO



BIGGER MEMBERSHIPS

Club presidents and owners feel it in the pinch of diminishing revenues and rising costs; managers note it in decreasing clubhouse traffic; professionals see it in the unsold merchandise in the pro shop and superintendents encounter it in tightening budgets—the malady that is spreading to many clubs throughout the country—unfilled membership quotas.

In its annual formal survey of the three administrative employees and club presidents and owners, lack of new members ranked high on each group's list of current problems. As noted in *GOLFDOM*'s April issue ("What's Plaguing the Pros?" p. 35), professionals particularly point out the effects this has had on their merchandise sales and lesson business. And the problem of deficient membership may become a bigger monster as time passes, because some professionals say they feel threatened by their clubs and courses. The hard-pressed facilities, some professionals note, are beginning to look more closely at the arrangements between club and professional in certain income areas traditionally held by the professional. One does not have to be clairvoyant, therefore, to predict what might occur at a club if the malady goes unchecked for an extended period of time. The initial and direct impact is financial, but as pressure builds, it can break down relations among key people and create hostility. And at that point, any rational, concerted attempt to deal with the problem of deficient membership becomes impossible.

It is not our intent here to sound like the voice of doom. In contacting numerous clubs on the matter of membership, many indicated that they have not experienced a problem, and others reported that they had already instituted programs to remedy the situation. Many did admit that the membership problem had worsened and that they didn't quite know how to deal with it. And this is not surprising.

It is an unfamiliar situation, because most clubs in the past have had the luxury of being able to fill any openings from a long waiting list of qualified people. Now, only 30 per cent of the clubs have such a list to fall back on, according to a *GOLFDOM* survey of club presidents and owners. The same survey revealed that 60 per cent of the respondents' clubs have programs under way to bring in new members. The techniques noted, in order of frequency, were: 1) offering associate or other types of limited membership, 2) offering incentives to present members to bring in new members, 3) waiving for a period of time certain initial costs, 4) offering memberships only for specific activities and 5) offering house memberships.

In putting together our special section for this issue, we were not so presumptuous to think we could offer an absolute solution to such a complex problem. Rather, it was our hope to call attention to the extent of the problem and stimulate some action by using, as examples, clubs that have had success with various membership programs. *GOLFDOM*

does not hold out these examples as the route every club should take. Any program must be adapted and tailored to the precise needs of a particular club. But the cases cited in this section should, at least, plant the seeds for ideas.

The section is designed for all clubs. For those that have not experienced the problem of decreasing memberships, *GOLFDOM* offers some preventive medicine—suggestions for maintaining their continued health. For the clubs already trying membership build-up programs, there are additional ideas that could be incorporated. For those in the midst of the problem, but without a program to deal with it, the section may be a starting point and clearly points out the necessity to *act now*.

The first step toward a solution is recognition of the problem—it is not something that can be swept under the carpet. Too many club administrators and officials who admitted they were experiencing a membership problem also expressed a belief that "it will pass with time." The likelihood of time curing the malady is extremely improbable, and to count on it is to flirt with disaster. The problem must be met head on with imagination and perseverance.

In future issues, *GOLFDOM* will continue to offer suggestions for solutions. In addition, we ask our readers to write us about any successful membership programs instituted at their clubs, so that we may pass the ideas along to others through our editorial pages.

VINCENT J. PASTENA
EDITOR

PAY AS MUCH AS YOU PLAY

John Gerring has proven that an idea can sell. Holly Tree CC was only that in the spring of this year—it had no golf course, no swimming pool, no tennis courts and no members. Yet within one 48-hour period, Gerring and his partners convinced enough people of the soundness of the Holly Tree concept that \$1.2 million was invested in residential lots around the course, then under construction. Fifty-seven of the 76 lots put on the market were gobbled up by Greenville golfers.

What could cause this kind of enthusiasm when many country clubs today are losing members? The primary reason given by many of the prospective Holly Tree members was their faith in the kind of golf operation that John Gerring could provide. Potential members mentioned also the low cost. Another reason given was the assurance that Holly Tree would be invitational and the fact that George Cobb would design the course.

Gerring's high reputation with Greenville golfers was won through two separate tours, starting in 1963 as head professional of the exclusive Green Valley CC in Greenville. A professional since 1958, after graduating from Wake Forest College, Gerring went from Green Valley to Myers Park CC in Charlotte, to Deerwood CC in Jacksonville and to Norwood Hills CC in St. Louis, then back to Greenville.

During those years Gerring learned how first-class clubs operate and what ingredients make them successful. These lessons he will apply to Holly Tree.

One of those is that the club will be owned not by the members but by Holly Tree Plantation Corp. The four principal figures in the creation of Holly Tree are Gerring; Dr. James McNamara, a Greenville physician; Jack Shaw, a builder and architect Cobb.

The concept of Holly Tree CC attracted members through a unique pricing plan based on usage

by DAN FOSTER

SPORTS EDITOR
GREENVILLE NEWS, GREENVILLE, S.C.



"The ultra-rich member is not . . . the best revenue producing member."



". . . couples in their 30s and 40s . . . will use these facilities the most."



"I would like to try having committee men serve three years."

Gerring is a general partner in the corporation along with McNamara and Shaw. He also is general manager of Holly Tree "and golf professional," emphasizing the latter role, "because I want to stay in the golf end. Golf is my business."

TAKING OFF

The group did not conceive of the idea of Holly Tree until 1972, and only announced their plans on November 6, 1972.

Prices were mentioned in two mailings. The first was sent to people who had been personally recommended by someone known to at least one of the three partners. More names were produced by responses to the first mailing. In all the names of 1,800 heads of families were produced. All had professed an interest in joining Holly Tree or had been recommended by someone who had.

The two most fascinating numbers in those mailings were these: \$100 dues annually for membership and \$20 a month for the use of the golf facilities. Some prospective members looked no further. Those who did found more bargains: tennis fees, \$10 a month and swimming, \$15 a month for five months a year.

"Those who join the club for one activity may use the other facilities on a per use basis," explains Gerring. "An example would be \$1 per outing for swimming and \$2 a day for tennis. Golf would be \$3 on weekdays, \$5 on weekends. For guests, golf fees are \$5 and \$7, respectively."

"Another category of membership is the man who pays \$150 a year and has no other dues. He will be billed each time he uses a facility; those will be the only bills he receives other than his annual \$150."

That particular membership category should appeal especially to people who belong to other clubs, but who still want access to Holly

Tree even though they play most of their golf somewhere else.

One membership category, which might wind up being called "super membership," will cost \$1,000 a year. Gerring's label for it is "charter membership." For that category, the member and every member of his family will get all their range balls free. They will have use of all facilities. It will even cover club storage, locker rental and that member's share of any electric car usage and allow him one free guest each month."

Other membership categories include juniors (ages 21 to 32) and seniors (over 60), each at \$50 annually and \$15 a month for golf; and non-resident memberships at \$25 a year, with activities paid for on a per use basis.

As Gerring sat in his office this spring discussing his plans, the first formal invitation for membership had not yet been extended. Nonetheless, he had a file of projected figures, months in the preparation, which he describes as conservative.

"Based on those," Gerring says, "we expect three-fourths of our course budget to come in through renewals."

That will make each May 1 a very

large day for Holly Tree, particularly as those \$1,000 checks from charter members arrive in the mail.

It will be some time, Gerring discloses, before the club knows how many members it will permit. He is determined to keep the size of the membership comfortable so that the club will not be crowded to the point of jeopardizing the pleasure of those who use it.

QUALITY AT LOW COST

From its inception, Gerring wanted a "27 hole membership" and a 27 hole course. "I have made some studies," says Gerring, "and found out that you're so close to taking care of the same amount of play on 27 holes as you do with 36, that 27 seems to be what we should have. On 27 we can give good service, have a super golf course and a quality staff at inexpensive rates." The third nine holes are included in the original land plans, and they will find a place reserved for them when the times comes for them to be built, with very little addition to the maintenance staff, adds Gerring.

Gerring is certain that even at the club's low prices, his club can "be a class operation," and he is deter-

mined that it will.

"We'll have a guardhouse at the gate and there will be a guard in it," he emphasizes. "Members will be issued stickers for their cars. We will have starting times for Saturdays, Sundays and Wednesdays. We are going to install a telephone from the ninth and 18th tees to the clubhouse grill, so players can order their food while they are playing those holes.

"We will designate a special table for quick service for those making the turn. We'll serve breakfast on Saturdays, on Sundays and on holidays."

Gerring believes food should be served only during daylight hours, based on his belief that most country club dining rooms lose money. Holly Tree, therefore, will not serve at night. Besides, as he points out, "There are so many fine restaurants in Greenville, we don't want to ask our membership to subsidize a dining room. If the members want to rent the club for special occasions, they can arrange for their own caterers and pay only a nominal fee for its use."

REVENUE THROUGH USAGE

Gerring, whose previous responsi-

continued

The indefatigable Gerring discusses the nine and 18 double greens with one of his new assistant professionals.



bilities have included management, has given a lot of thought to which aspects of a club are assets to the member and which are liabilities, and he has fashioned his master plan for Holly Tree accordingly.

The availability of caddies will be one Holly Tree feature, which Gerring plans to encourage by prohibiting the use of pull carts until 3 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays and possibly Wednesdays when the youngsters are not in school. (Electric cars, of course, will be available.) Gerring plans to combine a golf training program with his caddie program, limiting the caddie roster to those who are sons of members or residents of Holly Tree Plantation even if they aren't members.

"I believe our members will like the caddie program. It will give their sons a chance to earn money, while they are learning about golf," he adds.

Gerring holds definite ideas about member policy making. At Holly Tree, "members will participate in the running of the club and in setting policies. That is unusual for a corporate club." Gerring has expanded that idea to avoid the confusion that often can result when committee members serve only one year. "I would like to try having committee men serve three years," he says.

Gerring's home is only 60 miles from Greenville in Union, and his exposure to the ways of South Carolina golf and golfers includes growing up as the son of golf professional Al Gerring. He has seen enough to make him cautious about idle dreaming, but also enough to help him think big.

The package for Holly Tree that he is designing will allow him to realize several of his ambitions. He has for years wanted to take what he describes as a "quality golf program" to the age and income group he visualizes as Holly Tree's membership. And he is convinced that his program can be achieved without sacrificing pro shop sales.

"The people in the income levels and age groups who will be attracted to Holly Tree are the backbone of the game today. They have fine automobiles, fine houses, good

careers and they want the best in golf equipment and conditions." These are the people, comprising a large market, who have sizeable recreation budgets and who could make up a good club membership, but who are not anxious to lay out \$3,000 or more at one time for a club membership. These people are investing in communities, not just in Holly Tree Plantation, but in other areas of the United States, in which the focal point is the golf course.

Another advantage of Gerring's approach to Holly Tree is his emphasis on a prodigious membership, which increases member enthusiasm in tournament play. The more participants for these events, the more, he believes, the members enjoy competing.

"The ultra-rich member is not, it may surprise you, the best revenue producing member for a golf club. He has so many other things he can afford to do—travel to Europe, extended vacations—that he does not spend as much time playing at his home course as the younger people with less money.

"Mr. Skinner's philosophy was revenue through usage, and our information and experience indicates that couples in their 30s and 40s are the ones who will use these facilities the most."

Equipment purchases in Gerring's shop can be made on the installment plan in cases where the price of the purchase would suggest it. But, he interjects, he has done that at other, more expensive clubs.

"We will let a man buy a \$300 set of clubs and sign 10 \$30 tickets. Each month, one of these \$30 tickets will be added to his bill. I might add that I have never yet lost a cent in one of those deals," he relates.

MERCHANDISING TO SERVE THE MEMBER

Turning to the subject of service to members through sales, Gerring will retain many merchandising ideas that have served him well at other courses.

"We will mail information regularly to our members. They like to hear from their pro shop," he says. One holdover from the past, which has been particularly effective, and which Gerring will ob-

viously retain, is his habit of mailing thank-you notes to those members whose purchases totaled more than \$15. The appreciation that this personal touch has created is summed up by one of Gerring's admirers: "I bought a car for \$7,000 and didn't get a thank-you note, so it was nice to get one for buying a few golf gloves."

Another successful practice of long-standing that will be incorporated into Gerring's pro shop merchandising plan is the giving of baker's dozen golf balls when a member buys a dozen balls.

Although Gerring dislikes the salesman image, he realizes the necessity of making his merchandise attractive. "I like to take the role of counselor rather than seller," he maintains. "I make suggestions when I'm asked, but I try to let my assistants actually finish the sales when it's not inconvenient."

Although he avoids the discount role, he keeps an eye out "for anything that stays in the shop over three months. Everything seems to depreciate after three months, and I've always believed that one's first loss will be the smallest, so we put things on sale that haven't moved well."

The prestige and integrity of the pro shop, Gerring has long believed, is essential to creating that first-class quality he believes he can achieve. That integrity is compromised, he maintains, when it carries non-golfing items, such as watches or clock radios, solely for profit. Gerring has made a practice of operating attractive and well-stocked pro shops that serve only the golfer and his needs.

The way Gerring expresses it, the soundest business practices are those that best serve the member and his game.

One of his most successful, involved promotions was his "Swing and Slim" exercise golf lesson classes for women. (This particular service was cited by *GOLFDOM* as one of the 10 best ideas submitted for its "Buy It At the Pro Shop" contest October/November issue, p. 34A.) He retained an instructor to conduct the class in light exercises. After a hour on the exercises, "we worked on their golf swings. We

continued on page 51

charged a \$10 registration fee, but with the condition that anyone attending all sessions would get a \$5 credit at the pro shop and we gave back the other money in prizes.

"It helped their golf games, their physical well being and it encouraged them to play more golf, because they were enjoying it more."

A good youth program also is included in Gerring's plans to serve his members. He is aware that multiple benefits can result from cultivating youthful interest in golf. Not only, he says, are the children where their parents want them to be, but, he adds, "A lot of adults start playing because their children do."

Teaching, also, ranks high on Gerring's list of services to his members, and because he has had rewarding results as a teacher, he intends to spend a lot of his time at Holly Tree teaching.

"I've never seen," he says with a smile, "a professional who was a good and enthusiastic teacher, lose his job."

"I still believe in the old time values—courtesy, appreciation, interest in your members and their families."

Members undoubtedly will applaud the plan to keep the course open seven days a week from March through October. Gerring simply does not think a course must be closed one day a week for maintenance. In the other months, November through February, he feels six days will be plenty to satisfy playing appetites.

Members will find more than golf at their club. The clubhouse will house a sauna bath and an executive suite. The latter will be equipped with a desk, telephone, note pads and other administrative accoutrements as an added convenience for those members who need to conduct one more office chore before they reach the tee.

There also will be a card room and a golf museum, stocked initially by a large number of items that people have given Gerring over the years, "including about 180 hickory-shafted clubs."

The site of Holly Tree is eight miles outside Greenville. There are good access roads, and Shaw's hous-

ing development was well under way before the idea of the club was even a consideration. Dr. McNamara already owned some of the land which will feel the spikes of play at Holly Tree. Part of it is on his former cattle farm. The group extended the corporation's land holdings to 935 acres before they made their initial announcement.

An Atlanta firm already has bought 35 acres to build condominiums, a feature the partners feel will add graciousness to their project.

The first 18 holes, for which ground was broken almost during the initial press conference, rolls over 175 acres, and the land reserved for the third nine does not have long to wait, it seems.

Gerring, who normally has 24 hour, seven day, 12 month enthusiasm, verbally caresses his new undertaking. He talks of bentgrass greens, the flexible tees the way some men talk about their horses.

As count-down to opening day began in earnest, his thoughts jumped so far ahead that he began checking off the people to whom he felt a great debt for helping bring Holly Tree to reality.

"Jack Shaw and Dr. McNamara, of course. And a man who has been tremendously helpful, George Cobb. He has done a super job of giving me the benefit of things he has learned in constructing over 300 other golf courses."

"Bill Ullman, of Southern Golf Course Builders has been a great help."

Those were immediate and belong to the present. His conversation then turned to his pro shop philosophy, which he has acquired working for Wade Ruffner at Biltmore Forrest CC, Biltmore, N.C., E.E. Johnson, Belle Meade CC, Nashville, Tenn., and Harold Sargent of Atlanta's East Lake CC.

Those were the head professionals under whom he served his official apprenticeship, after having served an unofficial apprenticeship under his father.

All of them have contributed to Gerring's picture of the type of golf operation he would like to run. Many professionals have had the same dream. What makes Gerring's different is that his is coming alive. □

Light Weight - One Hand

RAKE-Ezee SAND TRAP RAKE



Short handle, light weight. Golfer can rake trap while holding club in other hand.

HIGH DENSITY PLASTIC WEATHER-PROOFED



The bright, yellow-handled RAKE-Ezee Rake flags attention, reminds golfers to rake trap. Stands erect on blunt metal point.

Sturdy, attractive, won't rust, yet low in cost. Rake-Ezee stands erect on point, reminds golfer to rake trap. Fully guaranteed with tough plastic head. See your distributor, or write:

MFD. BY
NORTH CENTRAL
Plastics INCORPORATED
ELLENDALE, MINN.

For more information circle number 166 on card

MONTEX GOLF CAR

One of the best fleet golf cars on the market today is now available to golf car dealers and golf course owners throughout the country.

Starting from zero in 1971, in Florida, we almost matched our competition the first year and out-sold all the golf car companies in our territory by better than 2 to 1 in 1972 (list of sales available by written request).

Montex Golf Car production has increased enough so now you can have this golf car on your golf course. Join the winner. Call (305-395-4414) or write for further information.

Lew Montgomery, Inc.
145 N. W. 20th Street
Boca Raton, Florida 33432

For more information circle number 157 on card

BUILDING UP MEMBERSHIPS



Youth Programs:

INSURANCE FOR THE FUTURE



by STEPHEN W. BYERS

GOLFDOM looks at youth programs and young adult incentives at country clubs across the nation as a way to ensure clubs an involved future membership and as a way to perpetuate the success of the golf industry as a whole

A major concern in the golf industry in recent years has been how to perpetuate a continuing interest in golf and golf club life among juniors and young adults, the absence of which would amount to a death warrant for the future of the industry as we know it today.

The 1967 survey reported by the Wall Street Journal showing a 514,000 increase over 1960 in the number of youths under 18 who play regular golf, has not allayed the fears expressed by golf club officials, feeling the empty spaces on their membership rolls.

The celebrated chasm separating the values of youth of the 60s and 70s from those of their inevitably more conservative parents, involves myriad ramifications bearing on virtually every aspect of life for both generations.

It should not be the purpose of this article to proclaim the virtues of one generation over another. These points of contention have been, are being and will surely continue to be fully aired by spokesmen for each side.

Suffice to say there are fire-works in the chasm, and if clubs are to survive the reverberations they must find some sturdy bridges to gulf these ideological differences.

MOTIVATING YOUNG ADULTS

Just as necessary to the future of golf as juniors and more immediately convertible to full-club member status, are young adults between the ages of 21 and 35.

In the recent past, this age group served as a "hype" to outmoded club doctrine and injected pizzazz, urgency and vitality into sluggish club programs.

This continual resurgence of fresh blood or the lack of it usually determines the survival of any social institution.

The apparent lack of interest expressed by this age group in country club life has already begun to take its toll. For every club like the Scarsdale CC, N.Y., which boasts a surfeit of eager membership applicants, there are three clubs struggling for survival in the wake of higher property taxes, runaway inflation and the specter of a dangerously depleted membership

as the *coup de grace*.

Amazingly, GOLFDOM's poll on how clubs are bearing up under the above triple threat, showed that clubs, which were reticent about offering incentives to young adults in the form of dues and initiation fee breaks, were invariably the clubs in the worst financial shape, and judging from the age of their average member, future improvement appears a slim hope in the absence of policy reform.

Most of their spokesmen felt offering less than full paying memberships was a demeaning (to the club) "ploy," tantamount to door-to-door solicitation, or they were not appraised of or not convinced of the success of such "ploys" at many other clubs. Some of them seemed to be relying on the passage of time to cure their sagging membership problems.

The most successful clubs were those that offered special rates to members under 35 and presented the widest variety of membership activities.

The Lakewood CC, Denver, found it could add 50 new members a year if needed, with a "special membership plan," which provides that at 21 years of age, a young member is eligible for club membership for a fee of \$800. He is charged another \$800 at 26 and again at 31. On his 39th birthday he pays \$2,000, making the total of his four payments \$4,400, which is the amount of the bond required for normal full membership.

Normal monthly dues are \$50, but under the "special membership" this fee is graduated also, starting at \$15 when the member is 21 years old and so on until he reaches age 39.

Under this plan the benefits of full membership are afforded the "special member" at age 21 even though he pays less than a quarter of the bond and monthly fee as a full club member.

The Pinehurst CC, Denver, under the supervision of Laurice T. (Bud) Hall, offers a variety of memberships ranging from a \$16 a month social membership to the \$38.50 a month regular membership fee, with a refundable \$1,500 initiation fee.

"Pinehurst is not just a social club with athletic facilities," says Hall, "nor are we just in the food and beverage business. We are in the people business and enriching the lives of our members, employees and our community is our goal. People and pride are the important ingredients."

The extras offered at Pinehurst besides the regular golf and tennis tournaments, swimming meets, dinner-dances, bridge parties and fashion shows, which stimulate the interest of young adults, include a boating academy periodically coached by marine experts, a fishing academy, scuba diving lessons, charm classes for young girls, swimming and tennis classes taught by physical education instructors, teen dances, hairstyling and wig fashion shows, travelog adventure film series, art classes, culinary classes (running double sessions because of demand), water skiing classes, a mental cybernetics lecture series, a great decisions discussion paneled by four university of Minnesota professors, and club sponsored trips to the Orient and Africa.

SUCCESS: AT LEAST AN INDICATOR

The manifold avenues for channeling member interest at Pinehurst are stupifying to most club managers and impossible to completely duplicate unless the club enjoys the 60,000-square feet of roofed floor space, as does Pinehurst.

But many Pinehurst programs are possible for any club, and as Hall is a former president of the Club Managers Assn. of America many managers feel his would not be a bad lead to follow.

MOTIVATING JUNIORS

Unanimity of understanding between juniors and their seniors is a very tall order and certainly too much to hope for, but failing that, a few people in the golf industry have dedicated themselves to communicating to young people what is good in the game of golf.

One such man is Frank Emmet, director, Junior Golfers, of Wash-

continued on page 27

YOUTH from page 25

ington, D.C. Emmet realized 46 years ago that mere coexistence with youth in the hope that the passage of time will supply the impetus for golf enthusiasm was not enough. He knew that simply building a short link course for juniors separate from the adult course and saying "go play" was not the kind of motivation needed to satiate the golf club membership rolls of the future.

COMPETITION: A KEY TO ENTHUSIASM

Since 1927, Emmet has worked to encourage high school golf programs and the establishment of national and international golf tournaments. The Williams Cup Tournament that he worked to establish 10 years ago, in which eight teams of young American and Canadian golfers compete, is one of many successful Emmet efforts to motivate young people, through competition, to embrace golf as a life's profession and avocation.

Emmet stresses that, though much can be accomplished in high school and municipal golf programs, country clubs could provide a great service to the industry by developing and vigorously supporting junior golf programs, clinics and summer golf camps.

Emmet's efforts to promote the joys of golf and golf club life have not been singular. More recently, the names of Mike Hebron, coordinator for the Met PGA Junior Championships and head professional of the Smithtown Landing GC and Jimmy Jackson, head professional at New York's oldest municipal golf course, Van Cortlandt Park, have been added to the growing list of professionals "getting involved."

Before Hebron was approached three years ago to be junior chairman of the Met PGA, the Met was the only district that didn't sponsor a junior championship golf tournament. Now they do. Professionals donate prizes and take ads in a Junior Journal, which lists tournament winners and provides some written golf lessons. The Chemical Bank in New York City was persuaded to provide scholar-

ships to juniors suffering from financial hardships and the YMCA donates trophies along with other civic-minded municipal groups.

Hebron says, "Junior tournaments are my way of giving back to golf what it has given me. Junior golfers formerly came from the caddie ranks, but with the advent of golf cars and the movement of golf courses to the more remote suburbs, the caddie system can no longer be counted on to supply young golfers. There were formerly many municipal and private courses located in the city or on its near periphery that young caddies could get to on foot or with a short bus ride. This distance problem, combined with the advent of the golf car and the fact that suburban kids that live near courses don't need the money as badly as city kids, has cut into the caddie system. It's just a lot tougher to keep kids interested in golf without tournaments."

Hebron's golf clinics are held every Saturday at 1 p.m. for ages 6 to 14. The size of the class, he says, determines the number of instructors. He doesn't recommend private lessons for the young kids, even if they can afford them, because he feels golf is more fun for them when they are surrounded by their peers.

This is a tip that country clubs should note, because the fun in playing golf is surely the prime motivation for playing it. With older children or kids who have developed expertise at the game, private lessons are more applicable, because the motivation is more intrinsic and honing their game to a fine edge becomes a more personal experience.

Hebron gives the learning of etiquette and safety an equal priority with learning expertise in his lessons, stating that "consideration for rules on the part of juniors is the biggest factor in getting adults interested in playing golf with the young people."

He emphasizes the advantage of a club having a short nine-hole course on which the very young and beginners can make mistakes without curtailing the play and enjoyment of adults on the main course. But he does not feel that making a special place for youth to

(continued on page 56)

New,
important improvements
truly make the

Greensaire II

the world's
most
efficient
aerator.



The Greensaire II is completely redesigned. Sturdier, to withstand the constant punishment of aerating. Simplified, but mechanically improved construction lessens or eliminates many of the wear and part replacement characteristics of its predecessor. Performs better, longer, and with less maintenance.

The Greensaire II removes 36 clean cores from every square foot of turf. One pass relieves soil compaction, reduces thatch and an optional attachment windows cores for easy collection. Straight in and out penetrations. Holes are 3" deep and uniformly spaced on two inch centers. Different size tines for various ground conditions. You'll always get dependable, precision aerating.

- NEW!**
- Functional axle location
 - Control positioning
 - Coring improvements
 - Better lubrication
 - Easy tine changing
 - Simplified chassis

Write for detailed information.



The controls on the new Greensaire II have been relocated to offer the operator the easiest possible operating positions and maximum safety. Minimum of stretching or bending.

When its time to replace worn out tines it can be quickly and easily done without the need of special tools. Only an allen wrench is necessary to remove the tines from the clamp-style holders.



Ryan

TURF EQUIPMENT

Outboard Marine Corporation
1726 Cushman Drive
Lincoln, Nebraska 68501

73-R-3C

For more information circle number 158 on card
7/73 GOLFDOM MAGAZINE 27



FOURTH ANNUAL SOUTH CAROLINA TURFGRASS CONFERENCE, Clemson House, Clemson, S.C., July 10-11.

CMAA CONTINUING EXECUTIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM, Advanced Management Techniques, Denver, July 16-18.

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY TURFGRASS FIELD DAY, Columbus, Ohio, August 7.

CMAA CONTINUING EXECUTIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM, Personnel and Motivation Management, Haverford, Pa., August 13-15.

RHODE ISLAND TURFGRASS FIELD DAYS, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, R.I., August 22-23.

TURF AND LANDSCAPE DAY, Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, Wooster, Ohio, September 11.

MICHIGAN TURFGRASS FIELD DAY, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich., September 13.

TURFGRASS FIELD DAY, Ornamental Horticulture Research Center, Urbana, Ill., September 18.

PROFESSIONAL GROUNDS MANAGEMENT SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING, Wilson Lodge, Ogelbay Park, Wheeling, W.Va., September 19-22.

MIDWEST TURF FIELD DAY, Agronomy Farm and Campus, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind., September 24.

YOUTH from page 27

play golf should be regarded as the sole motivation for youth golf enthusiasm.

Hebron has had a large measure of success with his golf camps at Smithville Landing. "Kids meet here one day a week for eight weeks. We don't want to saturate their interest with too rigid a program. Our classes run from 12:30 to 5 p.m., and they have plenty of time to fish or do other things.

"Being natural hams, they particularly like to view the periodic films we take of their progress. We try to keep the fee for our summer camp to the minimum we can function with (\$50)."

Hebron regards his youth program efforts as an investment in the future of golf as well as a bid to motivate juniors to participate in a worthwhile sport. "They benefit and golf benefits. The player and the sport are the same," he says.

Hebron urges the establishment of more inexpensive clinics, the financing of which could come from private sponsors. "The main thing is recruiting interested people to get these sponsors and follow the programs through. People will often give money but not their time. We need both."

Jimmy Jackson is another man who has not been selfish with his time. This fall he is again scheduled to teach golf to underprivileged youngsters through a series of clinics at six junior high schools in New York's South Bronx, one of the most depressed areas in the city. (See article appearing on p. 34.)

The National Golf Foundation published this year a booklet, authored by Gary Wiren, educational director of the Professional Golfers' Assn., wherein he stated the NGF feeling about youth and the future of golf: "Junior golf means working with young people, and working with young people means an opportunity to shape the future of golf.

"Qualities such as courage, perseverance and self control," Wiren continues, "which are elemental parts of achieving playing success, are values which can be strengthened in the youngster's character under competitive golf situations."

Wiren also stresses that the teaching of golf skills makes juniors enjoy the game more.

GUIDELINES

It may prove beneficial to country clubs in evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of their junior programs to ask themselves the following questions:

- 1) Does our golf course have a regular junior day or morning that is scheduled each week during summer months?
- 2) Do our juniors have an organization with a statement of purpose?
- 3) Is there a schedule of events or seasonal program for the juniors that is posted or printed?
- 4) Are lessons or clinics offered on regularly junior players?
- 5) Is there a substantial weekly junior turnout at our club?
- 6) Is there an area, a room or a bulletin board set aside specifically for juniors?
- 7) Is there an active junior golf committee at our course, which is representative of the adults, the directors or owners, the golf course staff and the junior players?
- 8) Are our juniors required or given an opportunity to take tests in skills and on rules and etiquette to achieve certain privileges at the course?
- 9) Does our junior program produce players who participate on high school golf teams or who distinguish themselves in district or state competition?
- 10) Does our golf course hold an annual junior championship for its own players?

It should be remembered that the single most important component in a successful youth program is the dedication of the adult club coordinators.

It would be unfair not to report that there are those in the industry who have expressed doubt that junior membership drives and special rate stimulants for young adults will be productive as a device to fill the member rolls of the future.

The future of the golf industry and country club life is hard to predict, but one thing seems certain: Little can be hurt by taking a hard look at successful clubs and implementing what appears to work. □

COUNTRY CLUB LIFE FOR EVERYONE

by JERRY CLAUSSEN

Through a great variety of economical plans, Heather Ridge CC is putting the "good life" within the reach of more people—and profiting from it

Heather Ridge as a "new" image of country club has caused a stir in Denver. Says Heather Ridge golf professional Dick Hartman, "Lots of people are moving here or joining the club who never played golf before. Now they can and at a cost they never thought they could afford. It's the atmosphere they have always wanted."

A golf member, pausing between nines on a frequent midweek round with friends, enthuses, "I spend more time on the golf course than I do in the office and once in a while make more money here, too."

As of last May, the club had signed up about 2,000 members (1,400 non-resident). That included about 300 non-resident golf and 400 non-resident tennis members. The goal is 1,500 golf and 750 tennis.

Residents pay \$12 a year for club membership, plus golf and tennis fees, when they use those facilities. Heather Ridge has four non-resident membership categories. As the living units fill up, non-residents will be dropped, and early joiners will have the longest option.

The choices for non-residents are: golf-tennis-social, \$300 for one adult or a couple, plus \$50 per child under 21 years; golf-social only, \$200 plus \$50 per child; tennis-social, same as golf; social only \$25 plus \$30 annual dues, no extra for children. Annual fees do not include use fees for tennis and golf. Those charges are the same for everyone.

A "FUN COURSE"

The golf course itself is one of the strongest of Heather Ridge's many drawing cards and is different than anything else in Denver. All 27 holes were available for play this year and golfers loved it.

The main 18, playing out of the clubhouse, is a short hazard filled par 70. Length is just 5,879 yards for men from the middle tees and is 5,585 yards for women.

It covers only 93 acres, while winding through apartment buildings and townhouses, over and around five lakes and 50 traps. It starts with a par-three of 190 yards, finishes with a narrow 318-yard par four, has four other par fours under 320 yards and two par fives. Greens are large and difficult to read.

Denver Post golf writer Ralph Moore, who briefly held the back nine course record of 37 on opening day, July 4, 1972, reported the course "treats the player's ego much like the attention a pampered lap dog receives."

His counterpart at the Rocky Mountain News, Dave Nelson, views it as "a fun course which will present a distinct challenge without the demoralizing dimension of length."

Both the front nine of the 18 and the adjoining Heather Gardens executive nine (par 32, 2,220 yards), officially opened Memorial Day this year. The short nine, operating from a separate clubhouse, covers 42 acres of the rolling, sandy terrain overlooking Denver. It is, incidentally, Denver's first executive length course.

VARIED GOLF PROGRAM

The golf program under Hartman offers something for everyone.

For tournament play and a computerized handicap, men may join the Men's Golf Assn. for \$20; women pay \$16 for their association.

Men are grouped into three handicap classes (0 to 10, 11 to 17 and 18 and over). Tournaments go on every Saturday and Sunday. In one recent month, events included three point pars, an 18-hole medal gross and net and a best 18 of 36 net over one three-day weekend. The women are divided between nine-hole and 18-hole players, four handicap groups and compete Tuesdays and Fridays.

Hartman also had extensive group lessons scheduled this year for beginners. Men's and women's



classes, up to 10 at a time, worked on fundamentals in series of five one hour sessions. The fee was \$15 apiece.

The always smiling professional takes a great interest in juniors, too. He conducted two junior lesson series to open the season. One offered six one hour lessons plus six tournaments on Saturday afternoons for \$15. The other consisted of eight half-hour lessons, no tournaments, for \$10. Age groups were 10 to 12, 13 to 15 and 16 to 17.

His individual lessons are priced \$6 per half-hour for members, \$7 for non-members. The practice tee is large and located directly in front of the pro shop next to the number 10 tee.

All golfers, resident, non-resident members or guests, pay green fees of \$1.75 for nine holes on weekdays, \$2.50 weekends and holidays, \$3.50 for 18 holes on weekdays, and \$5 on weekends or holidays.

A member may bring an unlimited number of guests; but each guest may be invited only twice a month. Young people may play any time, the only restriction is that those under 13 years must be accompanied by an adult. Otherwise, there are no time blocks reserved just for men or just for women, except tournaments. Reservations are encouraged by phone before 4 p.m. the day before.

Hartman holds a standard PGA-sanctioned contract with Environmental Developers, Inc., owners of Heather Ridge. He runs the pro shop and club storage, which has room for only 125 bags, rent free. He gets a percentage of the fees from the 45-car electric fleet, all driving range and lessons income and profit from sales in the pro shop.

ACTIVITIES NON-STOP

The clubhouse at Heather Ridge is a modern, two story brick-and-glass structure of 25,000 square feet. The dining room is upstairs and has a capacity of about 225, lounge seating 70, kitchen and offices.



Pro Dick Hartman, above, practices in front of the pro shop. The entrance, below, of this "new image" of country club.

Downstairs are the swimming pool, saunas, locker rooms and golf shop.

Activities are coordinated by General Manager James Gatewood; the new Heather Gardens clubhouse has its own general manager, Wayne Bishop. They both report to EPI Vice President Norman Sheldon.

Food and beverage operations are leased out to a concessionaire. Club manager is Jack Fishburn, formerly at Lakewood (Colo.) CC. He and Chev Joseph Thurston came from Lakewood to Heather Ridge when the clubhouse opened in November, 1971.

Food service for members and their guests is available from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5:30 to 10 p.m., everyday except Monday. Volume runs about 2,000 covers a week, Fishburn reports. Reservations are requested. There is no monthly minimum use charge.

Sandwiches and à la carte items are available in the afternoon. The menu offers variety—30 selections for lunch alone. Wednesday is buffet night, with themes such as Polynesian Nite and Fiesta Nite. Sunday brunch is served 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. There is live music and dancing in the dining room on Friday and Saturday nights, and nightly entertainment in the lounge.

The club does not solicit outside party business. Members may arrange for private events Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights or weekend mornings or afternoons. Minimum size of such an event is set at 100 persons.

All tabs must be paid in cash, by personal check or through one of three specified credit cards. No signing for later billing is allowed.

Along with golf, tennis is a major attraction to a growing membership. Near the clubhouse is a complex of 10 lighted outdoor courts surrounding a large

continued on page 55



COUNTRY CLUB from page 29

hangar-like pavilion housing five indoor courts. The indoor courts played 90 per cent capacity last winter.

The fee schedule is different for winter and summer, prime or non-prime time and indoors or outdoors. Outdoors, court charges are \$2 an hour weekdays after 6 p.m. and all day weekends and holidays, or \$19 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays. Indoors in winter, rates are \$6 an hour weekdays until 6 p.m., \$8 an hour at night and on weekends. Half rates apply indoors for the five summer months.

A staff of seven professionals, three year-around, is headed by Dr. Irwin Hoffman. The pavilion houses a well-stocked, although small, shop, and the new wing of locker rooms added last spring.

The swimming program also is extensive. Classes include beginning swimming for children, advanced classes, adult "learn to

swim," mother tot, water survival, life saving, diving and swimming teams. Hours are 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. in summer, indoors year-around. Aquatic Director Ruthie Seylmaker heads a staff of 12 in winter, 25 in summer. Open swimming is free to members, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. indoors, 12:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. outdoors. Guests pay \$1 weekdays, \$2 weekends.

A variety of other kinds of recreation and classes is headed up by Activity Director Cathy Hepler. Members are kept informed about these events by regular newsletters and calendar reminders.

For adults, there are bridge classes and competition, painting, exercising, yoga, arts and crafts, theater and concert parties, lectures, fashion shows, movies and ski trips.

A child day care center for ages one and up is available Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The summer youth program in-

cludes horseback riding, sailing, roller skating, bowling, ballet, macramé, bachelor survival courses, baton and cheerleading classes, charm and modeling courses.

They all add up to the reason Heather Ridge is such an attractive way of life, why people of all ages move to and/or join such a club. Golfers and non-golfers alike can appreciate the good life as described in this Heather Ridge brochure:

"We've created a place for you here that's unlike any other country club in Colorado. Heather Ridge has been built on the basic premise that trees are prettier than cars; that grass is nicer than pavement; that a good time is always twice as good when it happens in beautiful surroundings. . . . Add the sheer physical exhilaration of a hard-won game of golf or tennis or a sun soaked afternoon of relaxation . . . and you'll know what makes Heather Ridge a very extraordinary place indeed." □



Tennis at Heather Ridge is inexpensive and popular, and players are well served by this attractive shop.

THE HISTORY AND FUTURE OF HEATHER RIDGE

The original plan called for Heather Ridge's 320 acres to be used for rental apartments. Market studies made in the late 1960s showed that more apartments would be needed in Denver, so the community was planned to accommodate 4,000 units in 135 buildings.

In the last two years the market changed. After 741 apartments were completed—about 90 per cent rented—the original plans were revised to include townhouse development. Future construction, phased over the next five years, will be geared solely to townhouses.

Of the first section of 176 townhouses, 90 per cent were sold before

completion. Advertising was minimal. More effective was word of mouth promotion of the new concept with lots of amenities at low prices.

Prices for townhouses range from \$23,000 to \$29,000 for smaller units in one section, to \$33,000 to \$45,000 for large units in another. Units facing the golf course fairways cost \$4,500 more than those off the course. Monthly apartment rentals go from \$186 for a buffet unit to \$575 for a three bedroom unit.

One unique feature of the community plan is the grouping of "neighborhoods" for residents with similar interests. Each will have its own swimming pool and barbeque/picnic area. Some will even have children's play areas.

By 1978 Heather Ridge will house about 15,000 people, predicts Howard Farkas, president of Environmental Developers, Inc., the owner. Affiliated with Transunion Corp. of Chicago, EDI is building seven other new communities, including two in Chicago and one in Phoenix.

More than \$100 million will be spent at Heather Ridge by the end of the decade. Future amenities will include a shopette, movie theater and ice skating rink. More than \$2 million was spent even before the first apartment was occupied. The designed team was made up of three engineers, land planner, architect and golf course architect Richard Phelps of Denver.