

PGA Considering Rating of Pro Instruction Ability



Bob MacDonald, noted golf instructor, with his instruction device which is being adopted for school practice.

RATING PROS on the basis of their qualifications as instructors, an idea that some of the veteran PGA officials have discussed informally for several years, recently was given impetus by a newspaper syndicate article written by Bob Jones.

Jones, in commenting on a letter written him by Myles Coen of New York, relative to the public's vague idea of the meaning of the term "golf professional," says:

"Obviously, the competent authority of certification (of pros) should be the PGA and the men at the head of this body have, for some time, been mindful of this problem. * * * The appearance of chaos (in golf instruction) has been fostered to a large extent by the utterances of the very incompetents which a procedure of this kind would discredit."

Bob further says that before any good can be done in this matter by the PGA it must have the complete confidence of the golfing public so the PGA certificate of instruction ability will be accepted as substantial.

Just how this ambition of rating instructors can be put into practical working is perplexing PGA officials. George Jacobus, president of the organization, is consulting other PGA members who are among the country's foremost instructors, in an effort to work out a plan. The Jacobus idea at present calls for a preliminary session at which leading pro instructors, prominent amateurs, doctors and sports writers will be consulted.

It is evident that golf clubs again are beginning to appreciate the value of authoritative pro instruction. There still is some difference of opinion about the possibility of business men's instruction volume ever amounting to much. Men don't have the time or the inclination. They prefer to keep their handicaps at the point where they can take in some nice bets. The women's and children's instruction business, however, is still not worked anyway near to the warranted extent by the pros. It is in these fields that the pros can extend their tutoring business and by so doing tremendously increase the interest and activity at their clubs. Therefore, the pro attempt to get instruction on a better basis is an affair that should get whole-hearted cooperation from club officials.

R. Arthur Wood, president of the Western Golf association, in proudly pointing to that organization's slight loss of money from its Junior championship, said he considered the Western Junior championship the association's greatest contribution to the game and to the country. There was a field of about 300 at the 1932 Western Junior.

This year, Albert R. Gates, business administrator of the PGA, is sending to all members a letter asking the pros to pay special attention to the development of players for the Women's Western Junior Open championship. Mrs. R. D. Raymond,

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president of the Women's Western Golf association, and her associates expect to greatly increase the field at the girls' event this year.

Charles Hall, honorary president of the PGA, and USGA officials have been in correspondence regarding the establishment of national boys' and girls' championships along event lines that have been popular in England for many years.

With all this build-up in prospect among the youngsters, and the women coming into the game by the tens of thousands each year, it is quite plain that definite identification of competent pro instruction would make these newcomers to golf more receptive to the idea of taking lessons.

FEE COURSE TRUCE

Detroit Owners, Facing Ruin From Price War, Agree on Schedule

Leland Hotel, Detroit, Mich., owners and operators of about half the daily-fee courses in the Detroit district and sectral owners of courses in other parts of the state took action to stabilize fee-course rates for the coming season. Detroit action followed the plan of the Chicago fee-course owner who, after four and a half months of debate and deliberation, adopted the following minimum price scale:

 WEEK DAYS—

 18 holes
 \$.75

 All day
 1.00

 Replay
 .50

 After 4 P. M
 .50

 SATURDAYS—

 18 holes A. M
 \$1.00

 18 holes P. M
 1.25

 After 4 P. M
 .75

 SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS—

 18 holes A. M. and all day
 \$1.50

 After 1 P. M
 1.00

 After 4 P. M
 .75

The above rates do not apply to the better class courses in the Chicago district. These courses will maintain a premium of 25 cents over most of the rates listed above. Ratings of courses as originally intended in the Chicago district were adopted at Detroit with the addition of a third classification, nine-hole courses of which there are plenty in Detroit and very few in the Chicago district.

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The Chicago arrangement at the start involved classification of all courses into A and B classes, dependent on location, design, condition and clubhouse facilities. It also called for posting of a \$500 bond which was to be forfeited by any course not adhering to the agreement. After much arguing based on the intention of some courses that obviously were class A to go into a lower classification because of a possible competitive edge in prices, Chicago laid aside a hard-and-fast classification, and agreed to some elasticity in the classifications based on local competitive conditions. Detroit, however, seemed committed to a definite classification.

What impressed on the Chicago feecourse owners that their situation would become one of increasing hopelessness was the inability to get the \$500 bond. Plants having investments of around \$150,000 couldn't put up the bond. Continuance of the past throat-slitting competition on the price basis meant that many of the courses actually were paying people to play. In the Chicago district only 3 courses out of approximately 40 admitted to getting slightly better than an even break financially on 1932 opera-



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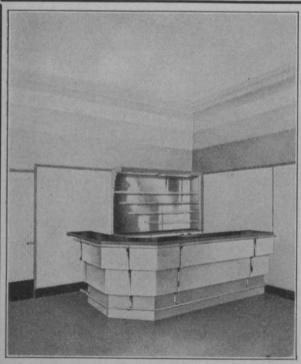
THE FULNAME COMPANY Le Blond Bldg., Sta. O. Cincinnati, O. tion. At the Detroit meeting only 2 courses were able to report that they did better than break even in 1932, and even then depreciation was not figured in.

At both of these cities the major obstacle to be overcome was a bitter competitive attitude based on mutual suspicion and distrust after the agonies of 1932 when the shopping players at fee-courses would trade down the owners by telling that the players had been offered lower rates at other courses. This ribbing operation brought about the stampede that plunged the fee-course business in these two major districts deeply into the red.

GOLFDOM's impartial position and extensive contacts in the daily-fee course business qualified it as an arbiter and organizer in both the Chicago and Detroit efforts to work out salvation for the courses in these districts. In Detroit there was not the intensity of personal competition that existed in Chicago, and on this account the serious situation in Detroit may be worked out much quicker than in Chicago. Two factors contributed to the Chicago owners getting together; one being the owners of the mortgages or

other securities on fee plants in the Chicago district reading of the efforts to stabilize prices and insisting that the operators who were "on the cuff" exercise all power to facilitate adoption of a general agreement. The other factor brought the smaller courses who were inclined to get tough and say they could stand the punishment of continued warfare into line. This element was the threat of foreclosure of some big plants at about a dime on the dollar. With this load of overhead lightened, the new operators of the foreclosed plants could give any and all a brutal beating.

So, although some of the gentlemen were at first reluctant to agree to a "United we stand, divided we fall" platform, they eventually saw the light as their only hope for 1933 operation. After considerable heated arguing and some pouting in the Chicago district, some genius had the inspiration that the boys could rally together on the basis of a gentlemen's agreement with each business man conducting his operation as a business gentleman instead of a cutthroat competitor. The boys had tried



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everything else, so decided to give this policy of being gentlemen a trial.

Just what will happen when some of the outlaws want to revert to the jungle law that got them into the jam they are in cannot be definitely forecast. However, we will hazard a guess. When some operator runs out on his agreement. after making use of the arbitration machinery set up in the Chicago district, it is not improbable that courses in his neighborhood will see that free-play tickets are distributed to the outlaw course's players, by being handed out to traffic coming to the course taking the run-out. Distribution of this free-play load among all other courses in the competitive neighborhood will ease the strain on each one of them and after a few days or weeks of this kind of a deal, the erring brother ought to see the light. However, definite agreement on such a corrective policy never would be made for obvious reasons.

One thing that most of the fee-course owners agreed on was that price reductions last year had no effect in increasing. or holding business. The golf player plays because he enjoys the sport and he-or she-is not going to hurry out to feecourses simply because the price is low-The minimum rates set in both ered. the Chicago and Detroit schedules provide entertainment that competes with the movies on a price per hour basis. Further confirmation of the opinion that ruinously low daily-fee course rates would not attract more play was provided in the Detroit municipal course report for 1932 which showed that play was off about 35%. approximately the same amount the dailyfee business slumped in that district under the 1931 volume. The public course prices were the same but the fee-courses slashed prices unmercifully in trying to cut into each other for play during 1932.

WILSON'S "GATEWAY TO GOLF" ISSUED

Chicago, Ill.—The 1933 catalog of Wilson-Western Sporting Goods Co. golf equipment is called "The Gateway to Golf." It is a handsome, unusual book both in illustrations and the breezy line of copy that describes the clubs and balls. There is a special section devoted to women's equipment. Rules of golf and descriptive matter on some of the Wilson-Western tennis equipment also are given in the book.

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MILORGANITE GOOD TURF

GOLF'S 1932 BILL

\$244,600,000 Spent on Game Despite Curtailment; Figures Detailed

EST THERE be some moaning that the depression folded up the golf business, let's just see how the game fared on a financial basis during 1932.

GOLFDOM did not make its annual survey at the end of the 1932 for the very adequate reason that these surveys set us back more than \$3,000. There wasn't three grand for us to shoot in one shot of statistical work last year. But from the financial reports of about 900 private clubs, several hundred letters from professionals, numerous letters and talks with fee-course owners and many reports of municipal course operations, we have been able to make a fairly reliable guess at the score of 1932.

Play was off approximately 25% from 1931, making about 70 million rounds as the figure for 1932. At the metropolitan district municipal and fee-courses the loss was heaviest, going as high as 40% in some cases.

Women's play again increased last year. About a 20% rate of increase was registered, averaging all classes of courses, although the private club women's play showed the greatest increase.

You can figure all you please, but you won't be able to get higher than 2,225,000 golfers, even including the infrequent players, during boom years. Last year with the private clubs enforcing the forfeit of membership for delinquencies in payment more than ever before, the slump in private club membership was only about 15%, bringing the number of private club men and women players down to a little over the 900,000 mark. Women players at private and fee courses (including municipal) now are nearly 40% of all players.

GOLFDOM's records, which are the most accurate and complete in existence, show that only 47 of the 5,691 golf clubs passed out during 1932. This is a much lower loss than can be boasted by any other business that comes to mind. Practically all of these dead courses were in smaller towns or at resorts.

One point that is plain from the 1932 financial reports of golf clubs is that more 18-hole private clubs made money than ever before. They slashed operating expenses unmercifully, but still got by in pretty good condition. This year, if general business conditions improve, many of the deferred and necessary purchases will have to be made for course and clubhouse maintenance and operation, or the clubs will suffer so that ultimate recovery will be long away and expensive. The daily-fee courses were the plants that took it on the chin in 1932. Due to price wars not 10% of the 700 fee courses in the country did better than break even.

Summing up the expenses of golf in

 Initiation and transfer fees
 \$2,100,000

 Dues
 60,000,000

 Guest green-fees (private club)
 6,000,000

 Fee and municipal course fees
 19,000,000

 Clubhouse income
 85,000,000

 Playing equipment purchases
 12,500,000

 Caddie hire
 20,000,000

 Golf apparel
 40,000,000

That makes a total of \$244,600,000 spent for golf directly, in a poverty-stricken year for the game. These figures are extremely conservative.

You may note, with interest, what a comparatively small part of the total is spent for the actual playing of the game. The rest of it is put into circulation as a protest against hoarding and as health and merriment insurance.

H AVING a waiting list these days is something that makes a club worth studying. The Binghamton (N. Y.) C. C. filled up its quota of 200 senior members and couldn't take in the extras that applied under this plan:

Between April, 1932 (when the plan was put into effect) and July 1, 1932 each member who secured a new member agreeing to pay dues of \$10 a month, including tax, for 12 consecutive months, had his own dues reduced from \$17.50 to \$10 a month, which reduced the dues of each old member who got a newcomer, approximately \$85 a year.

Treating the old member as a unit paying approximately \$105 a year, including tax, the club gained about \$35 on each of its old members who brought a new member into the fold.

Classifications for junior members up to \$55 (according to age) and unmarried women or women whose husbands did not play, at \$50 a year, also added to the club income.

In the past two years the Binghamton club has reduced its current and funded debt about \$25,000.



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UNIFORM ACCOUNTS

Club Managers' Convention Sees New System for Uniform Books

B. E. O'GRADY, manager of the Hamilton club, Chicago, was elected president of the Club Managers' Association of America at the concluding session of that organization's seventh annual convention on March 2. Frank Murray, Ravisloe C. C., was re-elected secy.-treas. Golf club managers elected directors are: Ralph Sykora, Longue Vue club; Wm. Norcross, Garden City C. C.; G. H. Davies, Beaconfield G. C.

Definite feature of the meeting, so far as country clubs are concerned, was presentation of the association's system of classification of accounts for country clubs. This suggested system is set forth in a booklet that may be obtained from the association secretary, Frank H. Murray, Ravisloe C. C., Homewood, Ill., for \$1. Managers have been handicapped so long by inability to compare operating expenses accurately that they hope for the wide adoption of the proposed system.

C. F. Strodel of Balaban and Katz, picture theater operators, spoke on training of personnel, and Prof. Garfield Cox of the University of Chicago addressed the managers on "The Economic Outlook" at the last day's session. Strodel told the managers of the improvement effected in relations with the public when Balaban and Katz discarded the stiff and standardized method of having their employes serve. He advocated eliminating the word "fire" from the managers' vocabulary, commenting that the fear of being "here today and gone tomorrow" seriously curtails employes' efficiency.

He reminded the managers that the reason people go to clubs is the same reason for attending the movies, to escape the irritations of modern life. Strodel said that the employing problem is just as serious as it ever was because the present supply of labor did not mean that there was any large increase in superior workers available in most lines.

Prof. Fox had some cheering words to say about the national shakeup and expressed the opinion that a uniform banking system would be a prominent factor in national recovery.