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*The HAIG* ULTRA in GOLF EQUIPMENT

WALTER HAGEN Grand Rapids 2, Michigan, Division of Wilson Sporting Goods Co.

# Educational Tasks for Pros

By **FRANK DONOVAN**

Professional, Clover Hills Golf Course  
West Des Moines, Ia.

This business of hiring and training an assistant has become quite a problem. The greatest stumbling block is the rule regarding the amateur status of boys who have reached their 18th birthday. In order to retain their amateur standing they have to sever all connections with a golf shop.

The days when the boy graduated from the caddy ranks to caddy master, etc., up the line are gone, along with the days of haphazard pro shop operation. The average boy today wants more than a high school education, and indeed higher education is just as valuable to the boy going into the golf business as one going into any other business. Yet he is deprived of very essential golf shop experience that he cannot get anywhere else while he is furthering his education by not being able to work in a shop during vacations etc. If he is a better than average golfer, he wants to play golf in college and he should—he needs that experience too—but even more so he needs to learn how to fit golf clubs, repair clubs, sell merchandise and learn the fundamentals of teaching the game.

The results are that a good many young men who might make fine professionals turn to other lines of work when they get out of college because they are not willing and can't afford to spend a couple or three more years getting this training after they get out of college. If they do have nothing to offer the club except have nothing to offer the college except their golf game and the net result is both the pro and the club who hired him are dissatisfied.

I think this rule should be amended so that the boy can retain his amateur standing while he is in school and still work in a golf shop. Any other student looks for summer work in his field and in some cases I think is even given school credit for some of this work.

I think golf would benefit greatly by having better trained, better qualified golf professionals, if this rule were amended. Golf is no longer small business and our future golf pros are going to need to be better trained to successfully handle the increased volume of business and keep the golf business in the golf shops.

A boy can play football all through school and not be regarded as a pro yet he is being expertly trained by a highly paid professional and often receives more

compensation than the boy working in a golf shop.

The problem of educating the golfing public to appreciate the value of expert "pro service" lies squarely with the golf professional, I believe. The average pro should spend more time on golf promotion. If it is for the good of golf it will eventually be good for the golf professional. A great many pros overlook a bet by not spending more time on junior golf, giving free lessons to high school teams, taking an interest in junior tournaments, and encouraging the kids to ask advice. Don't always expect them to pay you for a lesson when five minutes of your time will straighten out their drives. Most parents appreciate any interest shown in their children and it is only a few short years until the kids themselves are your customers.

At a semi-public course such as mine, we have lots of beginners as well as people who think the pro shop is the place where you pay the green fee. We are more apt to find a customer coming out with the little "bargain number" in golf clubs, than the average pro at a private club, something he has picked out of a catalog. He has a friend who has a friend, etc. who can buy some off-brand clubs at what he thinks is 20% off or wholesale. Whenever these clubs show up at my shop, and I am always on the look-out for them, I take the time to look them over, put them on the swing-weight scale and very pleasantly and casually tell him why the clubs he bought are not right for him. I often check his grip and give him a pointer or two to let him know I am interested in his game.

I have already lost that sale it is true, but I have also planted seeds of dissatisfaction in his mind. He can't help but feel his clubs are to blame for his poor golf game. Chances are while I am making my little speech there are other people in the shop and I am selling them the idea at the same time. I don't think the pro can talk too much about this. No one else is going to educate the people to pro shop buying, that's for sure. "Word of mouth" is still the best advertising, in my opinion.

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See page 117

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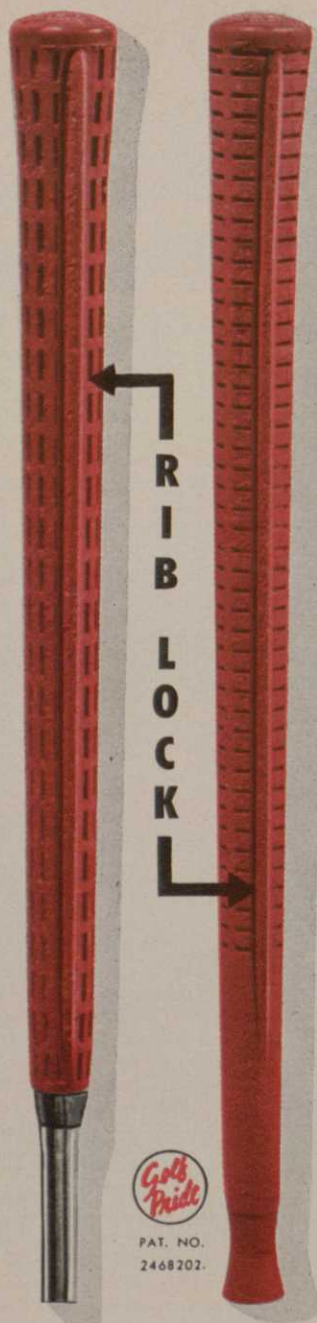
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# Supts. Must Teach Players

By **E. A. SHIELDS**  
Supt., Druid Hills Golf Club  
Atlanta, Ga.

Golf course maintenance is such a complex and varied subject and any one of the several phases of such operation is, in my opinion, as important as the other in that they are interdependent one on the other in order to have the most efficient operation, which we all individually strive for.

In my judgment, one of the most important problems facing golf clubs today is that the general golfing public is not familiar enough with what is actually entailed in the maintenance of a good golf course, and that some sort of educational program with this end in view should be inaugurated. That is, a program wherein the member would become more acutely conscious of a course operation.

A superintendent who spends all of his time on a course and observes various groups knows a lot more about what is going on than an individual who observes only his group. By the same token, a good superintendent can not tell a member what he can or can not do, but merely suggest what the club rules are.

It does very little good, apparently, to put up the "Please Replace Divots", "Repair Foot Marks in Sand Traps", "Please Use Waste Paper Receptacles", "Please put empty bottles in case" and "Repair Ball Marks on Greens" signs. Golf courses are full of such signs, many of which have become an offensive eyesore to their golfers. The idea is good, but the method is not sufficient. We need another approach. What is it?

I believe that were the club membership "sold" on the idea that it is their golf course and that it is to their individual advantage to treat it as such, they would eventually come to respect their rights and the rights of others, and enjoy playing their golf course more.

Labor continues to become a more serious problem. Labor rates in my district are not high enough to compete with industry — especially government projects and labor unions. In the past 6½ years hourly rates of my men have jumped 40%, which is still under the above mentioned employers, and still is not enough to get and keep the best help. My course is one of the oldest in this city, therefore, the city has completely surrounded us. Some of the courses in the outlying districts are not having the same troubles that I have as city laborers for the most

part are not as good as the men who were reared in the country for golf course labor.

Much has been said and written about Green chairmen. I believe a superintendent who has a relatively permanent, understanding chairman with whom he can work, has a most invaluable asset. Clubs which have the ruling that a chairman has to be a member of the Board of Directors are possibly overlooking many well qualified members, and spending much needless time and money. It is very true that the Green-chairman has a thankless job, yet every club will have some one in its membership who would be highly honored to serve and help do a good job.

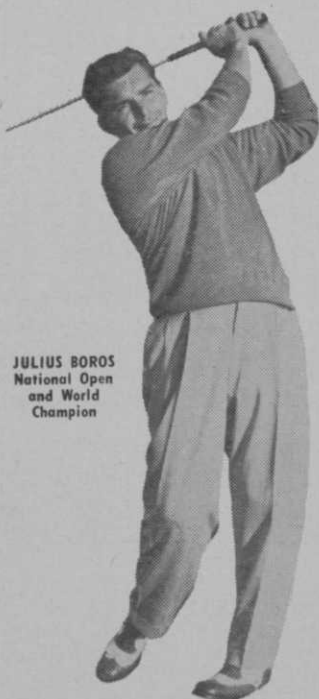
## RECOGNITION FOR SUPTS.



Supt. William H. Stupple, Exmoor CC (Chicago dist.) (R) receives "Citation of Merit" Award in recognition of his outstanding achievement in the care and maintenance of the Exmoor course in preparation for tournament play of the 50th Western Amateur Championship. Stupple is the eighth to receive the award presented by the GCSA in 1952. Agar Brown, secy. of the GCSA, who made the presentation reports the awards will continue to be made in the coming years to further the recognition of the golf course supt. and the part he plays in providing properly maintained courses for today's golfers. Others receiving the award are: Herman R. Borchardt, Northwood Club, Dallas; Ernest Felton, Miami (Fla.) CC; Albert Linkogel, Westwood CC, St. Louis; Herman Senneseth, Univ. of Minn. GC, Minneapolis; Robert Finlay, Seattle (Wash.) GC; Harry Meusel, Yale GC, New Haven, Conn.; and Alvaro Alanso, Monterey Peninsula CC, Pebble Beach, Calif.



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## Here's How A Young Pro Progresses in Business

By **WALTER J. BIBER**

Professional, Kalamazoo (Mich.) Country Club

Walter E. Biber, professional at Kalamazoo (Mich.) CC is one of those able and eager young pros about whom the club officials and members brag.

You can see from the accompanying illustrations of his shop, one of which shows Biber with a club, how he sets up for business so his members will be conveniently, completely and cheerfully given expert service in attractive surroundings.

Other young professionals moving up—and a lot of the older fellows too—will get something out of what Walter has to say about his job.

Here it is:

"A successful professional today has a job he must handle in a big business way. He must be an effective teacher, a good player, organizer, merchant, good-will ambassador, reception committee and have all the answers to golf. Is there any wonder that the PGA insists that an applicant must have at least five years' experience before he can become qualified as a home club pro member of the association?"

"I don't pretend to have all the an-

swers to this exacting and varied job, but there are quite a few things I've learned from those master pros for whom I've worked, from others among my fellow pros, from experience and all the reading and study I do to better equip myself to serve our club members.

"My season really begins in February when I start planning my season's program, such as changes in my pro shop, the caddie program, etc. I rearrange, paint and build new features of the pro shop early in the year so I won't be overly rushed on this work when I should be devoting all my time to my members.

"April 1, I always send my members a letter telling them of the opening of my shop and that I am looking forward to seeing them and serving them—as I most certainly am. I tell them what's new in my pro shop stock.

"Our club has a monthly bulletin in which I have a column. In it I continuously tell about new merchandise in the shop as that is information the member of a first class club expects from his pro.

"I also advertise by having folders sup-



plied by manufacturers sent out with the club's monthly statements and I've found this an excellent form of advertising.

"At the end of the season I send the members a letter thanking them for everything and telling them that their clubs have been re-conditioned and are ready to be picked up. Also in this letter I suggest golf gifts for Christmas and tell them that I'll make deliveries for them.

#### **Pro-Member Relationship**

"To me pro-member relationship is the most important part of a pro's job. If a pro is well-liked and regards his members as the finest bunch of men and women he's ever seen, then the rest of the job will run smoothly. When you really think the members are great you're always on the ball and interested in every one of the members getting the best of everything, and not concentrating on a select few. The members can sense that you are on the level and eager to help them and they'll go out of their way to buy everything they can from you.

"I treat every member with a great deal of respect and when they come into the shop I greet them in a way that shows I'm glad to see them. This is easy, because I really am glad.

"I make sure that if they desire their clubs, a caddie or merchandise they are promptly served. My assistants are schooled to give our members fast, fine service and to anticipate members' wants whenever possible.

"Naturally, the pro shop must be clean

at all times. Clubs, showcases, tables, counters, floors, walls and merchandise must be kept cleaned continuously, not just daily or weekly.

"A stock of top representative lines of balls and clubs must be stocked, and selected after carefully considering what the members need and want.

#### **Apparel Stocks Sell**

"If a member wants a certain line I don't carry I do not try to change his mind but make sure that he or she gets what fits. I am constantly reminding my members that through a pro shop they get exclusive lines of the finest clubs and balls that possibly can be made, and that



this equipment is especially fitted to their individual games.

"In the pro shop there should be stocked everything a golfer wears on the course. You can't sell it if you don't have it; few members like to order merchandise sight unseen, and wait for delivery.

"I have found that by increasing my stock of slacks, shoes and shirts my sales of these items have greatly increased. You have to study your sales and experiment to learn what type of merchandise your members will buy. I have found that quality merchandise generally is the best seller but I must also handle a few price items. Try to keep your stock moving. When you find that you have items which have been in stock too long, put them on sale or give them as prizes.

"Study the methods of down-town merchants. They are the pros of merchandising. I have found that the best way to display shirts, slacks and hose is on tables or on shelves where the members can handle the merchandise. As far as I am concerned, showcases are for balls, gloves, head covers and such small items, only. Every item in my shop is clearly marked as to price.

"It is wise to departmentalize your shop by having men's clubs in one section, bags, putters, wedges, women's clubs, shirts, jackets, slacks, headwear and shoes, each in their own section of the shop rather than scattered around. It makes your stock look bigger and makes buying easier.

"I believe in changing displays periodically. I do everything my assistants and I can think of to keep the stock moving and looking clean and new.

"The ball case is placed at the farthest end of the shop which makes certain that members and guests come into the shop so they'll be exposed to the eye-appeal of all the merchandise.

"Apparel is a large item in keeping up my volume. Competition is strong from down-town stores but as the shop is much more convenient I get an edge. Members buy from you when you beat the competition in style and meet them in price. The pro has to keep looking and making sure of good taste in establishing his shop as a foremost style center. When I see how well dressed my members are as they come to the club I am reminded that it is part of my job to see that they can maintain the same excellent standard of dress on the course with what they can buy in my shop.

#### **Caring for Youngsters**

"A good caddie is an important factor in a member's enjoyment of a round. Therefore a first-grade caddie program must be planned and supervised by the pro. I advise, as the first step, to join

the Western Golf Assn., and get its caddie program material. The caddies must have incentives and some genuine personal interest and attention from the pro to get them working well and interested and happy in the job.

"I watch the members' reports on the caddies and see that the lads who aren't doing too well are instructed and helped and get their interest in the job sparked.

"Each Friday morning in the summer we conduct our juniors' program for youngsters from 8 through 16. We have a group lesson followed by play. The 8-through-10 group plays 3 holes only. Match play championships are held for boys 8-10, 11-13, 14-16, and flights for girls 8-10 and 11-16.

"There's so much to this wonderful business a fellow can—and must—keep learning something more about it every day. I rarely have a day when I can't pick up a good idea for my club and my business out of GOLFDOM and other publications, listening to my members, listening to and watching other professionals, and from salesmen."

#### **Propose Collegiate Girls Golf Squads; Schedules**

Mrs. Charles Dennehy, former amateur star whose daughter, Virginia, promises to be an even better golfer than her mother, suggested at the Women's Western Golf Assn. annual meeting that action must be taken in establishing girls' golf squads and inter-collegiate schedules at universities and colleges.

There is a national women's inter-collegiate golf championship played annually at Ohio State university, but outside of very few schools there are no girls' golf squads or intercollegiate team competition.

In view of the activity in male team competition at universities and the tremendous growth of women's golf this neglect of the coeds' golf obviously is something that calls for prompt attention by athletic directors and golf professionals at the schools. Golf writers covering the WWGA meeting couldn't explain or understand the failure to fill this gap in varsity competitive programs. The alert and energetic WWGA membership took to the idea as something requiring immediate and forceful promotion.

It's a matter that calls for professional promotion as certainly the girls' squads will require a lot of pro tutoring, will produce considerable publicity for pros, and the coeds' matches against women's teams of clubs will be interesting and most acceptable additions to women's programs at clubs besides being fine training for the coed's intercollegiate matches.



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# Florida's Turf Problems Are Increased by Rhodes Scale

By **ROBERT L. LAWRENCE**

Supt. Indian Creek Country Club  
Miami Beach, Fla.

There are a great many important maintenance problems pertaining to every golf course. Some have more important problems than others. This is due to various reasons, such as poor topsoil, good soil not available in that vicinity. Also irrigation systems, especially the sources of water supply. Some courses or parts thereof are on land where fairway irrigation is not necessary, due to ground water table being fairly close to the surface. Each course has its own problems, and each expects the best maintenance possible for amount appropriated.

There are many important factors that enter into golf course maintenance. One of the most important for the Superintendent and the club in general is for close co-operation and understanding between the Grounds chairman and the superintendent. They should consult and each be familiar with all work that is to be done, especially with work other than regular routine work. Certain remodeling and renovating work is considered maintenance work. Very careful planning of such work weeks in advance of starting time will save the club considerable expense. In South Florida the most desirable time to do remodeling and renovating work is April to August. Such work started too late usually causes considerable extra expense in getting the course in condition for the winter season.

The greatest problem confronting golf courses today is to obtain a high standard of maintenance in the most efficient manner. The maintenance costs on many golf courses could be reduced if they had the proper and proven best strains of grasses for that particular vicinity.

Remodeling work on many courses would reduce the maintenance costs, providing only if such work is really given serious consideration by the club officials and the golf course architect. Maintenance problems should be considered from every angle on any changes or new work.

There are various reasons why remodeling work is done on golf courses. Usually the two main reasons are to modernize and for economical maintenance. Club officials should consider the latter one of the prime factors.

Some renovation work such as chang-

ing to a different kind of turf, particularly on operation is a costly and major operation. Good fairway turf kept in a good healthy condition will save considerable in maintenance expenses. The weed eradication work would be greatly reduced. Many southern courses have to fight weeds throughout the 12 months of the year.

## Make Turf Tests

It is recommended that each particular golf course run certain tests of various strains of grasses to determine which is most suitable for their climate and soil. This can be done by planting small areas in fairways or on tees, and keeping such areas under playing conditions for at least a year.

Research by USGA Green Section and other agencies has been a great asset to golf courses. The research on growing better turf, also control of insects, and various fungus diseases greatly assist the clubs in choosing and maintaining turf.

Good equipment is necessary for efficient maintenance. The equipment manufacturers apparently are keeping pace with the times. Just think of the vast improvement in maintenance equipment during the past 20 years. The golf course superintendents are usually informed of most new maintenance equipment.

A few of the most important problems confronting golf course maintenance are listed and explained above. The writer would hesitate to state which he thinks is actually the most important.

In the present day of high salaries, high cost of supplies and the most important item of high taxes, it is necessary for each club to operate as economically as possible.

## Need Wider Understanding

It is the belief of the writer that the present day golfers want and expect a high standard of maintenance on their courses. If and when the Grounds chairmen and officials of the clubs get the superintendents' accurate and sound view of the maintenance problems that are so urgent then a promising approach to the solution of the problems can be made and the golfers kept happy without allowing maintenance costs to run above the mini-