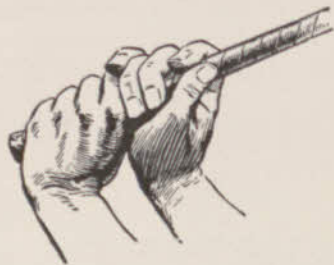


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At Long Beach Meeting

Supts. Talk Turf Technicalities But Are Preoccupied with Economics

By HERB GRAFFIS

THE economics of golf maintenance provided the high note of the 27th annual convention of the Golf Course Supts. Assn. of America. The financial phases of golf course work figured prominently in almost every technical address during the turf conference sessions at Long Beach, Calif. on Feb. 7, 8, 9 and 10, and in the equipment exhibit shopping was active on the basis of spending for economy.

Attendance was satisfactory although eastern and midwestern representation naturally was limited. Superintendents from courses west of the Rockies offset the absent ones from further east.

There was a record registration of supts.' wives, indicating that many of the girls had been promised the trip last summer when they were complaining about Dad getting up before daybreak, coming home all hours of the night, worn and worried, and not giving his family much of a chance to know him. That was a smart job of domestic relations done for the clubs.

Part of the background of economic discussions throughout the conference concerned the salary, fringe benefits, security and other points covering the supts' jobs which have their wives also comparing golf club employment with that in industry.

The Golf Course Supts. Assn. of Southern Calif. headed by George Lanphear, with the hearty help of the Southern Calif. Golf Assn. and the Southern Calif. PGA, raised about \$9000 toward defraying con-

vention expenses. The main items on the budget were \$3500 for ladies' entertainment and transportation, \$2500 for the national GCSA for defraying expense of the educational conference and \$1250 for bus transportation. Unused portion of the collected fund is to be turned over to the Southern Calif. Turf Council.

New Men Needed

The prevailing shortage of top grade supts., accented by the number of new courses and their demands, was frequently referred to during formal and informal sessions. New men aren't coming into the field to the extent necessary to meet club requirements. The case of the new president of the GCSA, Ward Cornwell, changing from Lochmoor Club to the Detroit GC, is indicative of the bidding for first class men, so supts. at Long Beach said. In many instances, second and third men on a maintenance staff are leaving to take supt. jobs.

Some of the supts. were of the opinion that the personnel shortage is going to correct the economic situation in general for supts. and that men qualified by temperament and training will be coming into golf club work from schools in increasing numbers before long. In the meanwhile, the present shortage accounted for considerable interest in the proposal presented by Marvin Ferguson of the USGA Green Section for a six-week school in course management at Texas



Golf Course Supts' Assn. of America, at its annual meeting held during the organization's 27th National Turfgrass Conference, elected an administration headed by a veteran and widely known supt. Ward Cornwell. The official family: Front row (l. to r.): Frank Dunlap, director, Baltimore (Md.) CC; Paul Weiss, Lehigh CC, Allentown, Pa.; Ward Cornwell, pres., Detroit (Mich.); Agar M. Brown, secy-treas., St. Charles, Ill. Back row (l. to r.) are Directors: L. E. Lambert, Oakwood G&CC, Dodson, Mo.; James E. Thomas, Army-Navy CC, Arlington, Va.; Elmer Border, Olympic CC, San Francisco, Calif.; Donald G. Strand, Westmoreland CC, Wilmette, Ill. and John A. Gormley, Wolfert's Roost CC, Newtonville, N. Y.

Agricultural & Mechanical College.

It was plain that fellows who did get into course maintenance work some years ago liked it well enough to stick, and look good after the years. At the GCSA annual banquet pins were presented to veterans present whose names were on the list of 77 who had been GCSA members for 25 years.

Highlights of turf conference addresses:

Keep Players Happy

The opening conference session was devoted to the subject of keeping the golfer happy. In a panel discussion, Edward K. Zuckerman, president of Brentwood CC, Santa Monica, Calif., advised the supts. not to try to make their courses tougher to play than the other fellow's layout. He suggested putting emphasis on condition and balance of the course rather than tricky pin placements and complicated traps. Zuckerman also hinted that the supts. could do a far better job of establishing good public relations with their club officials and members so that the latter are fully aware of the problems confronting the greenkeeping dept.

Howard Montgomery, pres. of the Southern Calif. Club Mgrs. Assn., traced the evolution of clubhouse development. Speaking of present day aspects of the clubhouse, he pointed out that not only

must trained specialists be hired to operate the golfers' haven, but they should be constantly reminded of their obligation to keep the members happy.

The pro-supt. relationship was discussed by Bud Oakley, vp of the Southern Calif. PGA and pro at Palos Verdes, Calif. CC. Oakley stressed the need of teaching the golfer respect for the physical aspects of the course as well as rules and etiquette, pointing out that this responsibility was primarily the pro's. Oakley outlined his organization's work with Juniors and also told how his state's pros and supts. had collaborated in helping to supply courses and instruction to Veterans Hospitals.

The final panel speaker, Roy Nelson, Golden Valley CC supt., Minneapolis, Minn., alluded to some of the "above and beyond" facets of the greenkeeper's business. Among them he included tree planting programs, improvements where unsightly spots mar a course's beauty, better restroom facilities, more benches spotted around the course and wider use of shrubs.

The last speaker on the opening day program was Rex McMorris, executive vp of the National Golf Foundation who dwelled on golf's terrific potential for expansion in the next few years. His speech will appear in a future issue of GOLF-DOM.

Cool climate maintenance was the theme of the second day's morning meeting. Dr.

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For years, golf club manufacturers have recognized the problems of excessive vibration and distortion inherent in steel-shafted clubs. They've known that steel shafts "shiver" and "flutter" at impact—that power is lost through impact vibration—that shaft distortion and resulting club head wobble reduce both distance and accuracy.

Now, GOLFCRAFT has found the answer to these basic disadvantages—a shaft made of

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You'll make no mistake by playing and selling GLASSHAFT Clubs. Lloyd Mangrum has called them "the greatest thing that ever happened to golf." One round will show you why. Why not give GLASSHAFT a good display in your shop? Watch the real interest you'll generate. A supply of folders for distribution to your members is yours for the asking.



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Ward Cornwell (1), new GCSA president, accepts the gavel from Bill Beresford and prepares to take over for the coming year. Cornwell also is taking over the supt's job at Detroit (Mich.) CC, having moved there from Lochmoor CC in Grosse Point. In the background is John Gray, Windsor, Ont. supt.

Robert M. Hagan, Dept. of Irrigation, University of Calif., gave a lucid discussion of "Sensible Water Management", using a wide variety of slides, graphs and tables to enlighten his audience. The irrigation expert emphasized that the big problem facing the supt. is in knowing when and how much water to use as well as knowing how to water. Tests and studies made by Hagan's dept. were reviewed. They show that the irrigation interval depends largely on soil structure and that absorption and evaporation rates of various plants play a highly important part in the whole scheme of irrigation.

Plans are being made to prepare Hagan's studies in printed form which will be reproduced in *GOLFDOM* when available.

William F. Bell, Pasadena architect, told the GCSA audience that course construction costs today are not much higher than they were 30 years ago. This, he said, is due to the mechanization factor and because turf research and improvements wrought by the supts. themselves has done away with many false starts in green, tee and fairway construction that were prevalent two or three decades ago. Bell's speech was punctuated by a movie, prepared by James Harrison, Turtle Creek, Pa., architect, illustrating the various types of construction work going on today.

Following up on the construction theme, Cecil Hollingsworth, who owns and operates Singing Hills CC, El Cajon, Calif., stressed the lack of capable machine operators in building courses and warned

promoters, supts., and others interested in new construction, to investigate the performance records of contractors and subcontractors before signing contracts. Hollingsworth also recommended vigilance in forcing builders to hew to plans and specifications.

Continuing Improvement Program

Public course players came in for discussion when Walter Fuchs, supt. of Glen-eagles CC, Lemont, Ill., took over the rostrum. Fuchs pointed out that catering to the fee golfer means more than merely providing him a good course on which to play. "If you want to bring him back," said the Lemont supt. "you have to roll out the rug in the pro shop, lockerroom and restaurant as well as on the first tee." Fuchs then described his continuing improvement program at Gleneagle which has resulted in the planting of 2,000 trees in recent years, the addition of several lakes and reworking roughs and traps.

"Experience with Improved Bent Grasses" was the subject of a speech by Leonard Hazlett, who heads the Beechmont CC, Cleveland, O., greenkeeping corps. Hazlett described experiments with Pennlu and a nursery recently installed at his club. The high point of his address came in showing a slide film, step-by-step procedure of renovating seaside bent greens. Greens were aerified four or five ways and plugs, topdressing and fertilizer were mixed on the site, with the complete job taking only 90 minutes. As soon as his crew moved out, Hazlett said, play was resumed and in not more than a few days marked improvement in the quality of the bent was noted.

Dr. Fred Grau, West Point Products Corp. agronomist, followed with a description of new bent grasses, the text of which will appear in a future issue of *Golfdom*.

The Wednesday afternoon session covered warm climate maintenance. Speakers included Louis LeValley, Fresno State College (Calif.); Dr. James Watson, chief agronomist, Toro Mfg. Corp., Minneapolis, Minn.; L. W. DuBose, Jr. supt., Houston, Tex. CC; Carlos Smith, supt., Guadalajara CC, Mexico, and Dr. O. J. Noer, Milwaukee sewerage commission agronomist.

Bermuda on a Large Scale

Louis LeValley's remarks dwelled on water management of alkali soils although he enlarged on Dr. Robert M. Hagan's earlier thesis by telling how water affects

(Continued on page 110)

Memphis Pro Reaps Profits from Low Key Selling

By EMMETT MAUM



A relaxed, friendly atmosphere is what Pat Abbott of the Memphis CC strives for in his pro shop. The member who comes in to do nothing more than talk golf is just as welcome as the fellow who makes a purchase. Abbott recommends this attitude to other pros, says it moves more merchandise in the long run than high pressure selling.

"Don't force the club member to buy your merchandise. Sales will come without resorting to pressure tactics!"

That is the advice of Patrick Abbott, genial pro of the Memphis (Tenn.) CC, who operates a profitable golf shop, but is just as concerned with keeping club members happy as he is in making money.

"Some pros become so sales conscious they scare members away," says Abbott. "Of course, a pro is in business and has to keep an eye on the profit and loss statement, but he should bear in mind that for many members the club is almost like home. They come out to play golf and enjoy themselves and resent having merchandise shoved in their face whenever they step inside the pro shop."

In Abbott's opinion, pros should strike a happy medium in their sales efforts. Some feel that their shops are being run strictly for the convenience of members, while others put all emphasis on selling. Pat prefers a middle course in this respect, feeling that the pro should master the knack of selling merchandise without making it

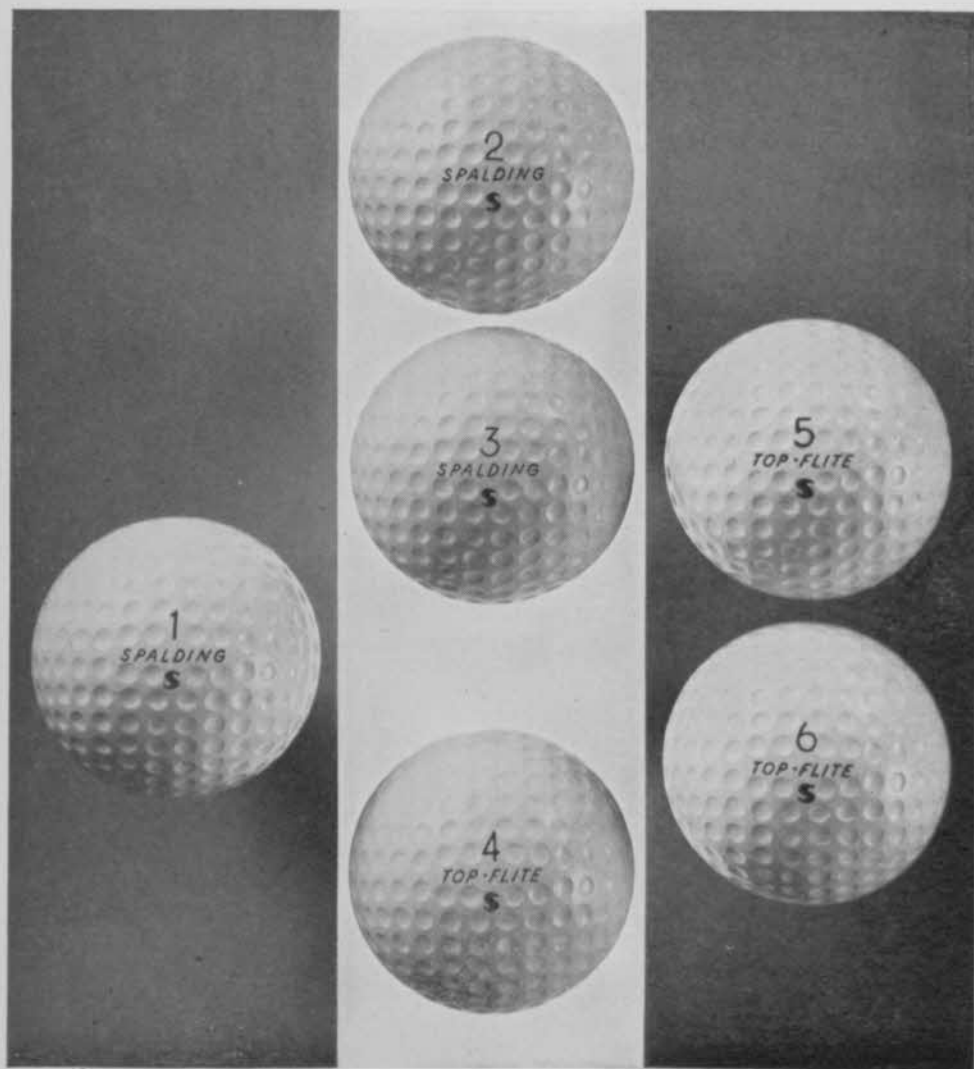
obvious that he is pushing it. Clever and attractive displays play an equally important part with the salesman in spurring the buyer to action.

Members Benefit From Pro Shop

Abbott feels the pro should supply all golfing equipment to club members. He doesn't claim this as a divine right of the profession, but an idea that should be sold to golfers because they benefit most by it. "I've long contended," says Pat, "that I know a member's needs in shoes, clubs and balls better than any outside competitor. The lesson tee gives me that advantage. After I have seen a golfer swing a club several times I can do a much better job of fitting him than if he just comes into the shop and starts ordering."

"I think this is tremendously important," Abbott continues. "If more pros were to emphasize this point, I'm sure they'd sell more merchandise without resorting to high-pressure tactics. Golfers who are satisfied with the shoes, clubs and balls you sell them are bound to come back and buy other articles because they have confidence

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Spalding has vastly improved the markings on its new TOP-FLITE[®] golf balls for '56. These popular, hard-to-hurt balls now have large numerals indelibly printed in colors on opposite "sides" of their tough covers. Numbered 1 to 6, they make it easier than ever for your members to tell one Spalding TOP-FLITE from another. The names "Spalding" and "TOP-FLITE" are clearly lettered below the numbers.

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IN SPORTS

Give the member what he wants, but

draw the line at cheap merchandise

in the merchandise you handle."

The Memphis pro keeps as much merchandise as possible out where members can see, touch and test it. Long observation has taught him that the golfer is an impulse buyer — a fellow who, when he sees or picks up an item which immediately strikes his fancy, buys it without hesitating. Clubs and bags in Abbott's shop are shown in two long, open racks at right angles to large showcases in which sportswear is displayed. Several merchandise tables and counter racks are used for displaying smaller articles, while slow moving items are shown in a display window facing a sidewalk that leads from the pro shop to the first tee. The window is changed every week.

Keep Notes on Equipment

To keep abreast of members' needs, Pat and his assistant, Parvin (Doc) Mitchell, keep notes on the condition of clubs, bags and shoes. If these notes are systematically kept and occasionally reviewed, Abbott points out, they offer numerous opportunities to make sales by suggesting replacement of worn out equipment.

Pat carries only quality equipment in his Memphis CC shop. He has never handled anything else, realizing it would undermine business if he did so. "I miss a sale here and there," Abbott says, "when I tell people I don't stock such things as cheap clubs or bags. I explain the stuff won't hold up long enough to justify their putting money into it. If they insist on buying it, I lose a sale, but at least, I keep my friends. Sooner or later most people become unhappy with cheap merchandise and come back to the shop and replace it with something better."

Speaking of women golfers, the Memphis pro declares that great care should be taken in fitting them with proper clubs. "It's a job I don't rush into," Abbott says, pointing out that the weaker sex is just that and it takes at least a couple sessions on the practice tee to decide the weight and length of woods and irons a woman can handle. Too many pros, says Pat, overestimate the strength and power of a woman and poor club fitting results.

During the summer of 1955, the Mem-

phis CC experimented with a new program which, Abbott believes, will develop some fine golfers among the coming generation.

Summer Day School

"Last June, C. D. Smith, a member of our club, came to me and suggested a summer day school for children of from 5 to 14," Abbott relates. "We put our heads together, worked out the details and with a little fanfare started the school in July. It ran until August."

From 9 to 10 a. m. Pat had the youngsters out for group instruction. Then, they went to the swimming pool and had classes in that sport. Following lunch, John Kraft, the tennis pro, gave the kids lessons on the courts for one hour.

"At the end of the summer, several kids could hit the ball quite well as the result of their golf instruction," Pat recounts. "The cost to members who sent their children to the day school was nominal, yet there were enough youngsters (20 to 25) out there to make it worth my time. Teaching children is a little harder than instructing adults, but actually it's a lot more fun."

The day school was in session Mondays through Fridays. This summer the club plans to start the juvenile program much earlier and give it the benefit of a lot of advance publicity. "We believe this can be built into something big," says Pat, "and certainly it will develop many golfers for the future."

Besides serving as pro at Memphis CC, Abbott manages to find time to give regular group lessons at Southwestern College, located in Memphis, and to coach the golf team there. And just to prove that professionals are versatile, he occasionally takes part in plays produced by the city's Little Theater group.

Labatt Open Offers \$26,800

The Labatt Open, offering \$26,800 to winners, will be held at the Royal-Quebec GC at Boischatel, Quebec, July 12-15. Included in the prize money will be an extra purse of \$1,800 to be distributed among the Canadian pros who finish highest in the tournament.