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THE BUSINESS JOURNAL OF GOLF

GOLFDOM

FEBRUARY • 1958



Come Rain or Come Shine — Pros Plan to Be Ready

If You Were Foiled by the Treacherous Spring of 1957 Here Are Some Ideas that May Help You Get Your Selling Season Started Early in Spite of the Weather

Painfully recalling the miserable weather with which they had to contend in the spring of 1957, Midwest professionals and others in sections that were equally hard hit, have been giving a lot of thought in recent months to promotional ideas that will get players thinking about golf early in the 1958 season and bring them into the pro shops even if adverse weather again delays play.

As things turned out, 1957 proved to be a very profitable years for the pros. Exceptionally fine golfing weather from mid-June through October plus a record Christmas volume enabled them to increase sales nearly 10 per cent over the previous year. But in the opinion of many golf shop operators, the poor spring start put them in the position of walking a tightrope to profits. They hope to avoid a recurrence this year.

A majority of pros, queried by GOLF-DOM as to what steps they intend to take to counteract poor spring weather if it plagues them again this year, plan to make extensive use of indoor practice facilities. But, if it is impossible to do this at their clubs, they hope to set up some kind of sheltered practice ranges or teaching sheds. Indications are that more advertising literature will be sent out than ever before. Golf clinics, golf nights, greater encouragement of women's and junior's play and early tournaments also will be widely exploited, but generally the pros are looking to the practice nets to stir up enthusiasm among their members, especially if the weather tends to dampen it.

Horton Smith, the Detroit GC pro, who is just as resourceful when it comes to operating a shop as he was when it came to winning major tournaments a few years back, is one of those who feels that a teaching shed should be a permanent fixture at all clubs. "It's the best kind of insurance against poor spring weather," Horton says. "Ordinarily, we can get our season underway by mid-April but with a shelter available there's no reason why we can't get our members thinking about golf long before that."

Detroit GC doesn't have a shelter at the moment but Smith has been planning on getting one for some time. He'd like it large enough to accommodate three golfers and portable so that it could be moved around the driving range and thus minimize turf damage.

Horton feels that many pros aren't stirring early interest because they don't encourage their members to play in "reasonable" rain. A relatively large precentage of his spring stock consists of rainwear, spiked rubbers and umbrellas. These are strongly pushed by his sales staff in March and April along with a pep talk to the effect that a golfer doesn't have to forego his pleasure just because the weather isn't what he'd like to have it be. Even cotton gloves are made available so that there can be no complaints that the player can't hold a club firmly in his hands.

Golf Night, held early in the season at Detroit GC, is one of the big events of the year. It is marked by introduction of the various golf chairmen and the pro staff and climaxed by the showing of golf films and a clinic staged by Smith and his assistants. After the Golf Night rally has been staged, Horton avers, interest in the game perks up. He suggests that if pros have been waiting until rather late in the spring to hold golf rallies at their clubs that they move the date up because these events are assumed by the membership to officially start the season.

Uses Nets Until May 15

Jock Hendry of the Town & Country Club, St. Paul, Minn., is another who feels that the answer to getting early season patronage lies in having nets available. He has two of them installed in his clubhouse. They are constantly in use from the time the season unofficially starts in early March until well after the weather is right for outdoor play. They bring a good deal of revenue from lessons and sales of accessories and equipment. Hendry takes no chances on having the weather close in on him after spring apparently comes to St. Paul for good. He keeps the nets up until May 15.

Philadelphia PGA Section Sponsors Spring Golf Show

Philadelphia Section of the PGA will sponsor a golf show on Apr. 8, at the Sheraton Hotel in Philadelphia. The show will run from 1 until 10:00 p.m. Leading manufacturers will display equipment and wearing apparel.

The show will include golf clinics conducted by local PGA members with nationally known professional stars, who also will give demonstrations, as their guests.

Golf driving nets will be made available for visitors to try out their early season swings. PGA instructors will be on hand to assist golfers seeking help with their games and to answer all golfing questions.

This is the first time in the history of Philadelphia that such a show has been conducted. It is expected to attract thousands of the area's golf addicts.

Leo Fraser, pres. of Philadelphia, has announced that in addition to the show, there will be a short Section business session in the morning. The day's activities will be concluded with a dinner in the hotel in the evening.

Howie Atten of the Dubuque (Ia.) also goes to the nets when spring seems far behind. He has one set up in the men's locker room and a second one in the main ballroom for the distaff swingers. Free instruction for a limited time are further inducements for Dubuque members to get out to the club early and start practicing.

Practice nets, in the opinion of Chuck Tanis, pro at Chicago's Olympia Fields, have saved his lesson business in several different years when the two courses at his club have remained unplayable beyond the customary starting date. He has indoor spots where both men and women can receive instruction and polish their swings. Tanis also recommends that the pro work closely with the club manager in fitting spring golf parties into the regular club entertainment schedule. Another thing that helps to start the pro's merchandise moving is to keep year-around displays, if possible, in the lounge and locker rooms. But once they are there, Chuck adds, they have to be changed frequently to give fresh appeal.

(Continued on page 79)

Go Along With the Winning Trend to

DICK MAYER and GLASSHAFT CLUBS, winners of the National Open and the World's championships, are the leading combination in the country's golf.

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Discuss Course Cost Cutting at Green Section Meeting

WITH economy expected to play an increasingly important role at many a country club this year, the USCA called its Green Section into action on the day preceding the Association's annual meeting to find out from supts., architects, manufacturers, research men and others closely connected with course management how maintenance costs can be kept down.

The conference, held at Chicago's Drake Hotel on Jan. 24, attracted some of the best minds in turf management and related fields. Speakers and panelists touched on just about every phase of course maintenance. If there was any subject they overlooked it was pretty well filled in when both the morning and afternoon sessions were turned over to the audience for questions and comments.

William C. Chapin, Rochester, N. Y., chmn. of the USGA Green Section committee, was in charge of the conference. Vice chmn. was Marvin H. Ferguson, mid-continent director and research coordinator for the Green Section.

Speakers at the morning session were Robert Bruce Harris, Chicago golf architect, J. R. Watson, Jr., Toro Mfg. Co., and William H. Daniel, Purdue University agronomist. Panelists included O. J. Noer, Charles Hallowell, Carol Bretzlaff and Andrew Bertoni. A. M. Radko of the USGA Green Section was moderator.

Design Simplicity Helps

In discussing the economics of design, Harris said that the postwar trend in architecture has been to courses that are easy to maintain. One example is the adoption of larger greens. A second involves getting away from planting shrubs and trees in clusters that interfere with maintenance work. Better contoured trapbunker arrangements also have made the supt's job easier.

Harris also advocates leaving plenty of room between traps and greens so that gang mowers can be easily maneuvered in these areas. Following his talk and during the morning panel session, Harris fielded at least a dozen involved questions, all with aplomb and reasonable answers.

Jim Watson, substituting for David M. Lilly, Toro pres., pointed out that supts. and their clubs should weigh all factors in the equipment and labor cost picture when deliberating the purchase of capital items such as tractors, mowers, etc. He said these purchases should be made with long range plans in mind and that only accepted accounting methods should be used in amoritizing and depreciating them.

Discussing chemicals, Bill Daniel emphasized that supts. can't become too well versed in their use since they play a far more important role in turf management than even people working in the field generally realize.

Do 50 Per Cent of Work

"If you stop to consider that only 5 or 10 per cent of your budget is spent on chemicals," Daniel said, "and that, in effect, they do about 50 per cent of the work around a course, you'll get what I'm driving at."

The Purdue agronomist gave several tips on how to get the most out of nitrogen and discussed the needs of turf as to phosphate and potash applications. He also stated that there is much to be learned by supts. about arsenicals, the art of spraying and spraying equipment.

The morning panel discussion was largely concerned with methods of depreciating equipment, the abuses of electric cars and the extent to which clubs should go to in re-designing courses that are not easily maintained.

Andy Bertoni suggested that depreciation should be figured on a per round basis. He emphasized that regardless of how it is computed, supts. shouldn't overlook including it in their annual budgets. Equipment depreciation reserves at clubs, whose supts. volunteered information, range from \$2,400 to \$3,700 a year.

Practically everyone agreed that golf cars are here to stay. It was generally conceded that little has been done to check drivers who run amuck on a course because keeping them in line involves meting out justice that doesn't seem to come within anyone's authority. One supt., however, stated that cars at his club are numbered solely for the purpose of catching up with errant drivers, and the golf car committee there is empowered to hand down stiff walking penalties when infractions are detected.

(Continued on page 66)

Townley Racks Bags In Fiber Tubes

Art Townley, pro at Hartsville (S. C.) GC, recently adopted a new system of storing clubs in his shop. He uses 14 in. diameter heavy fiber tubes manufactured by a local firm. The tubes are 32 in. long and permit practically 100 per cent utilization of storage space. They can be stacked in tiers with or without partitions or dividers between them. Townley finds that even the largest bags can be inserted or removed from the tubes much easier than when conventional racks are used. Wear and tear on the bags also is greatly reduced.



Cleveland District GA Helps Crippled Children

Twenty-one handicapped children attended the Society for Crippled Children's Camp Cheerful last year, as a result of a program sponsored jointly by the Cleveland Coca-Cola Bottling Co., the Society for Crippled Children and the Cleveland Dist. Golf Assn. Each child became a guest for one week of each member of the CDGA scoring a Hole-In-One on one of the CDGA courses in Cuyahoga County. Funds were provided for the program by the Cleveland Coca-Cola Bottling Co. 1957 was the third year for the program and resulted in almost 70 children receiving the benefit of this activity.

Lack of Area Data Can Be Costly in Turf Treatment

A well known supt. says that he has a hunch that some dissatisfaction with turf treatments is due to dosages figured on inaccurate guesses as to how large turf areas actually are.

He recalls that at the Green Section committee meeting at the University of Rhode Island turf plots last September, estimates of the area of a certain plot varied from 250 to 2500 sq. ft. The plot was actually 1000 sq. ft. in area. The veteran remarks that supts' estimates came closer than those of chmn. guessing the size of the Rhode Island plot, but admits that he has been wide of accuracy on many guesses where he should have measured and figured.

The supt. adds that turf treatment

demands that measurements of areas should be displayed on a wall of the course equipment headquarters and every supt's office. Furthermore, such exact measurements should be the basis of all maintenance cost records and comparisons. His own records show areas of each green, tee, fairway, rough sand traps, clubhouse grounds and roads.

C of C Offers to Arrange Masters Hotel Accommodations

Augusta, Ga., Chamber of Commerce will handle, upon request, contacts with hotels and motels in and around the city for press, radio and TV representatives who plan to attend the Masters this year. The tournament will be played Apr. 3-6. Arrangements also will be made for players through the C of C.

Persons seeking reservations should get in touch with G. C. Maxwell, chmn. of the C of C housing committee between Feb. 17, when the housing bureau opens, and Mar. 1. Four nights occupancy is required at practically all hostelries and advance deposits range from 25 to 100 per cent.

Military Tournaments

Several big military golf tournaments are scheduled for 1958. The Air Force worldwide championships for men and women will be held Aug. 18-23 at Francis E. Warren (Wyo.) Air Base. The Army interservice tournaments are scheduled to be played at Colorado Springs, Aug. 27-30. The Air Force championship will include a Seniors meet for men over 45.

There to Learn!

Smart Young Pros Justify Operation

of PGA School

By HERB GRAFFIS

PROFESSIONALS who looked over the 116 young men at the PCA's second annual Assistants' Training School and sat in on any of the class sessions enthusiastically declared the school is the best thing that the PGA has done for golf in general, the master pros and the association itself.

Quite a number of the pros, from 84year-old Bertie Way to fellows who've been on pro jobs only a few years, got a closeup of the students and classes held in the Lions' Club building at Dunedin, Fla., Jan. 13-17 inclusive. Some of them had been dubious of the procedure of the Assistants' Training School although none had questioned that a business education for assistants was needed in order that clubs would be better served by pro staffs and professionals could make a profit from employment of a select group of well trained and well paid assistants.

Training Long Needed

It has been recognized for years that a planned program of assistant training was greatly needed in professional golf. Supts. had gone into training programs, collaborating with state agricultural colleges and experiment stations and the USGA Green Section. Club Mgrs had a program for developing younger men through courses at hotel schools and in several college short courses. But the pros, until 1957, had been without training schooling for assistants although this obvious service had been pointed out frequently for more than 25 years by GOLF-DOM.

The GOLFDOM campaign echoed the urging of Willie Ogg and a few other of his pro pioneer companions who'd been sold by Ogg on the idea. Ogg's presence on the faculty of the first two schools was a happy indication of the open, alert and adaptable minds of progressive older pros.

Emil Beck, pro at the Black River CC, Port Huron, Mich., has been chairman of the Assistants' Training School program since it was launched. Leo O'Grady, former pro at PGA National Course and now operator of a golf range near the course, is co-chairman. The pattern of the assistants' course, as devised by Beck with the aid of O'Grady, according to master pros who have watched the school conducted, and by the word of the students who were at the 1957 classes, is of positive and practical value.

There were five instructors at the training school, sessions of which started at 7:30 a. m. and ran for 45 minute classes with a 15 minute coffee break after 10:35.

The instructors and their subjects were:

Joe Devany, Grosse Ile (Mich.) G&CC – Pro Department Policy and Management;

Eddie Duino, San Jose (Calif.) CC – Public Relations and Professional Ethics:

George Aulbach, Lufkin (Tex.) CC – Merchandising and Advertising;

Willie Ogg, Albany (N. Y.) CC – Principles of Instruction; Observation, Analysis and Application;

Bill Hardy, Chevy Chase (Md.) Club – Club Repairs, Fitting, Construction and Design Features.

Expects Big Returns

Instructors spoke from manuscripts and notes that reflected the considerable time and study these men devoted to this modern development in pro business education. The instructors were paid nominal fees from the PGA educational fund allotment of National Golf Day revenue. This writer is very strongly of the opinion that the golfing public and PGA members got much bigger value per dollar from the Assistants' Training School investment than from any other expenditure of Golf Day income. His studied estimate is that the schooling should mean at least \$1,000 a year increased pro department revenue per PGA school graduate and probably more.

In evening sessions Woodrow Register, Pres., First National Bank of Dunedin spoke on financing fundamentals of pro shop operation.

Tom Crane, PGA executive sec., told of PGA organization and services, and Herb Graffis editor of GOLFDOM and GOLFING magazines, talked on the assistant's personality and performance in expressing the ideal character of pro department operation.

Junker Provides Cash

William Junker, sales mgr., Fawick Flexi-Grip Co., spoke as host to the banquet, which concluded the training pro-

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gram and at which diplomas were awarded. Junker also put up \$1000 of the Golf Pride grip makers' money as the purse for the PGA Senior-Junior tournament which was played in afternoons following school sessions.

A number of sons of master professionals attended the school. Among them were Tom Watrous, Charles Blanton, Wm. Flattery, Gene Kunes, jr., David Ogilvie III and Harry Schwab, jr. Of the 116 attending the school, the expenses of 15 were paid by pros who em-

Of the 116 attending the school, the expenses of 15 were paid by pros who employed them; four had expenses paid by their clubs; seven came from Canada and nine are not yet employed as assistants.

Most of the lads had finished high school and about 20 were university graduates. Twenty were attending their second year at the school. One young man borrowed on his life insurance to get to the school. Travel and living expenses cost the youngsters probably about \$150 although some managed to get rides to and from Dunedin. One lad, Joe Bonadio, summer asst. to Art Doering at the Pittsburgh Field Club, got up at 5 a.m. to drive 57 miles from his winter job to be on time for the opening of classes.

Show Aptitude, Eagerness

Every student was on time every day and evening at the classes. Appearance, attitude, aptitude and eagerness of the young men at the assistants' school plainly showed that pros, golf clubs and the PGA all are lucky to have this high class of talent coming into golf business.

At the 1957 annual meeting of the PGA, Pacific slope delegates expressed keen interest in having an assistants' school established for that area. Examination and appraisal of the school at Dunedin would warrant favorable action on the western pros' request.

Any successful pro, club official with knowledge of industrial training, and golf playing equipment manufacturer would agree after learning the facts about the PGA Assistants' Training School that this project reveals promise of a bright future for the business and the game of golf.

Emil Beck and his co-chairman, Leo O'Grady, and the assistants' school staff have made a significant and highly profitable contribution to golf in planning and conducting this educational work.

> It's for Your Convenience Buyers' Service See Page 93

Golf Club Sales Show Two Per Cent Increase

Sales of golf clubs for the fiscal year ending Oct. 31, 1957, by companies reporting sales to the National Assn. of Golf Club Manufacturers, was 4,140,150 units. This was an increase of about two per cent over the comparable 1956 period. Of the 1957 total, 2,887,696 were irons and 1,252,454 were woods.

Commenting on the sales for last year, Henry P. Cowen, Assn. pres., said that the volume increase was remarkable in view of the poor 1957 spring weather. He added that a large part of the gain is attributed to the upturn in the number of golf participants.

Cowen also cited the expanded services and impressive performance record of the National Golf Foundation as being instrumental in increasing club sales.

Jackson Event Open to Pros Eliminated at Baton Rouge

The first Jackson Open, which will be played at the Jackson (Miss.) CC, Mar. 1-2, has been scheduled expressly for players eliminated after 36 holes in a nearby major tournament. In this case it is the Baton Rouge Open, which will be played Feb. 27-Mar. 2. The Jackson event, according to Nelson Giddens, pro, will be played over 36-holes with prize money totalling \$5,000.

Every player eliminated at Baton Rouge will automatically become eligible for the Jackson Open. Jackson's Junior Chamber of Commerce is cooperating with Country Club members in underwriting the tournament.

PGA Adds Five Tournaments to Spring-Summer Card

Five new tournaments, including two \$50,000 events, have been added to the PGA's spring and summer schedule. The \$50,000 affairs are the Buick Open to be held at Grand Blanc, Mich., June 19-22, and the Pepsi-Boys Clubs championship which will be played at Norwich, L. I., June 26-29.

Other major additions to the circuit are: Vancouver (B.C.) Open (\$40,000), Aug. 29-Sept 1, Denver Centennial Open, Sept. 11-14, and Lafayette (La.) Open (\$15,-000), Apr. 24-27. 0