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How about site design? Why soil tests?  
—and many, many more, important questions!

## **Where did we get the answers?**

Harold J. Cliffer, A.I.A., institutional planning and design specialist, personally interviewed managers, golf professionals, owners and officials of 54 private, 19 municipal, 16 semi-private, one military and two industrial golf courses in every section of the country to collect data for this book. This information was expertly evaluated to arrive at the minimum, median and maximum requirements of facilities and space for any size clubhouse, keyed to the number and type of golfers to be served . . .



Harold J. Cliffer, A.I.A.

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**The NATIONAL GOLF FOUNDATION, Inc.**

407 South Dearborn Street

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# Foundation Survey Indicates Par 3s Are Here to Stay

**W**HAT about Par-3 courses?

Are they popular? Are they here to stay? How about their future?

The answers to these questions were brought out by a recent survey of Par-3 course operations made by the National Golf Foundation. Nearly half of the 260 par-3 courses listed in the Foundation's files responded to a questionnaire sent out this spring. The 123 answers represented Par-3 operations in 32 of 39 states in which short courses are operated.

## Popularity of Par-3 Courses

In 1955, when the Foundation conducted its first survey of Par-3 courses, there were 120 such operations in existence. On Jan. 1 of this year the total had risen to 260. Last year 38 new Par-3's were opened for play, 32 were under construction and 124 were in some stage of planning. In the first three months of this year 17 more new Par-3's were opened and construction had begun on an additional 19.

There's no mystery behind this growth. With present congestion on the nation's courses stretching playing time for 18 holes of regulation golf to five and six hours, golfers are turning to Par-3's for a 'quick' round. In cases where the Par-3 is lighted, golfers can extend their playing time beyond sunset.

More important, new golfers, reluctant to invest time and money in regulation golf until they have tried the game, turn to the Par-3 to test their reaction to the game. While many new golfers graduate to the regulation courses in a very short time, they continue to play the Par-3. Also, the short course is not in competition with regulation layouts although it does take some of the overflow. It fills a definite need in the golf picture.

Economically, the Par-3 is the answer in most metropolitan areas where land availability and cost of course construction are obstacles. Par-3's can be built on a few acres at relatively little cost. Their small areas make lighting for night play physically and economically practical. Finally, the relatively short playing time required for a round of Par-3 golf means that more and more golfers are going to play more golf.

Are Par-3's a passing fancy? Far from it! While the larger, more elaborate and costlier (and most profitable) short course operations are usually of post-World War II vintage, one hotel Par-3 responding to the survey, dates back to 1900! As for semi-private operations, one 9-hole course is 24 years old, and an 18 hole operation reports 28 years in business. Included among the municipal 9-hole courses is an ancient establishment claiming 35 years existence. This latter course is 868 yards long, cost \$4,500 to build, \$2,000 a year to maintain and draws 5,000 rounds of play during its five-month season.

Projecting the average figures in the 1959 NGF Survey, the typical 9-hole, semi-private Par-3 is 5 years old, is 1074 yards in length, is built on 14 acres at an average cost of \$27,605 (excluding land) and costs \$7,490 per year to maintain. It has an average \$15,239.70 in green fees and \$10,296 in shop sales.

The 18-hole semi-private Par-3 also is 5 years old, is 1739 yards in length, is built on 19½ acres at a cost of \$75,700 (exclusive of land) and costs \$17,714 in annual maintenance. It enjoys a 9-month season, averages 30,485 rounds per season, grossing \$38,715.95 in fees and \$16,864 in shop sales.

## Lighting Situation

Of the 59 nine-hole semi-privates reporting, 20 are lighted, 37 include driving range facilities, 16 are 'golf center' operations (with driving range and miniature golf course) and eight are operated in conjunction with regulation courses.

Among the 22 eighteen-hole semi-private operations in the survey, 10 have all 18 holes lighted and four have 9 holes lighted. Four are operated in conjunction with regulation courses, 20 have golf driving ranges and eight are golf center operations with both driving range and miniature facilities.

## Future of the Par-3

As in the case of regulation golf layouts, there will never be enough Par-3's to satisfy the growing demand for more places to play golf. This demand is growing with the population, rising standards of living and increasing leisure time. In 1955 the Foundation produced its 'Golf Operator's Handbook' to satisfy numerous requests for planning and operating information from prospective driving range, miniature golf and Par-3 course operators. In 3½ years, 5,000 copies of the book have been sold and it has gone into a second printing.



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# A Pro Puts On A Fashion Show

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Assistant Pro Tommy Burns and model show latest well-dressed golfer styles.



This garb can be worn for golf or away from the course. Etonic shoe is very latest for the gal golfer.

(Left) Swim suit (and contents) have GOLFDOM'S unqualified endorsement. Strong does thriving business with the sun set.





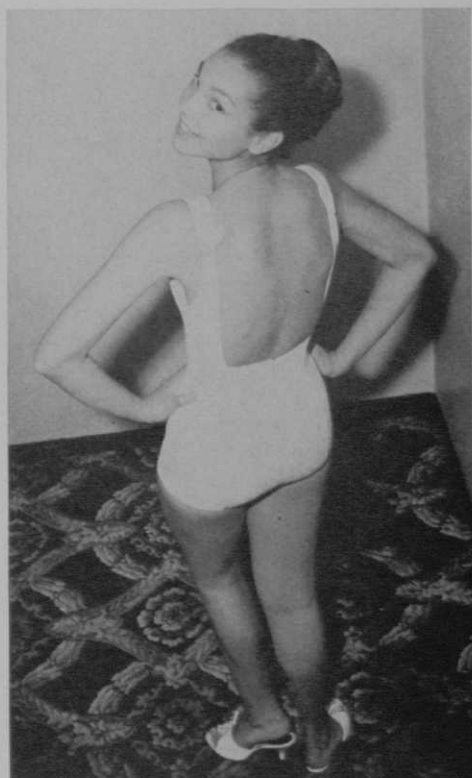
Pro Lou Strong would have been happy even if he hadn't made a sale.



Greta Leone (left), assistant pro, was in charge of catching the cues as she stood in the wings with models.



Emcee was Squire slack rep, Ed Lust, who helped Strong put on fashion show.



A caption is hardly necessary.



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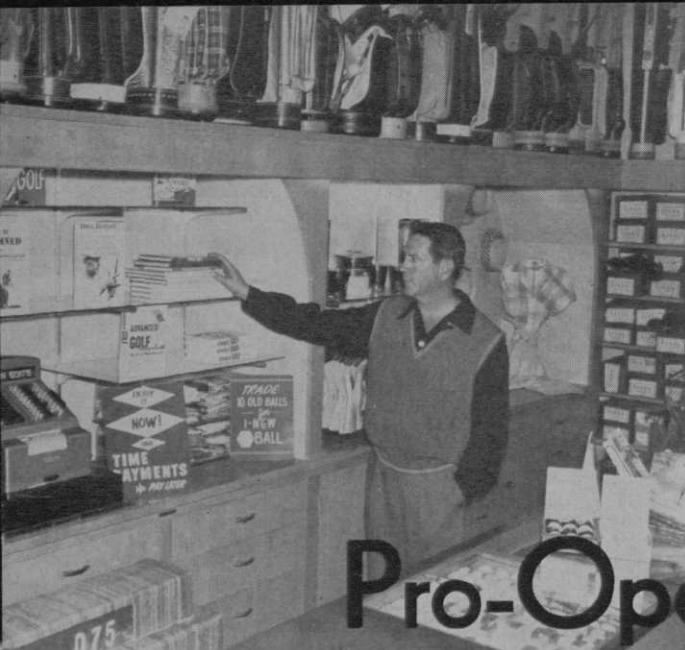
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George Lake, Recreation Park pro, behind main sales counter of his small munny shop.

# Pro-Operation at Long Beach Muny

By **CHUCK CURTIS**

**G**EORGE LAKE, professional at the Long Beach (Calif.) muny courses in Recreation Park, has an impressive list of credits in the development of young assistant pros, many of whom now have head club jobs throughout the country. He also has been a vp of the national PGA, a chairman of the PGA junior golf teaching committee, a pres. of his PGA section and general chmn. of the 1958 PGA National meeting in Long Beach.

Former assistants at Recreation or amateur players at the course who later became head pros have included Jackson Bradley of Houston, Bob Judson of St. Andrews, Ill.; Harry McCarthy of Balboa Park, San Diego, Calif.; Wayne Otis, who took a head job in 1958 in Whitinsville, Massachusetts; Darrel Hickok, in Illinois; Gary Nixon, White Sulphur Springs, and Joe Warburton, Don Willis and Jimmy Ireland, all at Southern California clubs.

Most important to the financial well being of his family, Lake also is an outstanding home club pro and merchandiser.

His bookkeeping setup, for example, gives him a quarterly report on sales.

One of his two woman assistants, Zama Schoepflin, also is his bookkeeper, keeping a daily record of sales. A certified public accountant audits all records quar-

terly, preparing tax returns and giving Lake a financial statement.

## Profit Ratio Determined

The statement shows the percentage of profit in different categories of sales: soft goods, clubs, bags and balls. Thus an abrupt change in the ratio of the sales and profit margin gives Lake a guide to pricing changes in order to move slower selling goods.

Lake, himself, does all the ordering of clubs (except for re-ordering of basic items which the assistants handle). Miss Schoepflin orders all soft goods, keeps track of prices, attends style shows where golf clothing is shown, and advises Lake on pricing of soft goods.

Although this is entirely a public course operation with heavy transient trade (including large numbers of Navy personnel), the soft goods business amounted to 30% of total sales in January of this year.

Lake has one of the smaller shops among Southern California public courses, yet he ranks among top pros in that thriving golf area for yearly sales.

"The big thing is to have things out where they can be handled," George says. As a result he has about 90 sets of irons and woods constantly on display. And he sells a good deal of merchandise to players from other clubs and courses.

"Lighting is a big factor in any size



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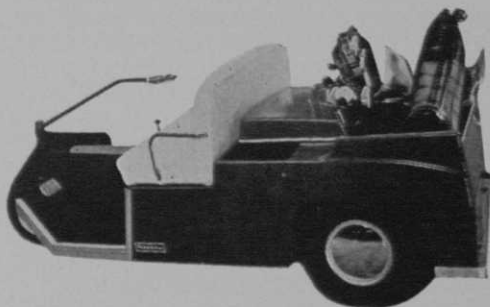
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Zamona Schoepflin, one of Lake's two fulltime women assistants, shows golf ball display drawer.

shop," Lake declares. His shop now has overhead fluorescent lighting as well as a number of individual spots which are directed at featured displays.

"One of the major mistakes a pro can make," Lake says, "is trying to hold up the price on closeout merchandise when by marking it down he can clear the space and realize money for new purchases.

#### Doesn't Go Overboard

"Another error is in allowing too much on old sets, George maintains. As an example, he mentions that a pro might quote an over-allowance on old clubs for a specific set of new clubs. The deal would give the pro a fair profit. Then the customer changes his mind and selects another set of new clubs on which the pro's margin is not very large. The customer wants the same inflated allowance on his old clubs and the pro is stuck with a profitless sale.

Lake has a splendid arrangement in his lease from the City of Long Beach.

All green fees are paid in the golf shop (a separate cash register is used for this, also for locker rental and shoe shines which the city gets). He owns the rental carts and operates the driving range, renting out the canvas buckets of range balls from the shop.

He pays a flat rental, rather than a percentage of sales.

Under the operational plan every golfer including the players who use the practice range come through Lake's shop.

Lake's rental pull carts have detachable handles which are stored in the shop. When a golfer rents a cart he is required to put up \$1 deposit, of which 65¢ is re-



Old fireplace in Recreation Park shop was rigged into a display with use of pegboard and shelves.

turned at the end of the round when he turns in the handle. Strangers are required to leave a driver's license or service I.D. card for rental of golf clubs.

Rental sets have Lake's name and the words "rent set" appear on the clubhead. They are matched sets. He feels these not only are more foolproof against theft than ordinary sets of rental clubs, which are just unmatched sets of old clubs with no positive marking, but that they also lead to sales of complete sets of matched clubs in the same swing weight and shaft as the rental clubs.

#### Code for Stock

Lake's staff of two men and two women (in addition to considerable part time help) marks merchandise with a code letter when pricing. Thus the letter "D" stands for 1959 and every January the entire stock is examined and all year-old items are marked down. Lake won't allow anything to stand around much more than two years; after that it's priced down to a sure selling point.

Lake's assistants, who teach on their own time, are on a straight salary, no commission. They average 42 hours a week in the shop but are paid overtime for the longer summer days. "My girl assistants are paid better than many men assistants in the area, possibly because they are better trained in pro shop work," Lake declares.

Recently Lake, working with the restaurant concessionaire, had equipment for canned music installed in his pro shop. Now the would be purchaser can examine or purchase clubs or equipment to the accompaniment of soft melodies.