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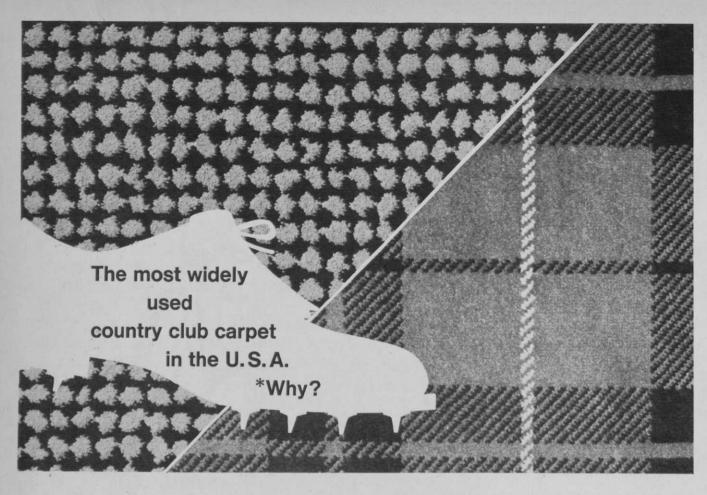
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### CORPORATING GOLF BUSINESS

VOL. 42 NO. 8

**AUGUST, 1968** 

### ARTICLES

- 30 Yards Makes A World of Difference 37 by Desmond Tolhurst New pro shop complex at Lake Success GC was built a stone's throw from the old site. The result is a command post for whole golf operation.
- 42 Is This Any Way to Run A Pro Shop? You Bet It Is! by R. J. Allen Bob Klewin and his wife, Maryellen, team up to produce inventive displays at Tucson National-but that's only half of it.
- 46 **Don't Let Winter Freeze Your Profits** by Joe Doan By putting a big effort into gracious dining, the Glen View Club does an off-season business of up to 70% of what is grossed during the summer.
- 50 The Functional Approach by Jerry Marlatt Every member wants a beautiful club, but be sure yours is designed practically. A good architect should be able to accomplish both.
- 55 **Does Your Course Cheat?** by Stan Sousa Is faulty design costing your players two or three strokes on every round of golf they play?
- 56 Analyze Your Turf & Save Money Latest techniques such as spectrophotometer analysis reveal early deficiencies practically and economically.

### 58 Automatic Irrigation on A Shoestring

This case study shows how one golf course owner trimmed costs by converting, and then installing system himself.

### VIEWPOINTS

- 8 **GOLFDOM Speaks Out** 14
- Swinging Around Golf
- 20 Grau's Answers to Turf Questions
- 24 Accent on Management 29 **Turfgrass Research Review**

### DEPARTMENTS

- 10 Letters To The Editor
- 62 **New Products** 66 **Coming Events**
- 67 News Of The Industry 74 Classified

by Ross Goodner

by Herb Graffis

by Fred V. Grau

by Ken Emerson

by Dr. James B. Beard

76 Advertising Index

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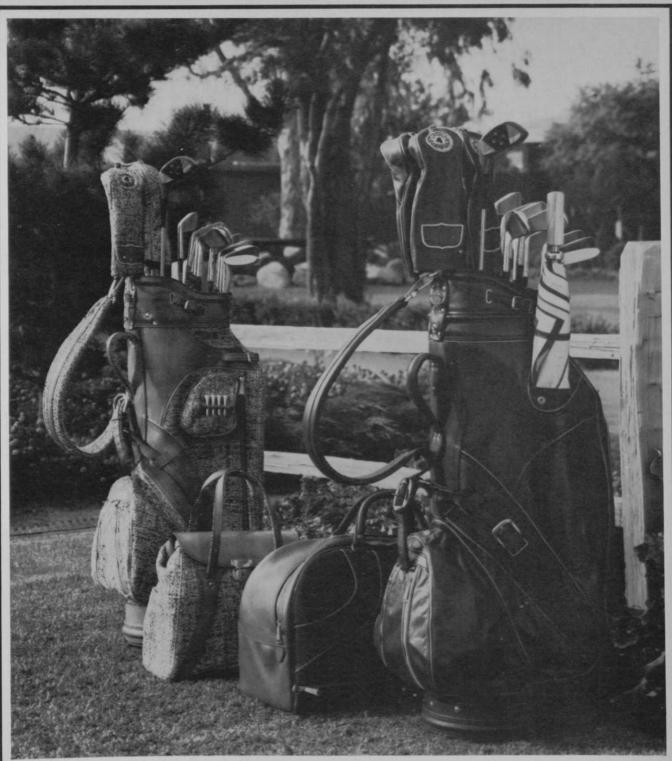
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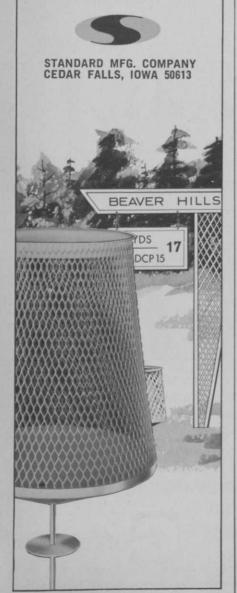
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**GOLFDOM** Speaks out

**G**olf is never without its problems, even in the best of times, and some of them—like the slice and the shank—are omnipresent. One of these is the old argument about the 14-club limit. Should it be raised? Lowered? There seems to be little practical thinking on the subject. Manufacturers and club professionals would like to see it raised, for obvious reasons. Purists, historians and other reactionaries would like to see it lowered, or unchanged. And the guy who really counts—the long-suffering golfer—will settle for anything that gives him a lower score.

The promise of a lower score is the core of the manufacturers' argument. They would have the duffer believe that raising the limit to 15 or 16 clubs will automatically chop off excess strokes and simultaneously enable him to break a hundred and eliminate all that mental anguish. The fact that it would also sell more clubs and increase revenue apparently is only incidental.

The purists, on the other hand, are quick to point out that Chick Evans or Mary Queen of Scots, or somebody, once won the Open while carrying only seven or eight sticks. That, they say, was when it took real skill to play the game. Naturally, they object strenuously to adding so many clubs that there becomes one for every type of shot. They would have the duffer learn to hit several kinds of shots with each club.

The touring pros, who play so well they shouldn't really figure into the discussion, would like to have more clubs in the bag. Nothing would please them more than to have a special club for every conceivable situation on the course. This, of course, was what caused the 14-club limit to be imposed in the first place.

Now let's get down to the important thing, namely, whether raising the limit would really help the average golfer. Those favoring the change say the addition of a No. 5 or No. 6 wood, a 1-iron, another wedge, a ''chipper'' or whatever, would enable the duffer to play a few shots per round better and perhaps give him two or three pars he wouldn't normally get, all of which would increase his enjoyment of the game. Our contention is that it wouldn't help him a bit. Most sets of woods already contain a 5-wood, since the brassie has become virtually obsolete; the duffer can't hit a 1-iron and probably should give up his 2-iron in favor of a 6-wood; the wedge already is the hardest club for the duffer to play, so he hardly needs another one, and the ''chipper'' is nothing that he can't duplicate by taking a medium or long iron and choking down on the grip.

As for reducing the limit, the idea is ridiculous. Nobody would stand for it. Suffice it to say that if the duffer can't hit a straightaway 5-iron shot now, he certainly isn't likely to learn how to play three or four different shots with it.

Golf Magazine recently presented the 14-club question to its readers in the form of "pro" and "con" articles and the reaction was about 50-50, which indicates there is no great groundswell of opinion favoring a change.

Golf is a fairly easy game for some and quite difficult for others, the degree of skill varying in direct proportion to the amount of practice one devotes to it. We don't think changing the club limit would have any appreciable effect, one way or another, and our studies show that the most important guy to consider—the duffer—doesn't think so either.

Ross Goodner Editor

For more information circle number 194 on card

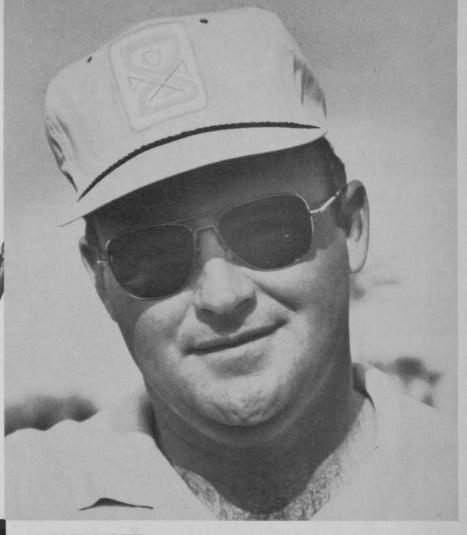
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# Letters to the editor

### An Open Letter To An Open Letter

Dear Brother Superintendent Caranci:

In your open letter in the June issue of GOLFDOM you have questioned my backbone and honesty and refer to my article as inconsistant and impractical. I had to refer back to my own writing to make sure you were refering to the piece / wrote. I will take up your objections one by one.

The article was unsigned for two reasons: to reply in kind to a similar article by a golf professional in an earlier issue, also anonymous, and to spare possible embarrassment to those I have been associated with, past and present.

In regard to my writing "fiction," my experiences parallel most of my fellow superintendents and if you

FLAILS-FLAILS

"hammer-knife" flail blades

have not had similar problems and thoughts you must have led a very sheltered professional career indeed.

You also seem to doubt that the average salary in this area is \$10,000. I am only a few hours by car from you and I ask you to check your own New England Association survey (1964 or 65) which shows an average of \$9,300. Our own association survey about the same time was slightly higher and in view of the generally increasing salaries I felt justified in rounding it off to \$10,000.

If you had been reading GOLFDOM as avidly as you pursued my article, you would have realized that my reference to milkmen was a tongue-incheek jibe at an article in an earlier issue by a superintendent comparing the two jobs—and the point IS the skill involved. I thought this was made very clear. As a point of information, union scale here is \$3.70 per hour, time and a half for over 40 hours and double Sundays and holidays, for milk tanker drivers.

My "slam at long hours" was my opinion that too often the superintendent is forced, or feels compelled to LABOR above and beyond the call of duty. As you state, we are engaged to SUPERVISE, my point exactly.

That there is friction between many pros and supers, and chairmen and supers is no figment of my imagination, as a straw poll of any group of turfmen will prove. I do not condone, encourage or revel in it. I mentioned it to make the problem known to the many readers of GOLFDOM who are no doubt unaware that the problem even exists—and the influence it can have on the operation of a course.

That most superintendents do realize the importance of the members and their chairmen is evident in the condition of most golf courses. But to write of all the pleasures and joys of my craft was not the purpose of the article and would have defeated the "Confessions" theme of the piece.

You conclude by saying my effort did "nothing to enhance the plight of the superintendent." In my Webster's, plight is defined as a dangerous or distressed condition. I do not now, nor have I ever, considered my chosen life's work as qualifying for such a description. Thus, I have no desire to be a greens chairman or a milk truck driver. A Pro? Well, I will keep working on my backswing.

Continued

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