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# GOLFDOM

## THE BUSINESS MAGAZINE OF GOLF

VOL. 47, NO. 8, AUGUST, 1973. INCORPORATING GOLF BUSINESS  
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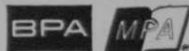
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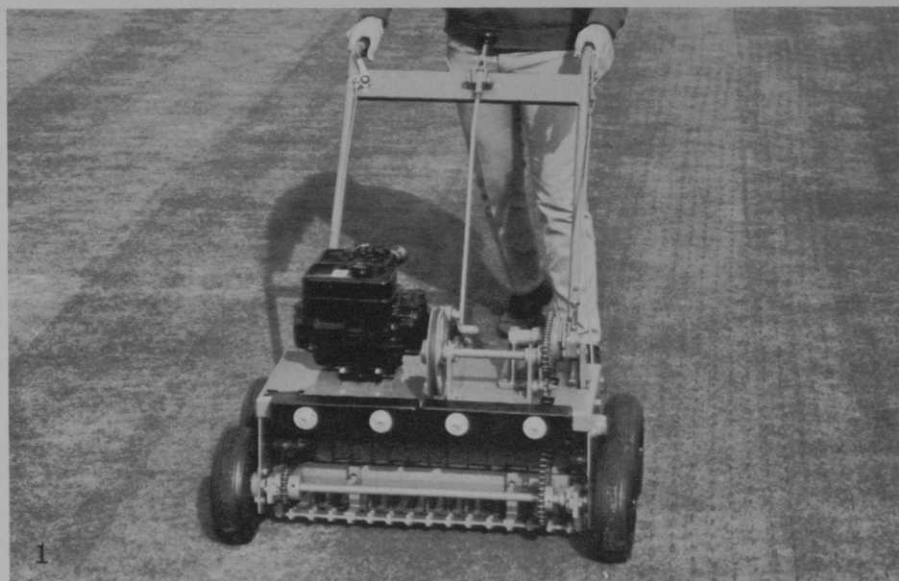
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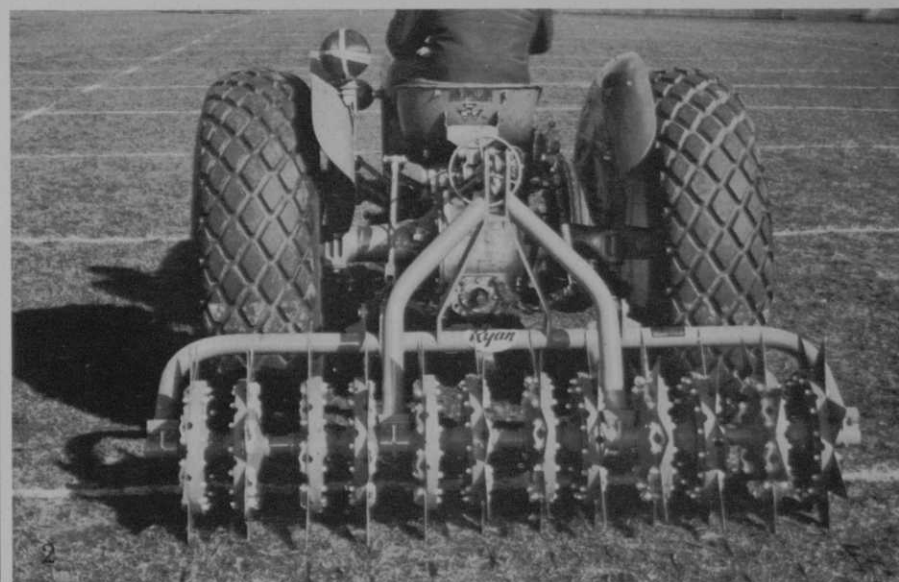
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### GOLF LESSONS NEED OVERHAULING

The golf lesson business today is very sick. And it needs drastic medicine to make it well.

Several things it could do to heal itself and better serve the golf industry are: 1) Free lessons on a modernized basis by competent instructors at private clubs. Most well-managed clubs could afford to increase the professional's salary by what he gets for lessons and offer the professional's and qualified assistants' services without charge on the lesson tee. The increased club income soon would pay the cost, and the members would be getting more use out of the club. 2) Free modernized instruction at resort courses. This kind of course should be ideal for improving one's golf, because study time is available and the study tee convenient. Golf resort hotels are amazingly backward in failing to utilize the valuable advertising inherent in improving golfers' games. They advertise name pros, who are famous because they were and are interested in their own games, not the games of others. At a resort the name pro plays with three guests a day. Paying an able teaching professional, so he could give lessons without charge would pay the resort hotel. The guests would advertise it. What made Pinehurst the first great golf resort in the United States was Maniac Hill, that historic open air golf university where professionals in the North and South Open and during their annual trips to and from winter golf jobs discussed techniques with each other and keen amateurs. 3) A revolutionary overhauling and modernizing of instruction policy and methods. This would have to be done primarily by the Professional Golfers' Assn., then by the

National Golf Foundation in its collegiate golf promotion.

The present half-hour lesson originally was a substitute for the playing lesson, which got results, but was abandoned about 1910 in the United States because professionals didn't have enough time for those eager to learn by playing. Then came the years of teaching by the side of a fairway, then the practice and lesson tee.

Despite the skill, devotion and temperament of some professionals, the lesson tee results generally have been unsatisfactory and often a waste of an able professional's time.

Every successful teaching professional's results usually have come from inspiring eagerness to learn by showing the pupil how to teach himself. The professional's diagnostic ability and his direction in basic training usually require only five or 10 minutes at the start of the lesson when an effective instructor is on the job. The rest is supervision, sometimes correction, so the pupil can work out his or her own answers, just as must be done in play.

The Professional Golfers' Assn. in its annual national meeting teaching sessions and at its sectional meetings on teaching has had expert professionals demonstrate how they play, but rarely how they learned to play. Although pro golf authorities agree that effective golf instruction is about 25 per cent teaching and 75 per cent learning, the outgrown half-hour lesson method calls for the opposite division of time and responsibility.

The national scoring average of golfers, which has 90 per cent scoring over 90, shows that the half-hour lesson pattern is obsolete. Economics, too, show the plan is archaic. Less than 4 per cent of a

continued on page 10

## About golf car availability and profits.

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## GRAFFIS from page 6

professional's income derives from lessons. About 70 per cent of lessons are given to women, because the lesson time and place is inconvenient for men. After 60 years, the half-hour lesson plan seems to be doomed, maybe for the good of golf.

*Amos Lapp*, 48 years a superintendent, St. Andrews GC, West Chicago, retired. He will become green chairman of courses operated by *Joe Jemsek*. St. Andrews is a Jemsek course. Amos Lapp's sons in charge of courses are Kenneth, now at Coghill CC, and John, who moves from Glenwoodie CC, also a Jemsek course, to succeed his father at St. Andrews.

*Clifford A. Wagoner*, president, Golf Course Superintendents Assn. of America, says, "National Golf Day 1973 has got to be classed as the Number One event of this year's golf tour."

How right he is, considering the wide scope and value of the PGA's only nationwide fund-raising affair for golf education, turf research, golf therapy in veterans' hospitals and as an aid to indigent professionals. Joe Dey is asking men in the Tournament Players Division to improve their showing in National Golf Day. It steadily has been the poorest of any PGA section. Dey defends his charges by saying that a higher percentage of the TPD contribute their \$1 minimum each year. He's probably right, because there are too many home professionals who are indifferent, lazy or unthinking about getting their members or fee course players to participate in an individualized sport's biggest charity.

Golfers aren't cheap; they simply haven't been told what's being done with the money. Cliff Wagoner knows. He has seen it help young men get through turf management schools on GCSAA scholarships, which get their support from National Golf Day funds raised by PGA members.

*Al Radko*, research coordinator of the United States Golf Assn. Green Section, which studies and directs the distribution of around 15 per cent of National Golf Day money to golf turf research all over the country, can tell you that the

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