

CERTIFIED PROS?

The following article was published in Golf World, December 16, 1969 and has a lot of good information as far as both pros and superintendents are concerned. In the first place, it should make the professional group stronger and more solid in as much as it clearly defines the "can's and can't do's" of their organization. In the second place, it may give our own organization an idea or two along the lines of the certification bug that is in everyone's ear. The PGA seems to have done an excellent job on their new classification structure and should be commended for coming up with a seemingly sound group of ideas which should satisfy most of their members.

To be sure, when we are in Houston in February, you can depend on hearing a lot of talk about certification and rightly so. This seems to be a must, as well as some other possible changes in by-laws, member classifications, and other areas if we are to keep abreast of our cohorts in the golfing world.

It is going to be a difficult job for our group just as you can be sure it was a difficult job for the delegates of the PGA to draw up and validate a slate of requirements to suit the majority of their members. But any undertaking of this size and stature cannot be accepted by all the members of any group of this size due to the fact that regardless how large or how small the membership may be, there is always a certain number that will never be satisfied on any plan presented. This is why committees and boards of directors and delegations are set up. These groups are supposed to represent the entire membership by taking different ideas and thoughts from different individuals as well as their own groups.

So when we go to Texas, try to have an idea or two in mind to suggest concerning our own certification program. The more ideas we submit to the certification committee, the more possibilities they will be able to work from and this may lead to a solution much sooner than we ever anticipated. Please read the following carefully and see what comes to mind.

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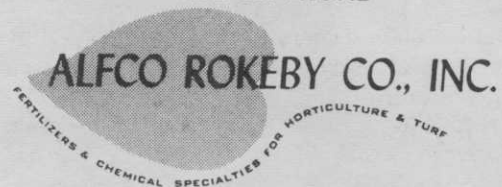
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MASTER PRO AT HEAD OF PGA CLASSES

Delegates to the 53rd annual meeting of the PGA of America agreed to a broad overhaul of the membership classification structure, abandoning the time-honored letter designations and substituting categorical identifications.

At the same time, they voted to create a new elite classification of "Master Professional" and to restore the apprentice concept for young men advancing towards membership.

Meanwhile, in parallel action, the Executive Committee approved a proposal to launch a golf club certification program. These certificates of approval will be awarded to clubs meeting PGA physical standards and where the PGA head professional is employed under a contract acceptable to his Section.

Abandoned now, effective September 1, 1970, are the membership class designations "A" through "J". In their place is an entirely new membership classification structure. Essentially, it provides for two routes to the position of "head professional" (the old Class A designation). On the one hand, an aspiring professional may apply for apprentice status. This is defined as "a registration program for golf professionals who are not working toward PGA but who are working toward membership in the association."

After acquiring at least six credits toward membership and completing Business School 1, the aspirant receives his Apprentice I card and becomes eligible to attend Sectional meetings. After acquiring 24 credits and completing Business School II, he receives his Apprentice II card.

From the Apprentice classification, the candidate may become either an assistant (if employed as a shop assistant or teacher under a head professional), or an associate (if he assumes a position of head professional without meeting the minimum requirements for this classification). The assistant also may move into the associate category under similar circumstances. Each may then qualify as head professional after serving a full year as an associate and pass a comprehensive examination. The head professional, of course, has all the rights and privileges of full membership.

Under the terms of a "Grandfather Clause", all present Class A members not subject to transfer classification will automatically become "head professionals".

A second route to head professional is open to full-time playing professionals. From Approved Tournament Player, as they become eligible for membership, the tournament regular becomes a PGA Playing Professional. Subsequently, when he chooses to end his playing career and accept a resident club position, he moves into the Associate Professional category for a period of one year until he completes the minimum requirements for graduation to Head Professional.

Meanwhile, a cluster of "Transfer Classifications" were set up to provide for members who, for one reason or another, do not fit what, for want of a better word, might be called "active" classifications. These included:

Affiliate—Members actively engaged in golf capacities other than at a club or course. This category would include all present Class B members. Affiliates will not have a vote, nor can they attend executive sessions, endorse membership applications or hold office.

Professional Emeritus—Members in good standing for 25 years who continue in golf activities other than at a club or course. It would include past presidents not qualifying as "Master", "Head" or "Playing" professionals, and those who own or lease clubs on courses or driving ranges. They would have all rights and privileges.

Inactive—For members in good standing for 20 years who are incapacitated by illness or injury, or those unemployed for a period of one year who are recommended for this category by their Section, or those unable to meet the obligations of membership and are recommended for transfer by the Section, and those who leave the profession (with a 2-year limitation applied here). Their rights and privileges limited to insurance and subscription to The Professional Golfer.

Retired—Members for 25 years who are 65 or over and retired from the profession. Rights and privileges limited as for the Inactive class.

Honorary—Those accorded this status by a vote of the delegates in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the game and to the association. They will be privileged to attend meetings and to vote on matters referred to them by the Executive Committee.

However, the most significant action of the delegates at Scottsdale dealt with the creation of the new role of Masters Professional. He will be defined under the constitution as "a golf professional who: (1) as a PGA member, has served in the capacity of a head professional for a minimum period of ten years, (2) has satisfactorily completed all PGA training programs, and (3) meetings other requirements as prescribed by the Executive Committee."

These "other requirements" have been spelled out by the Executive Committee in these terms:

He must complete all PGA Home Study programs.

He must have demonstrated his playing ability, at present or at some time in the past (the equivalent of 5-handicap under the USGA handicapping system) or the ability to break 80 consistently on a regulation course under reasonable playing conditions.

He must submit an acceptable thesis on golf instruction.

He must have attended an Executive Management Seminar, and continue attendance at these at least once every three years.

He must pass an initial examination.

He must participate actively in Sectional affairs.

In other important actions by the delegates, it was agreed that time spent at approved Par-3 courses will count toward membership eligibility. A recognized Par-3 course was defined as one which "consists of no less than nine holes and driving range with a minimum hole length of 55 yards and a total yardage of at least 1,000 yards for nine holes and 2,000 yards for 18 holes. It must have at least 14 acres in total course area, exclusive of clubhouse, golf shop and parking area, must be planted in grass but may provided artificial tee mats. It must have a professional golf shop located on the course and be operated by a Class A (head professional) member."

The delegates also voted to grant eight credits toward membership for all degree graduates of an accredited 4-year college or university and make them eligible to apply for membership after being employed in the golf profession for 32 months.

Action at the urging of the Northern California Section, the delegates added a clause to the Code of Ethics which would make anyone liable to disciplinary action who accepts a position without first consulting with the officers of the Section or accepting a position which doesn't comply with the job requirements of the Section in which it is located.

NEW MEMBERSHIPS

At the board meeting following the conference in Baltimore, the following memberships were read and reviewed and if no opposition is heard within 30 days after publication, these men will be accepted as members under the published classifications.

James J. Torrillo—Belaire Golf and C.C. in Bowie, Md. Jim is applying for a class E membership and was sponsored by Ron Hall and Bill Emerson.

Grant Pensinger—Chambersburg Golf Club in Scotland, Penna. Grant is applying for a class B membership and was sponsored by Fred Baker and Bert Yingling.

William T. Ramberg—Elks Club in Salisbury, Md. Tom is applying for a class E membership and was sponsored by George Gumm and Lew White.

Bernard W. Bornhorn—Baltimore, Md. Bernard is replacing Jack Witcher and is applying for a class E membership. He was sponsored by Russ Kerns and George Cleaver.

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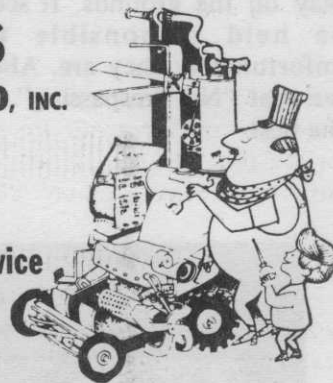
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