

What the PGA Is

By HORTON SMITH

SECRETARY OF THE PROFESSIONAL GOLFERS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Sports pages often make reference to the PGA, and golfers are continually tossing off the phrase. How many of these golfers know just what it is? I shall try to explain.

The Professional Golfers' Association was organized in 1916 by a small group of pioneer professionals. It has grown to national magnitude in both size and influence.

Although some elements of the PGA may indicate a commercial aspect, it is not organized for profit. Its aims are the promotion of golf and the betterment of professional golfers.

The PGA Dedication says: "Believing that the growth of the game of golf and its high standing in this country is largely due to the efforts of its early professional exponents, and because of their ideals of sportsmanship and ethical practices, the Professional Golfers' Association of America is dedicated to the perpetuation of those ideals."

The object of the PGA: "To elevate the standards of the professional golfer's vocation; to promote interest in the game of golf; to protect the mutual interests of its members; to hold meetings and tournaments periodically for the encouragement of the members; to assist deserving members, who may be out of employment, to obtain a position; to institute a benevolent fund for the relief of deserving members; and to effect any other object of like nature that may be determined from time to time by the Association."

The PGA Code of Ethics: "The name 'Professional Golfer' must be and remain a synonym and pledge of honor, service and fair dealing. His professional integrity, fidelity to the game of golf, and a sense of his great responsibility to employers and employes, manufacturers and clients, and to his brother professionals, transcends thought of material



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gain in the motives of the true professional golfer."

The underlying purpose of the PGA membership requirement of five years' golf professional experience in some essential capacity is to uphold the high standards as a protection to the public and the game.

3,000 Members

There are about 3,000 PGA members in the United States, of whom about 2,500 are attached as club professionals. The ten types of membership range from the full-fledged Class A professional at \$45 annual dues to the Class H assistant at dues of \$10.

The Association is managed by an Executive Committee composed of President, Secretary, Treasurer, and ten Vice-Presidents. Each of the nine Districts elects a vice-president. The tenth is elected by popular vote of the qualified tournament players as a direct "voice of the players". Officers are elected and

general business transacted at an annual meeting, at which each of the 30 Sections is represented by two delegates, and the qualified tournament players by two. The Sections have their local officers.

I should like to appeal to golfers to support both the USGA and the PGA in their efforts for better golf. The USGA welcomes the membership of every properly accredited club and golf course, and the PGA welcomes the membership of every qualified professional. Support both — and you support golf. We in the PGA recognize the USGA as the logical rules-making and governing body because golf basically belongs to the amateurs.

I have occasionally heard some professionals contend that the prize money in the Open should be greater. I have competed in 20 Opens and feel that this Championship is one of the "bread-winners" for the USGA, making possible sponsorship of many other worth-while events and projects, all for the welfare of golf — Amateur, Women's, Public Links, Junior and Girls' Championships, the Green Section and other activities.

I doubt if any professional would wish the USGA to eliminate any of these items merely to increase prize money for the Open. But I would like to suggest that when the financial position of the USGA warrants it, the prize money be increased and extra dividends be added. Already the USGA has adopted the policy of rewarding every 72-hole professional finisher with a prize of not less than \$100.

However, regardless of prize money for the Open or anything else, the PGA is endeavoring to cooperate fully with the USGA.

The PGA policy during the recent winter tour has been to adhere rigidly to USGA Rules. It has not only speeded up play but has eliminated much controversy. There has been discussion amongst professionals to the effect that "local" rules might be adopted which would provide for even a more strict interpretation than USGA Rules. This

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY AND COUNSEL

Thomas W. Crane

latter point referred specifically to conduct on the putting green.

As a competitor, I have found the USGA and its officials to be strict, just and cheerful in discharging their duties. I have enjoyed and appreciated the air of correctness and the spirit of good sportsmanship which have been traditional through the years in connection with USGA events.

The USGA Open has always been something just a bit special, and has put all competitors just a little bit more "on their toes". USGA events have something for which there is no substitute — dignity, prestige, quality.

We of the PGA are proud of the warm relations that we enjoy with the USGA, and will continue to work untiringly together for the great game we all love so much — Golf.