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IT'S NOT JUST A GAME:
A CASE STUDY IN LEISURE

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ABSTRACT

This work assumes that games and sports provide their participants with opportunities to actualize human potential that is not realized in everyday life. The sport of golf has been chosen to see what it has to offer its participants. A sample of golfers drawn from players at a local civic golf course is studied via participant observation and interviewing. It is seen that golf, for the sample, represents a challenge that is not present elsewhere in their life. The challenge is sought out so desperately and continuously that it appears to take on 'sick' proportions. The sample recognizes this and refers to themselves as 'addicted' to golf. Whether addiction can be thought of in a non-chemical way is then researched and the findings are applied to the sample. It is concluded that addiction can be non-chemical, but because addiction is defined as being antithetical to challenge it is concluded that the sample is not addicted.

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Barney Jackson, fellow Bandit, has proved that different academic disciplines have much to offer each other. His few comments were very insightful and helpful and much appreciated.

I would also to thank Peter Pineo for his late but helpful assistance.

One of the rules of modern academia is publish or perish and because he did not publish Bob Drass was not retained in this department. In addition to convincing me to stay in Grad School when I had no intention of doing so it was Bob who taught the first sociology course I took and who later taught my most rewarding graduate course and, thus, has been a major contributing factor in this work. As much as I appreciate his efforts I regret that the university did not keep him. I am truly grateful for his efforts.

Trying to thank the Bandits is virtually impossible,

after all how does one thank a major portion of one's life. Recently I ran into a former high school mate who when hearing I was doing a thesis on golf, said if there was one thing I would always be associated with, it would be golf. For me golf is the Bandits and what they have done, besides taking my money over the years, is given me an M.A., a fair exchange. While doing this study never once have I considered myself to be doing work, I now realize this is because the Bandits have made my work and life one thing, I consider myself really fortunate in this regard and I appreciate the Bandits immeasurably for this.

The last few years here at McMaster have largely been pleasurable due to fellow graduate students. When I came here I did not in my wildest dreams expect the camaraderie that evolved. The constant friendship and encouragement are among my fondest memories of the last three years. Special thanks to John Baker, Bruce Desmond, Joe Herbert and Bill Prince.

In the last couple of months I have quit this thesis almost as many times as I quit golf in a month, which is quite numerous, and one person, Marlene Scholdonat, more than any other encouraged me to continue and, thus, has been very instrumental in this work and

for her support I am truly grateful.

I would also like to thank my parents for buying me my first golf membership and to thank my typist, ME, who after typing two drafts of this thesis may never type again. Finally I would like to thank Ben Hogan, Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus who over the years have provided me with inspiration in an increasingly uninspiring world.

In conclusion to complement my sociological perspective that follows I would like to say a few words as a golfer, IT'S NOT JUST A GAME, AND WHO WANTS IT TO BE ANYWAY. HOY!

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Chapter I

Introduction

As the twentieth century comes to an end one of the new social concerns is what people will do with their increasing amounts of leisure time. Due to advances in technology, men and women no longer have to devote as much of their energy to mere survival. Even if one chooses not to speculate as to what the final work time to leisure time ratio will be, one must acknowledge that as this ratio gets smaller the importance of the leisure component increases. Out of the belief that this ratio is indeed becoming smaller, albeit at a much slower rate than the media would have us believe, this study intends to investigate one of the Western world's most popular forms of leisure, namely the game of golf.¹

In looking at leisure activities one identifies two categories: (1) spectator activities, and (2) participant activities. Included in the first category are such things as watching television, going to movies, the theatre, sporting events, etc. The emphasis here is on

watching other people participating. While it is hard to imagine someone never engaging in one of these spectator activities it is not as hard to imagine the non-participant. In being the participant a person takes an active part in the event. In most cases this would involve being a player in a game or sport or being involved in some type of creative activity. Combining the obvious observation that it is less taxing physically to be involved as a spectator than as a participant with the observation that in spite of this many people will go to great lengths to sacrifice what seems to be much needed recuperating time to be actively involved, led me to believe that a study of participants would be much more informative than a study of spectators.² When one further realizes that the members of my sample leave only eight to nine hours maximum in a golfing-working day to see their family, sleep, eat, etc. one cannot dismiss the idea that this game plays a very important part in their lives and that it would be an informative area of study.³

The reasons behind choosing golf as opposed to tennis or some other leisure activity were many. Being acquainted with the subculture as a participant not only facilitated access to my sample but had also, over the years, aroused my curiosity as to why people played

the game. The very structure of the game in that it is not just a forty-five minute to one hour endeavor, led me, as previously mentioned, to conclude that this activity by virtue of the time investment alone was very special to its participants. The immense popularity of the game also made me feel it would be informative.⁴ As Michael Murphy has so vividly put it,

The ball is ubiquitous, ... it is in flight at this very moment above every continent. Moreover, it is in flight every moment of the day and night. It may take flight one day on the moon, especially when you consider the potential prodigies of mile long drives and the wonder they would bring to millions. Consider the symbolism inherent in that indubitable fact: a₅ golf ball suspended in air at every moment!

After Alan Shepard's 6-iron shots on the moon, during his recent Apollo visit, Murphy's statement becomes easier to visualize. The knowledge that golf has such a long history also intensified my interest in this particular game. As Allistair Cooke has said, "It has been going on for so long that it is impossible to dismiss like mah-jōngg or sex as a passing fad."⁶

Although most of his comments are directed specifically at the game of chess, Cockburn in Idle Passion: Chess and the Dance of Death makes a very intriguing remark about games in general,

But at the most profound level-beyond the desire for 'fun' or for exercise or for excitement-I think one can argue that games, with their own laws and their own time frames, represent an expectancy on the part of the contenders and of the audience; that games direct a question at the very heart of society and of culture as to what it could be and what it could become in terms of freedom and realized human potential. Some games are discarded, since the question no longer applies in the terms in which the activity posed it- as in medieval tournaments that asked which person was most courtly, which had the strongest horse, which had the toughest lance and the keenest eye; such a sport becomes an elegy for a class that has already had its day. (emphasis mine)

Assuming that Cockburn is correct about games and human potential, this work sets out to look at the motivations of golfers to try and ascertain if golfers do indeed feel that they realize some potential through golf that they do not actualize elsewhere.

Unfortunately this research is not a longitudinal study nor even a comparative one, rather, only the examination of the motivations of participants at one point in time. Although golf does have a long history I was unable to locate any similar type of research from previous eras. Given that the world we now live in is vastly different from the world that invented the game, it is truly unfortunate that the motivations of the players of then and now cannot be compared. Allistair Cooke

claims in his article entitled, "Self Torture Disguised As A Game", that, "They have been playing golf for 800 years and nobody has satisfactorily said why."⁸ This quote implies a constant 800 year answer to the question but I do not feel this to be the case. However, in no way is it felt that because some motivations may have disappeared and because the constancy of others cannot be tested that this look at present day motivations will not be rewarding.

Methodology

From what has been said so far it might be thought that only motivations are looked at, but this is not so. Motivations are indeed looked at, but they are looked at in the context of the golfer's total feelings towards the game, not as entities standing by themselves. To ascertain these feelings it was felt that a combination of methods would be more informative than employing just one method.

This study started out by using participant observation. After a few months in the field it was decided that an interview or a series of interviews would be a helpful supplement. Two interviews were conducted; the first interview lasted from an hour to

an hour and a half and was fairly broad in scope, the second interview consisted of five questions that were aimed at investigating a particular question that had emerged from the data.⁹ This second interview was the culmination of the original plan to generate a theory from the data.¹⁰

There was no problem gaining access to the sample as I was already a member of the group. In explaining the degree of my involvement it is useful to look at Gans's categorization of participant observers,

In my own work, I have distinguished three types of roles. One is the total participant, the field worker who is completely involved emotionally in a social situation and who only after it is over becomes a researcher again and writes down what has happened... A second is the researcher-participant, who participates in a social situation but is personally only partially involved so that he can function as a researcher... The third is the total researcher who observes without any personal involvement in the situation under study.¹¹

Given these three categories my work as a participant observer came closest to the total participant. The only difference between my actions and Gans's total participant is that he implies there is a definite break in contact with the sample. In my case the only break in contact with the group was that at a certain point in time I stopped collecting data, I did not stop my interaction

with them.

Choosing this form of participant observation is not as straightforward and simple as it appears. In fact, justifications will have to be made after viewing Gans's further elaboration that,

being a total participant is probably the most fruitful kind of participant observation, for only by being completely immersed in an event as an involved person can one really confront and grasp the social and emotional incentives and pressures that act on people in groups. Total participation is psychologically very difficult for the researcher, however; it is almost impossible for him to be both a total participant and an observer of himself and other people...Indeed I would go as far as to say that the participant observer cannot study his own people; he probably cannot work in a setting so close to his own life situation that he does share concerns and perspectives; for example he could not study the department of sociology of which he himself is a member. Even if he were able to persuade his colleagues to treat him as a researcher rather than as a colleague, which is unlikely, it is doubtful he could give up the temptation to participate, or to shed the feelings he had about his colleagues before he started to study them. Unless he is totally uninterested in his own department he might want to act when he should observe, to like or dislike when he should research, and to argue when he should be listening.¹²

It is quite interesting that Gans sees the close contact of the total participant as being the most fruitful participant method yet feels that he must renounce it at the same time. This is accentuated by the fact that

Gans never quite makes it clear why the faculty member cannot do the study. What he does do is leave us with the feeling that the sociologist must be detached, unemotional, totally objective. In other words he is telling us that the sociologist must not allow his beliefs or values to enter into the study.¹³ To understand these remarks better I think it might be useful for a moment to look briefly at this belief of "no values" and how it relates to users of participant observation.¹⁴

Proponents of sociology's soft methods deserve to be applauded for their desire to 'do' sociology in places other than the ivory towers of their respective universities. Leaving the comfort of the nicely air-conditioned offices to go out and interact with non-academics or non-professionals takes a certain amount of courage that should not be minimized. However, recognizing and acknowledging their willingness to get their hands dirty, so to speak, does not blind one to the fact that there are limits as to how dirty they will get. Fear of permanently staining one's hands leads to rationalizations to cover up an aversion to getting too close to the people being studied.

A blatant example of this aversion is seen in Blanche Geer's article, "First Days in the Field; A Chronicle of Research in Progress".¹⁵ In this article Geer reports on a participant observation study she was involved with at the University of Kansas in 1959. This study tried to ascertain incoming undergraduates' feelings during a summer orientation period. In discussing her involvement with the future undergraduates she states,

one might suppose that empathy for informants, once developed would become a problem in itself. It oftens feels like one in the field but drops sharply on leaving it. After a few weeks on analysis, I wondered how could I stand those silly kids. Discussion with coworkers and getting the faculty perspective later in the study also helped to restore a balance.¹⁶ (emphasis mine)

It does not seem to matter whether Geer is just more blatant in expressing her feelings or whether she is not yet as sophisticated as others in reporting her findings. What does matter is her feeling toward those 'silly kids'.¹⁷

Tied in to this desire not to come too close to the people being studied is the feeling that the researcher who does is not being scientific.¹⁸ This is noteworthy because in its quest for status it seems that sociology feels that if it borrows all the impersonal aspects

of the natural sciences, the prestige of these sciences can also be borrowed or perhaps even stolen. But it is this personal aspect that is the hope and appeal of the discipline. It is unfortunate that this possible uniqueness is not being pursued. I would have to agree with Gouldner's remarks that,

The dominant drift in American sociology is toward professionalization, the growth of technical specialists, toward the diffusion of the value-free outlook to the point where it becomes less of an intellectual doctrine and more of a blanketing mood.¹⁹

Further consequences of value-freeness are given by Gouldner,

Once committed to the premise of value-free sociology, such sociologists are bound to a policy which can only alienate them further from the surrounding world. Social science can never be fully accepted in a society, or by part of it, without paying its way; this means it must manifest both its relevances and concern for the contemporary human predicament. Unless the value relevances of sociological inquiry are made plainly evident, unless there are at least some bridges between it and larger hopes and purposes, it must inevitably be scorned by laymen as pretentious word mongering.²⁰

Fortunately not all sociologists feel that they either have no values or that they must claim that they have no values. Becker in his imaginatively entitled article, "Whose Side Are We on?" shines some needed light on the problem.

To have values or not to have values: the question is always with us. When sociologists undertake to study problems that have relevance to the world we live in they find themselves caught in a crossfire. Some urge them not to take sides to be neutral and do research that is technically correct and value free. Others tell them their work is shallow and useless if it does not express a deep commitment to a value position.

This dilemma which seems so painful to so many, actually does not exist, for one of its horns is imaginary. For it to exist, one would have to assume, as some apparently do, that it is indeed possible to do research that is uncontaminated by personal and political sympathies. I propose to argue that it is not possible and, therefore, that the question is not whether we should take sides, since we inevitably will, but rather whose side are we on.²¹

If there is a connection between a genuine desire not to get too close to subjects with the desire to be value-free one would then hypothesize that given Becker's above comments on value-freeness that he would not have an aversion to getting close to his subjects and that possibly he might even have opposite feelings. Looking at his remarks below we see that this hypothesis is found to be true,

We ought not to view it (deviant behaviour) as something special, as depraved or in some magical way better than other kinds of behaviour. We ought to see it simply as a kind of behaviour some disapprove of and others value, studying the processes by which either or both perspectives are built up and maintained. Perhaps the surety against either extreme is close contact

with the people we study.²²

What we are presenting is not a distorted view of 'reality' but the reality which engages the people we have studied, the reality they create by their interpretation of their experience and in terms of which they act. If we fail to present this reality, we will not have achieved full sociological understanding of the phenomenon we seek to explain.²³

It should not be construed from my desire to use and justify total participation that I have not encountered some problems with the method. Becoming as involved with a sample as I have, tempts one to ignore, or maybe to forget to report, certain behaviours or beliefs that might not be 'appreciated' past the boundaries of the sample. Hopefully this temptation has not been actualized to the point where the data becomes 'suspicious'. In reading my findings I think they demonstrate that I have gained the added insights of total participation but have not discoloured the picture. I believe this has been accomplished in the only possible way, by adhering to sentiments expressed by Mills,

So far as conceptions are concerned, the aid ought to be to use as many 'value-neutral' terms as possible and to become aware of and to make explicit the value implications that remain. So far as the problems (the question being studied) are concerned, the aim ought to be, again, to be clear about the values in terms of which they are selected, and then to avoid as best one can evaluative bias

in their solution, no matter where the solution takes one and no matter what its moral or political implications may be.²⁴

As alluded to above, on the commencement of this work there were no hypotheses to be tested. Instead the work was to be exploratory in nature with no initial direction.²⁵ The intentions were to follow Glaser and Strauss's lead in letting hypotheses and theories emerge from the data.

After getting a feel for the situation through participant observation I conducted the first wave of interviews in the fall of 1977. Even though I believed that much information was being obtained through participant observation I felt that doing systematic interviewing could only enhance my knowledge of the situation. Throughout, information obtained by interviews was supplemented by participant observations.²⁶ Over the winter the data was initially analyzed and the idea of looking at golf as being addictive was first conceived. At this point the problem of the total participant, mentioned above, was encountered; namely, that the researcher as a total participant might not want or might be unable to investigate something that hit too close to home. Given my close association with the group there was now the possibility that I might have

to think of myself as addicted.²⁷ The formulation and administration of my second interview, focusing on addiction, in the spring of 1978, should answer the question whether such a problem might be overcome by the total participant. In addition, I feel that the presentation of the findings below will show that the total participant can study an area that is close to her/him in an informative manner.

The Sample

This study was conducted at one of Hamilton's two civic golf courses. The golf course, hereafter to be referred to as Green Acres, has two 18 hole courses. In 1977 there were 742 senior male members.²⁸ Of the male members 86 or 12 percent belonged to an informal group called the Bandits. There are three organized groups at Green Acres, the next largest group, the Mini-Bandits, has 28 members. Whereas the Minis play only as an organized group on weekends the Bandits play as a group every day of the week. From mid-April to the end of October there are no more than a handful of days when no Bandit will play.²⁹ In addition, on weekdays, there are two times when they play. The main, or most attended time, is 8:00 A.M. and then there is

a second group at 5:00 P.M.

As mentioned, in 1977 there were 86 group members; in 1978 membership had dropped to 73 through geographical attrition. No new members were allowed to join the group in 1978. Of this number 22 were interviewed. All of the members interviewed in 1977 were group members in 1978 and available for the second interview. The age range of group members is from twenty to seventy-five.

When I approached group members about being interviewed my apprehension about their possible refusal proved to be ill-founded. Although I had read that people enjoy being studied and are much more co-operative than often assumed, I was still surprised at the co-operation given.³⁰ I do not think, however, that the positive reaction to my study was based principally on the enjoyment of being studied. I think this aided my efforts but I also feel that personal relationships already built up were a significant factor. In discussing his feelings on this, Whyte in Street Corner Society declares,

I found that my acceptance in the district depended on the personal relationships I developed far more than upon any explanation I might give. Whether it was a good thing to write a book about Cornerville depended entirely

on people's opinion of me personally. If I was all right, then my project was all right; if I was no good, then no amount of explanation could convince them that the book was a good idea..³¹

I see this as another big advantage of total participation.

Only one person refused to be interviewed, but at the same time he offered to answer all of my questions informally. Not understanding these opposing positions I asked, "What is the difference?" To which he replied, "I don't give interviews." The only other problem encountered was that one respondent gave me, what I knew to be, an incorrect answer for his age.³² After confronting him he started to hesitate on the interview saying that if it was going to be personal he did not want to do it. I replied that he did not have to answer any particular question if he did not want to (I was apprehensively anticipating my golf-wife-work question) and explained to him that the age question was important because I wanted to show how unique this game and this group in particular was in bringing three generations together for extended periods of time. After this there was no hesitation or reluctance to answer any of the questions on his part.

Thesis Outline

Chapter II focuses on my sample. The chapter investigates two aspects of the sample. First an overview of the group, the Bandits, will be given and second the individual sample members will be introduced. For each interviewee brief sketches will be presented. Included in these sketches will be the interviewee's age, the number of years he has golfed, his estimate of the number of rounds he played in 1977, his estimate of how many of these rounds were played with no other Bandits and his replies to the questions, "What is there in golf that makes you like it so much?" and "Do you think you will ever quit the game?"

The third chapter focuses initially on the competitive nature of the group members and subsequently on the betting that goes on among group members. It will be seen that the betting is an operationalization of the group member's quest for competition.

The fourth chapter entitled, "What would you do Without Golf?" demonstrates the importance attached to golf by the sample members. This is first shown by looking at how the interviewees rate golf in comparison with work and with their wife. The importance of golf to these men is further illustrated by; (1) showing

the weather conditions that they put up with to play golf, (2)noting that the Bandits have no desire to take up other sports, (3)looking at the vivid memories of golf that sample members have, and (4)examining their responses to the question, "How important is golf to you?" Finally the Bandits' feelings about whether they see golf as being just a game are examined.

Many sample members expressed the belief that they were addicted to golf, the fourth chapter investigates this possibility. For the addicted belief of the Bandits to be accepted addiction would have to be thought of as being non-chemical. Chapter V discusses this idea, and then looks at addiction and golf.

Chapter VI, the concluding chapter, presents chapter summaries as a background for the major findings of the thesis. These findings are then discussed, and in conclusion areas for future research are suggested.

Footnotes

1. As implied in the title of this work I am not going to concede that golf is just a game, but this will be dealt with later. Not to over confuse the issue at this point, golf will, for the time being, be referred to as a game.
2. For information on the effects of being a spectator of organized sports see Paul Hoch, Rip Off the Big Game, and Laverne Barnes, The Plastic Orgasm. Just as Ivan Illich in Deschooling Society talks about the hidden curriculum in schools, Hoch and Barnes talk about the subtle socialization of spectators that goes on in organized sports.
3. Although a round of golf may only take four hours, as will be discussed later, for this group it involves at a minimum five hours and on the average six hours. When one adds this to the eight to eight and a half hours spent at work and the commuting time, the total golf-work time approaches 16 hours. If one further accepts eight hours as necessary for sleeping time it is seen that there is no time left in the day. This is especially noteworthy because playing golf and working on the same day is done, on average, a couple of times a week by those in the sample.
4. Herbert Warren Wind in his article, "The State of the Game", (Golf Digest, August 1975, pp. 42,43) says from 1950 to 1975 the number of golfers in the United States went from three to 16 million. Prize money on the men's professional golf tour rose from \$460,000 to over \$8,000,000 during the same time period.
5. Michael Murphy, Golf in the Kingdom, New York, Viking Press, 1972, pp. 129, 130,

6. Allistair Cooke, "Self-Torture Disguised as A Game", New York Times, September 30, 1973, VI, p.13.
7. Alexander Cockburn, Idle Passion: Chess and the Dance of Death, Scarborough, Plume Books, 1972, p. 214.
8. Cooke, p. 13.
9. The commencement of interviewing did not signify the termination of participant observation. I stayed a participant observer throughout the study period. Both interview schedules are included in the appendix.
10. Barney Glaser and Anslem Strauss in The Discovery of Grounded Theory, explain this process as,
Generating a theory from data means that most hypotheses and concepts not only come from the data, but are systematically worked out in relation to the data during the course of the research. (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 6)
11. Herbert Gans, "The Participant Observer as a Human Being: Observations on the Personal Aspects of Field Work", in Howard Becker et al, Institutions and the Person, Chicago, Aldine Publishing Co., 1968, pp. 302, 303.
12. Ibid, pp. 303, 304.
13. Peter Berger is more explicit in the Invitation to Sociology,
the interest of the sociologist is primarily theoretical. That is he is interested in understanding for its own sake. He may be aware of or even concerned with the practical applicability and consequences of his findings, but at that point he leaves the sociological frame of reference as such and moves into realms of values, beliefs and ideas that he shares with other men who are not sociologists. (Berger, 1963, p. 17).

14. I do not mean to imply that only soft method practitioners of sociology believe in the idea of Value-Free sociology nor that all soft methodologists are believers. I am concentrating on soft methodologists because of the approach used in this work.
15. Blanche Geer, "First Days in the Field: A Chronicle of Research in Progress", in Phillip Hammond, Sociologists at Work, New York, Basic Books Inc., pp. 322-344.
16. Ibid, p. 341.
17. This may in fact be a 'which came first, the chicken or the egg' problem. Given the fact that the original proponents of soft methods (the Chicago School) often had deviants as their subjects it is not inconceivable that this aversion was purposely built into the method, i.e. given (a) we are studying deviants and (b) we do not want to become accomplices, then why not designate semi-participation as the best method.

Thus, what we end up with is a doctrine that sees it valuable to legitimize Value-Free sociology. This in turn raises the interesting point that Value-Free sociology i.e. values do not enter, was not labelled Value-Less sociology (after all one says speechless not speech-free); perhaps it was out of fear that the hyphen would one day be lost. What good is mystification if de-mystifying is as simple as dropping a hyphen?
18. It is at this point Gans is really caught in a double bind,
Participant observation is the most personal of all sociological research methods, and little can or should be done to eliminate the personal element. Instead, the method and its practitioners must themselves be researched to discover

how these personal elements affect the data gathering process and the gathered data. Soon, someone must do a study of participant-observers to find out what kinds of people take to this research method and why, and particularly to learn what personality types are drawn to the marginal social relationships which are the essence of participant observation. My hunch is that field work attracts a person who, in Everett Hughes' words, 'is alienated from his own background,' who is not entirely comfortable in his new roles, or who is otherwise detached from his own society; the individual who is more comfortable as an observer than as a participant. This is the stuff of which intellectuals and novelists are also made, but while literary observers may celebrate their marginality, sociologists must understand it and see how it affects their work if they are to be social scientists. If we can discover the psychodynamics that create field workers, then participant observation can truly become both a personal and scientific method. (Gans, p. 316)

Here Gans clearly wants participant observation to become more systematic: more, how shall we say, scientific? And how does he suggest this be done? Well a participant observation study of participant observers, of course. But wait a minute, what did he just say about people studying something very close to their life situation? Ah yes, true science is consistency and repetition.

19. Alvin Gouldner, "Anti-Minotaur: The Myth of A Value-Free Sociology", Social Problems, 9, No. 3, p. 212.
20. Ibid, p. 207.
21. Howard Becker, "Whose Side Are We On?", Social Problems, 14, p. 239.
22. Howard Becker, Outsiders, Studies in the Sociology of Deviance, New York, Free Press, 1963, p. 176.

23. Ibid, p. 174.
24. C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination, New York, Oxford University Press, 1959, p. 76.
25. Earlier it was said that the original plan was to look at golfers' feelings toward the game. This is not seen as being different from what is said here.
26. The benefits of using more than one method are clearly shown in Howard Becker and Blanche Geer's article, "Participant Observation and Interviewing: A Comparison", in William Filstead, Qualitative Methodology: Firsthand Involvement With the Social World, Chicago Markham Publishing Co., 1970, pp. 134, 135. Becker and Geer raise the point that whereas a participant observer through his/her close contact with the studied group is aware of and used to the group's nuances and vocabulary the interviewer is less likely to pick up on these. One then sees the added desirability of combining the two methods as done here.
27. Many people who have known me for years may have thought the answer to this was obvious, but when one thinks of the stigma attached to the concept 'addiction' it is easy to see my reluctance to admit that this may be true.
28. Only the senior male membership figures were given because this is an all male group. On two occasions women have played golf with the group. Whether women are free to join the group has not come into question because there are no female members at Green Acres who have sufficient golf skill to be in the group. Only senior figures were given because, although, there is one member under the age of 21 he is forced (if he wants to play in the group) to buy a senior membership because of tee off restrictions for those under the age of 21.
29. Initially this might seem highly exaggerated to the reader especially when he/she thinks of some of the deplorable weather conditions during this period. When I present the answers to my question, 'What are some of the worst conditions you have played in?' later in this work the original claim made will not seem so untenable.

30. Robert Bogdan and S. Taylor, Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods, New York, John Wiley and Sons, 1975, p. 31., and Gans, 1968 p. 310.
31. William Foote Whyte, Street Corner Society, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, p. 300.
32. Becker and Geer claim,
In short, participant observation makes it possible to check description against fact and, noting discrepancies, made by the person under study; such distortions are less likely to be discovered by interviewing alone.
(Becker and Geer, 1970, p. 139.)

Using both methods enables one to check for such distortions. Having encountered only the one minor distortion just discussed makes me appreciate the seriousness and genuineness of my sample. This was accentuated when one interviewee came up to me in the spring of 1978 before I had a chance to interview for the second time and informed me of sentiments that he wanted to include in his first interview.

Chapter II

The Group and Its Members

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to familiarize the reader with my sample. To best understand the sample, their group, The Bandits, must first be discussed. This is necessary because in many ways golf and the group are inseparable. For example, of the 22 people interviewed 19 played at Green Acres because of the group. In 1977 the 22 interviewees played approximately 2270 rounds of golf.¹ These people estimated that they only played 240 or 11 percent of the 2270 rounds with no members of their group.² Thus, it may be said that golf, for these men, is playing with the Bandits.

After discussing the dynamics of the group, brief character sketches of the interviewees will be given. Included in these character sketches will be the respondents' complete answers to the two questions: (1) What is there in golf that makes you like it so much? and (2) Do you think you will ever quit the game?

It is felt that the answers to these two questions best summarizes the respondents' feelings towards the game.

The Bandits

The main function of the Bandits is to give its members a regular chance to play for money. It is regular in the sense that almost every day from mid-April to the end of October there are group members playing at Green Acres and it is playing for money in that you cannot play with the group without paying, what may be thought of as, a daily admission price of \$3.00. This \$3.00 goes into a 'team bet' kitty.

The current group is an amalgamation of two prior groups at Green Acres. This amalgamation occurred about seven years ago and originally brought together about thirty men. The group steadily expanded until the fall of 1976 at which point a general concensus decided that the group was getting too large to manage. Following the 1976 season a list of members was compiled and it was decided that no one else would be allowed to join.

The original list contained 86 names and the present active membership is 77. There has not been a case of anyone being kicked out of the group, rather it is a case of people moving or deciding to play

elsewhere. Only one of the nine has stopped playing golf. Although it is not a formal rule it seems that, 'Once a Bandit, Always a Bandit' would apply to former members wanting to rejoin the group. The informal organizer of the group in discussing the attraction and formation of the group says,

It started with one group (a foursome). I was in that group, everybody joined us. They saw we were playing for money and playing regularly. They saw it was a good thing.

This was the beginning of the first group that eventually became the Bandits. The importance of playing for money can neither be minimized nor thought of as something unique to original members of the group. Although he has only played with the group for two years Ted is typical in expressing reasons why people want to join the group,

I met a couple members of the group and played with them. They taught me a lot and got me in. It's a regular game and a chance to make a few bucks.

To best understand how the group bet or team bet operates an example of what happens on a typical weekend will be given. The average turnout on a weekend in 1977 was 36 Bandits. A turnout of 36 players would result in nine, four man teams being formed to compete for the \$108 team bet kitty ($\$3.00 \times 36 = \108.00). The teams competing

for the kitty are ideally four man teams but because multiples of four do not always occur, for example 33 men may turnout, there can be up to three, three man teams.³

Each team competes on a 'best ball' basis, which means that the lowest score by any member of the team on a particular hole serves as the team score on that hole. For example if on the first hole the team of Bill, Bob, Brian and Bruce had scores of three, five, five, four respectively only Bill's score would count. Bob's, Brian's and Bruce's scores would only count towards personal bets that they might have. Intuitively it would seem that a four man team would always have a large advantage over a three man team but this assumes that all players are of equal ability and this is just not the case. The average individual weekend scores ranged from a low of 74 to a high of 94. This twenty shot difference works out to more than a shot a hole. In most cases the fourth man, the weakest player on the team, does not contribute, i.e. he does not beat all three other men on his team on any hole during the round.

To make the teams as even as possible the best players, the captains of the teams, are seeded. Going back to the weekend example of 36 players, the best nine

of the 36 are designated as captains, and these in turn are rated from one to nine with the ninth captain being the best player of the day. Captain number one, the weakest captain, then picks a player from the remaining 27 to be on his team. This player is referred to as his first pick. Each captain then picks from the remaining pool of players. After all captains have their first picks the cycle of picking is repeated until all players are on a team. Doing it in this manner means that if there are going to be three man teams the best player or players (up to three) have the three man teams. Prior to 1977 after the captains for the day were decided upon the order of selection was determined by lot. Due to a general desire to distribute the winnings more equitably, seeding was introduced. Prior to this a strong captain could get first pick and these two players were often powerful enough to win the team bet by themselves. Wishing to limit this advantage of the strongest players, the seeding of captains was introduced.

In another effort to spread the money around more, the individual daily contribution of players was increased from two dollars to three dollars along with a change in the distribution format of the kitty. Up until mid 1977 every player contributed two dollars to

the pot with the low team score taking the prize. If team one was six under par and beat all the other teams they would take the, then, seventy-two dollar pot (36x2) and divide it equally amongst team members.⁴ In practice what this meant was that after the fifth hole team two might hear that it is four shots behind team one and would in effect give up, as a four shot edge at any point is virtually insurmountable. In increasing the contribution three equal pots were created. There is now a kitty for the front nine, one for the second nine and one for totals i.e. total score for the eighteen holes. The same team can win all three pots or it can be different teams winning each one. Now a team that might have given up early has a fresh start on the back nine.

Individual motivations behind betting will be looked at in more detail in the next chapter but it is important to stress here that people do not play in this group to make money, the amount exchanged over the year is not that great. Last year the leading money winner on team bets won \$67.40 in his 36 weekend games while the biggest loser lost \$66.65 in his 33 appearances. In addition people may win or lose more on individual bets but unlike the team bet there is no obligation to participate on this level. There is one more forced

contribution, namely cleaners, but in this aspect there is also a desire to make things as equitable as possible.

A cleaner refers to the lowest score on a hole for the day. For example if on the first hole there was only a single three amongst the 36 players the player who accomplished this would have a cleaner and be entitled to \$0.25, \$11.75 in total, from all the other players. If at least two people had threes on the first hole there is no cleaner. The saying, 'Two tie all tie,' summarizes the principle behind cleaners. In cleaners the better players are favoured as they are more likely to get a low score on a hole. Given this fact the lesser players were dropping out of cleaners until mid 1977 when team cleaners were instituted. In team cleaners if any member on the team gets a cleaner he must share it equally with all the other members of his team. Also one team member cannot cut-off another team member. As mentioned above 'two tie all tie' in cleaners but this is no longer the case in the team cleaners if the two (or more) of the 'two tie' are on the same team. Prior to team cleaners players were often placed in a quandry over making putts if a fellow team member was in a position to get a cleaner if a team mate missed his putt. The quandry for the player was that if he made his putt he

might cost his team mate twelve dollars but if he missed it he might cost himself money on his personal bets. Making the putt often caused subtle dissension on the team. With team cleaners there is no longer the problem of cut-offs and everyone is in cleaners. It is interesting to note that shortly after team cleaners was instituted they began to be referred to as 'family cleaners' and people would try to get cleaners for the family. Where before there may have been slight animosity directed toward team members there is now more encouragement of each other. Even when the team is totally eliminated from any realistic chance of sharing in the team bet there is talk of salvaging something for the team.

In 1978 there was a movement coming from some of the better players to scrap team cleaners because as they put it, there was no real money changing hands anyway, and to replace the cleaners by changing the three dollar admission to four, with the fourth dollar going into the totals section of the kitty.⁵ This notion was defeated in a referendum of group members. What would have undoubtedly happened would have been a revival of individual cleaners which, as discussed above, is advantageous to the better players.

Tim, a two year member of the group, succinctly

summarizes what I have said above about fairness of the group in his response as to why he wanted to join the Bandits,

The buddies I was golfing with moved away, I tried to get in this group before but couldn't. I wanted to play because of the competition of playing for a few bucks. It appealed to me, also because they're concerned how they run it, giving the high handicapper as much chance- they spread the money around, it's fair. Also the honesty of each team.

The honesty of each team that Tim refers to is demonstrated by the fact that each team plays by itself, there are no opposing team members playing with the group to police it, all teams are self-policing.

Over the winter of 1976 a committee was elected to administer the weekends. Prior to this one person was recognized, and still is by many of the group, as leader. The committee was formed in response to feelings that one person could not administer a group this large and in response to feelings that this particular person was not the most desired choice as leader. In 1977 there was a committee of five and in 1978 the committee consists of six members due to a tie for the fifth spot in the yearly election. The committee seeds the captains and is supposed to make decisions about possible group changes but since it has been instituted all major changes have been decided by a general vote. Every member

interviewed thought that the committee was a good idea including the former leader although he expressed surprise that a committee was wanted by the group members.

The average weekend participation was 24 appearances out of a possible 50 dates for 1977. In contrast to this the committee members of 1977 averaged over 41 appearances for these same dates. Of the five committee members for 1977 only two were able to play at 8:00 A.M. through the week. In general committee members do not seed captains during the week. Since there is a fairly high consensus on the abilities of group members there is not much disagreement on seeding through the week, so the fact that the committee is not there does not present a problem. This consensus is made easier to reach on weekdays due to the fact that seeding four captains is easier to do than seeding nine.

Coincident with the coming of the committee has been a certain amount of bureaucratization. In fact one member has gone as far as to prepare a 23 page book of statistics for the weekend dates of 1977. Included in the statistics kept are team money wins and losses for all members, stroke averages of the players, cleaners per person and team scores. This committee member proposes to continue to do this yearly, and as the years go by to keep a record book. Some members feel that this is going a bit too far but at the same time they view it as harmless and as a result accept it.

(b) The Sample

To guard the anonymity of the individuals interviewed in the character sketches below the interviewee's occupation will not be given. Instead, after the last character sketch, a list of the interviewees occupations will be given. These are not listed to correspond with the character sketches. Included in the character sketches will be the individual's age, how long he has golfed, how many rounds he played in 1977 (the interviewee's estimate), how many rounds he will play in 1977 without any group members, and the respondent's answers to the questions: (1) What is there in golf that makes you like it so much, and (2) Do you think you will ever quit the game? The names with each character sketch are fictitious.

Syd

AGE: 46

YEARS GOLF: 14

ROUNDS/YEAR: 152

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 2

WHY: The individuality, you can't blame anyone else for your shortcomings. Also the outdoors, you get out in the morning and see nature, you're.. close to it, it's quiet and peaceful, you see the animals. Golf makes me tick.

QUIT: No, why should I? It's the best thing I've got going. I'm alive, I enjoy people, I'm healthy. I'm happy.

Lou

AGE: 26

YEARS GOLF: 9

ROUNDS/YEAR: 32

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 5

WHY: Beating hell out of that little dinky ball, removing beavers (divots), the fresh air, the animals turn me on too. Also the competition against myself, I have to do it all myself. It gives me a sense of accomplishment, I don't have to rely on anybody.

QUIT: Yes, I soon won't have time for it. I'm going to start spending more time with the wife, unless, I'm getting her a membership next year and she might like it.

BRUCE

AGE: 42

YEARS GOLF: 12

ROUNDS/YEAR: 120

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 10

WHY: It's you versus nature, there's nobody else to blame, every day is another day, every day is different, a new challenge. It's also good to whack the ball after a tough day. Also because of the companionship, you meet a lot of nice people.

QUIT: Yeah, when I draw my last breath, I love the game too much, and the companionship. There is no other game like it.

TIM

AGE: 37

YEARS GOLF: 10

ROUNDS/YEAR: 100

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 18

WHY: The prime has to be on the individual, to go out with some friends and compete with them, I'm a competitor. This group's team bet also

makes me like it, helping the team, coming through when everybody is out of it. Also the outdoors, it's like taking a walk in the park.

QUIT: Yeah, when I die. I enjoy it too much, the game, the competition.

SAM

AGE: 33

YEARS GOLF: 11

ROUNDS/YEAR: 50

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 10

WHY: The challenge against myself to do better. I never think in terms of beating anybody, just to hit the perfect shot for myself, it doesn't matter what other people do.

QUIT: Realistically, never. It's a part of me, what would I find to replace it, it's a whole summer. It's not just the golf though, it's also getting out and walking around.

EUGENE

AGE: 39

YEARS GOLF: 8

ROUNDS/YEAR: 100

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 12

WHY: The course keeps beating me, I've only beat it once and then I only matched it, not beat it. When I beat it I'll quit, or that's what I tell my wife.

QUIT: Yeah, familiarity I suppose. Unfortunately people aren't what you expect, people here are playing for money. Their attitudes are changing, money is important to them, money is not important to me. I resent anybody making money that important. It's not for me. We have to play on the same plane. If money keeps getting more important I'll quit all together, I doubt I would play outside this group. I'll find something else I would excel in at my age. I think everybody likes to excel, it's pretty important, you owe it to yourself to find things you can excel in.

PETER

AGE: 60

YEARS GOLF: 36

ROUNDS/YEAR: 25

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 0

WHY: The aggravation of not knowing what's going to happen on any given day, the unpredictability. You don't rely on anybody else, it's good for your ego but at the same time it can also destroy it.

QUIT: Yes, over women, and if it happens I'll never be back. I'll be too old for Christ sakes, but I'll still come here to socialize, I'll always do that.

HOWARD

AGE: 30

YEARS GOLF: 20

ROUNDS/YEAR: 40

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 20

WHY: I'm good at it, it's competitive and a personal challenge.

QUIT: No, I need the exercise. Besides, I enjoy it too much and it's something you can do all your life.

TED

AGE: 28

YEARS GOLF: 4

ROUNDS/YEAR: 150

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 6

WHY: The challenge and the fact that it's an individual challenge. I also like the group.

QUIT: They'll bury me first.

GRAHAM

AGE: 48

YEARS GOLF: 10

ROUNDS/YEAR: 120

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 6

WHY: It's not the game, it's the belonging in the group that comes above the game. You couldn't get a group like this elsewhere, it's very unique, that sums it up. Originally it was the game, but now the group is the 1st thing. As one guy said to me, who doesn't play here this year, he misses the guys. We have a great cross section, taxi driver to university professor. I like the individuality of the game, of course, but now it isn't as important.

QUIT: No, because I can't, I've tried. You only quit when you go 6 feet under.

SIMON

AGE: 55

YEARS GOLF: 25

ROUNDS/YEAR: 110

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 15

WHY: The nature of the game, it's so demanding physically and mentally. I like to challenge myself, you can never perfect this game but you always try to.

QUIT: I doubt it. I like it too much.

FRED

AGE: 62

YEARS GOLF: 25

ROUNDS/YEAR: 115

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 5

WHY: Being able to play the game fairly well and the fact that it is readily available, the guys are always here. it's not like that in other games. Also the individuality and the fact you can keep playin at a late age.

QUIT: Someday when I'm aged and infirmed, put that down, because that's what it'll take.

RALPH

AGE: 39

YEARS GOLF: 12

ROUNDS/YEAR: 70

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 2

WHY: Personal achievement and individuality, that sums it up. It gives me a chance to prove myself.

QUIT: I like it too much, it seems to be a never ending chance for improvement.

REG

AGE: 47

YEARS GOLF: 20

ROUNDS/YEAR: 190

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 10

WHY: When you hit a good shot you come back, it's the betterment of yourself, a chance to gamble on yourself. The individual part is important. I like to bet.

QUIT: The only thing that will make me quit is a disaster.

BARRY

AGE: 52

YEARS GOLF: 19

ROUNDS/YEAR: 85

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 0

WHY: The competitive part, you're the only one making the shot. It's an absolute measure of yourself.

QUIT: No, the only thing that will stop me is infirmacy.

CARL

AGE: 54

YEARS GOLF: 28

ROUNDS/YEAR: 170

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 3

WHY: The competitiveness, the exercise, the fresh air. I would never go out and play alone, no interest, never, ever, if I haven't got something on going out.

QUIT: Not until I die.

STAN

AGE: 55

YEARS GOLF: 6

ROUNDS/YEAR: 75

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 15

WHY: I've always taken part in sports, I like to compete, as well as the fellas.

QUIT: No, I don't think so, I'd like to stay active. I enjoy the game.

TREVOR

AGE: 26:

YEARS GOLF: 13

ROUNDS/YEAR: 200

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 40

WHY: Haven't got a clue. Probably as much as anything else, the unpredictability. It is the fairest game to every individual because there is no physical attribute that can make you that much better than anybody else, as opposed, to say height in basketball. Also the idea of just being by yourself outside, the outdoors is important.

QUIT: I certainly do not plan on quitting simply because of the fact why I rated golf ahead of my wife, simply because to me golf is part of me, something inside of me, something of my personality, that it would be like giving up part of your personality. You can't do that.

DARRYL

AGE: 75

YEARS GOLF: 55

ROUNDS/YEAR: 85

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 25

WHY: It's a way to get rid of your frustrations, the fresh air, exercise, you can forget the city. It's a mental and physical challenge. You can

play with wide ages of people and you forget about their status, everyone is equal.

QUIT: Only if disabled. It's not a matter of wanting but I may have to. It's a place to forget because you have to concentrate. Some people get boozed up to forget, golf does the same thing, especially if you get serious, you don't have to rely on booze or valliums.

LANNY

AGE: 29

YEARS GOLF: 4

ROUNDS/YEAR: 175

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 15

WHY: I think the main thing about it is that you are always competing against yourself to improve your score, frustrating as it is, like, you still got the urge to go out there and play. I don't know, it's an addiction, it really is.

QUIT: I don't think so, I don't think so. The game is addicting. I kind of lose my drive at the end of the year, I still come up here but I don't play that often. Then in the spring I'm so eager to go out and play it's ridiculous.

RANDY

AGE: 27

YEARS GOLF: 15

ROUNDS/YEAR: 15

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 7

WHY: It's an exact sport, you have to make the right shots, it's a mental game. I find if you lose your concentration or let it slide you start playing poorer, I like the mental part. I enjoy it because it's one on one, you against the course, I like to try and beat the course, that's the whole idea of it, if you make a bad shot you have no one else to blame.

QUIT: What golf? No, I don't plan to, it's something you can play no matter what age you are.

GORD 0000

AGE: 23

YEARS GOLF: 10

ROUNDS/YEAR: 80

ROUNDS NOT IN GROUP: 2

WHY: I'm not totally sure. I think it's a combination of things, The individual part is very important, I like having to depend only on myself. The outdoors is very important to me also, the freshness of morning, seeing the sun rise as well as set is very appealing to me. The people I have met through golf, the people it attracts, have also proven to be very friendly and appealing.

QUIT: I've quit this game at least 200 time over the years, but it never lasts more than a couple of weeks, I don't think I can quit but that doesn't bother me as I have no desire to quit.

(c) Occupations

The following is a complete list of the occupations of the above interviewees, in no particular order;

sheet metal worker
 supervisor of hydraulics
 clerk at city hall
 internal auditor
 melter
 pipe fitter
 steel worker
 teacher
 salesman
 apartment supervisor
 roll cutter
 switchman
 factory worker
 plater
 tool gauge maker
 machinist
 supervisor in shirt manufacturing
 steel worker
 sales co-ordinator
 lab technician
 teacher
 plumber and contractor

FOOTNOTES

1. This works out to be an average of 103 rounds per person per year. The lowest number was 15 and the largest 200. The 103 rounds per year means that they average two rounds per week for the entire year including winter.

Although the accuracy of the 103 per year average could not be checked out by looking at written records it does seem reasonable. I base this on the fact that records of weekend participation for the group are kept and these show that my sample averaged 30 weekend rounds for the 1977 season. Multiplying this by three and a half to expand this two day rate to a weekly rate gives 105 rounds per year.

2. This percent is further reduced by tournaments. That is, this 240 rounds does not represent how many rounds the Bandits choose not to play with group members as there is no choice as to whom you will play with in tournaments. I would estimate that this 240 would at the very minimum be reduced to 160.
3. Given the choice, group members do not want a fourth person to join them if they are only a three man team. However, on occasion this happens. Non Bandit members of Green Acres often go to the golf course by themselves looking for a game and if it is a busy day these singles are often placed with threesomes at the 1st tee. The starters (people in charge of sending groups off the 1st tee) know the Bandits' feelings and try to avoid sending a fourth, however, it is their duty to make up four if pressed by a single person. When singles join the group it is usually not a totally pleasant situation as the other three are wrapped up in their team and although they may not do it consciously they tend to ignore the single. It can be very disconcerting for the single to spend five hours with three other men and hardly talk to them.

4. If more than one team was at that figure they split the pot equally. If a four man team tied with a three man team each team would get thirty-six dollars. Each member of the four man team would get nine while each member of the three man team would get twelve dollars. The two dollar contribution is not entirely correct, rather it was an eight dollar team contribution, three man team players would have to pay \$2.70, \$2.65, and \$2.65 each.
5. It was argued that on average there were five cleaners per day and since this cost individuals another \$1.25 why not just make it \$4.00.

Chapter III

Betting and the Quest for Competition

Introduction

In studying the responses presented in the last chapter as to why these people play golf one sees that there are three reoccurring themes. The companionship of other players and the appeal of the outdoors are stated by different people as important variables that make up the overall attraction of golf. These are secondary, however, when compared to the constantly expressed sentiments that the game is seen as a personal challenge and a chance to test oneself. Although the comments vary from Darryl's simple remark that, "It's a mental and physical challenge," to the stronger statements of Reg, "It's the betterment of yourself," and Barry, "It's an absolute measure of yourself," the underlying feelings are the same.

Throughout the interviewing the views were expressed that golf is a challenge and that the golf course serves as an arena where one can do battle both against oneself

and against others. The frequency combined with the fervence of these responses made me, at times, skeptically feel that my sample was trying to convert me to some secret, possibly subversive, sect. Simply put, the replies just seemed to be too uniform to be unrehearsed. But under closer scrutiny it appears that the above analogy is not the correct one. Instead golf to the Bandits is better thought of as an elixir (subjectively addictive at that) for an almost unnoticed twentieth century social plague: a life that is almost totally void of personal challenges. In fact it may be that this group can best be described as a group of frustrated individuals who because they are deprived of personal challenges in their every day life (after all how many ways can you put in a bolt on an assembly line) come to see the challenge of competition available in golf as the only panacea for their frustrations.¹

In this chapter the competitive nature of the group members will first be briefly discussed and subsequently the betting that takes place amongst group members will be elaborated on. Betting is a very important variable in understanding these golfers because it is through gambling on themselves that their need for competition, their need for a challenge, is actualized.

Even though a group member may be 'objectively' considered a good golfer to other Green Acres members, in this group the true test is whether he can come through when there is money on the line. Performance when there is money hanging in the balance is the yardstick by which members measure both themselves and other group members. This is carried to the point where beating a fellow group member is not really beating or competing against him unless there is money at stake. Betting is how one competes. Competition is the challenge and as stated above challenge is the allure of golf.

The Quest For Competition

In the previous chapter it was stated that golf and the group are inseparable for the Bandits; therefore to understand why these people play golf the group must also be understood. This link is perhaps best shown with regard to the concept of competition as illustrated in the members replies to the question, "Why did you start to play with this group?" The Bandits not only golf because it is a challenge; they golf with each other because they offer the challenge.

Of the 22 members interviewed, 12 made reference to the competition that would be available to them.

Barry probably sums this idea best in his reply,

Mostly because of the competition; no, it was entirely because of the competition.

This idea comes through again and again. Bruce believes that the group is "super competition," while Fred observes, "they're very competitive, I'm competitive."

In addition to the 12 who mentioned competition, six of the remaining ten respondents suggested that it was an opportunity to play for money. Trevor explains,

It was the group's reputation, the idea of a large group playing with a common goal, that being of having money on the game, which to me makes it a little more serious and more appealing.

Only four of the 22 interviewed did not mention either competition or gambling in their reasons as to why they wanted to join the group.

The fact that some members emphasize the competition available while others specify the increased opportunity to play for money that comes with their group membership might lead one to believe that there are two distinct reasons why people want to join the group, but this is quite simply not the case. These two reasons are one and the same thing as demonstrated best by Simon's succinct answer to the question, "Why do you bet?" to which he replied, "It's a competitive thing, I'm competitive."

This is the group's common thread, these men seek

competition to challenge themselves and they see gambling on themselves as the best outlet.

Betting

Of the 22 people interviewed 19 take bets in addition to the compulsory team bet and cleaners. These bets are referred to as sidebets. The sample averaged five sidebets with the most active member averaging 13 sidebets a day. Each bet can be worth up to a maximum of \$4.00. This would be the highest amount wagered except in unusual cases. The \$4.00 can be won or lost in what is called a dollar nassau bet. A dollar nassau means between two players a dollar is bet on their front nine scores, two dollars on their back nine scores and a dollar on their total scores. For example if Bill and Bob decided they were going to have a dollar nassau bet and Bill shot 40 on the first nine and 42 on the second nine for his score of 82 while Bob's nines were 44 and 41 respectively for an 85 the bet would be a saw-off, that is, no money would be exchanged. This would happen as Bill would win a dollar for the first nine and a dollar for the total score but Bob would win two dollars for the second nine and consequently they each would win equal money, if Bill and Bob tied on the front nine all the money would go on the

second nine and whoever wins that nine would win \$4.00. Similarly if Bill shot 37-45-82 while Bob shot 40-40-80, Bill would owe Bob \$2.00.

Most nassau bets are \$.50 nassau and not the \$1.00 nassau used as an example above. The nassau bets are wagers between individuals and between two man teams. These two man team bets work on the same best ball principle as the team bets. Up until 1978 these bets were predominantly between a captain and his first pick against another captain and his first pick. In 1978 there appeared more combinations of two man bets, for example third and fourth members of teams were betting other third and fourth team members. Another bet is the straight dollar or beer for total score between individuals. In individual bets, strokes may be given if two unequal players want to bet, for example if Bill is a better golfer than Bob he may give him, say 4 shots and as a result if Bob shot 84, Bill would have to shoot 79 to win. In such stroke bets there is almost constant adjustment, i.e. if Bill won at four shots one day the next day he might give five or four and a half shots, with the half shot meaning in the event of a tie Bob would win. Another bet, though infrequent, is simply I bet that my team will beat your team.

Two man best ball team bets vary from day to day as to who bets whom. Since the bet is made with a team mate against two other team mates and given that the teams change daily it is not always possible to get a two man bet. One two man team may be too strong to get any bets. On the other hand the majority of individual bets are automatic: if Bill and Bob both show up on the same day, they have a bet. It is possible that Bill and Bob might not even see each other before they tee off, but this does not effect the bet. What matters is that they are both on the course on the same day. Just as it does not matter if Bill or Bob see each other before they tee off, it does not matter if they see each other after. If Bill is in the first team on a weekend day that has 12 teams and Bob is on the last team, he will finish over an hour after Bill and Bill might have had to leave before then. It is then up to Bob to compare the scores. Bill and Bob might not see each other for over a week but when they do they will settle their bet. All of the above bets are settled with cash on the spot except when someone has to leave as in the case just illustrated.

Only one member of the sample rated his individual bets as being more important than the team bet. All

except the one agree that if there were a choice between doing something to help the team, even though there might be more risk involved than one would usually take, they would sacrifice possible personal gain for the potential gain for the team. In the same vein, there is a desire to keep the team as 'totally' unified as possible and team members usually suspend their automatic bets if they are on the same team. If Bill and Bob were on the same team they would not bet that day.

Only one member of the sample bets regularly on other sporting events, this man wagers an average of \$150 a week on American football. There is one other member who bets in an organized way but does not do so regularly.² Other than these two the only other gambling done by the sample is the 'friendly bet' for 'a few dollars' amongst friends or playing cards for small stakes. It is illustrative that the regular bettor, mentioned above, says,

The reason I took up golf was to cut down on my gambling, I'm a compulsive gambler, I wanted to get away from it.

The point to be understood is that these men are not gamblers in the sense that they consider the amount of money exchanged as the most important thing, rather, the betting is important in the sense that it gives them

a chance to win, to perform, to come through, to test themselves. Pascal captures the spirit of the gambling done by these men in his remarks,

Such a man spends all his life playing every day for small stakes. Give him every morning the money that he might gain during the day on condition that he does not play-you will make him unhappy. It will perhaps be said what he seeks is the amusement of play not gain. Let him play then for nothing; he will lose interest and be wearied.

In responding to the question, "Why do you bet?" Eugene replies,

There's nothing better than beating Simon. I like beating a guy who takes great displeasure in losing. The dollar doesn't mean anything.

Tim responds,

It enhances the game, it makes you grind it out. Usually if I win money I spend it all here anyway, I'm not here to make money, I'm here for the competition and companionship.

and for Barry,

I like to win; the money, the dollar, doesn't mean anything; I just like the idea of winning.

Other responses included such things as "It inspires me," "I like the pressure," "I find it exciting, a challenge," and "It makes me try harder."

The sample had an average "most won in a day" figure of \$45 and a corresponding "most lost in a day" total of \$18. The average maximum win/lose for sidebets

was \$12. The \$6 difference in the two loss totals would be made up by the team bet and cleaners and the corresponding difference of \$27 for the winning total would be made up by the team bet and cleaner winnings. Since the \$6 difference for losses comes pretty close to what team bet and cleaners actually amount to on average it is assumed that the \$12 maximum win/lose amount is accurate. Given that this would mean losing every bet, not one saw-off, and given that this was observed very infrequently, we are presented with further evidence that not much money is won or lost and therefore the amount wagered is not the most important thing.

Although the amount is not paramount betting is very important and is part of the game. In his response to "Why do you bet?" Reg says

It's exciting, half the time I know I'm going to blow it, but it adds to the game. I've never gone out and not bet.

Reg is not unique as one only has to look back at Carl's reasons why he plays golf. Not everyone or even the majority of members can claim that they have never played golf except for money, but most can no longer separate the two. As Darryl replied,

the betting is part of it, the golf and the betting are inseparable.

Even in tournaments the betting goes on. In club tournaments at Green Acres if the tournament format is flexible (if one does not have to play in handicap divisions, as one does in the club championships) the executive of the club, all Bandits except one, make up the draw in teams. When this is not possible individual, as in the club championship, betting is still carried on. In 1978, 16 Bandits went to a tournament in Kitchener and over 30 went to a tournament in Nanticoke and even though they could not play together at these tournaments teams were picked and the Bandits played as usual, except they did know how their team was doing.

Where the Mini-Bandits do not compete in all club tournaments, the Bandits do. This participation seems to come from the knowledge that they will do disproportionately well. Playing for money daily has made it easier for these men to play well in tournaments. This is borne out in the fact that although the Bandits made up only 12 percent of Green Acres senior male population in 1977 they won 35 percent of the total prize money. They play in tournaments because they usually win something but at the same time they continue to bet and talk about things 'getting back to normal' next week.

Hand in hand with the idea that the amount wagered

is not the main thing is a dislike of people who think money is the main thing. Eugene's quoted remark in the last chapter, that he may quit because money is becoming too important for some members is typical of group members feelings. This did not come out regularly in the interviews but on many occasions conversations were heard that maligned group members because of their perceived overemphasis on money. It was also observed that the people being discussed as being money-conscious experienced difficulty in getting as many bets as they would have liked to.

Summary

Of the 22 Bandits interviewed only three did not take any sidebets and one of these did not take any currently because he was not playing well. Of the two remaining, one played golf primarily for the socializing that goes with golf and the other plays golf to compete but does not feel he has to bet. The desire for competition against others and against oneself is almost universal in the group. In turn this desire for competition is inextricably bound up with gambling. The gambling is for money but not for large sums of money. The amounts gambled are never meant to be significant in the monetary sense but

rather in the 'winning' sense, meaning that by putting money on the game one then comes closer to simulating a crises or self-testing situation where one now has the opportunity to rise to the occasion. Meeting and overcoming the created crises situation satisfies a need to know one can meet and deal with challenges. Although it was not directly looked at or tested it is now hypothesized that golf for these men serves as a convenient test that is a substitute for 'real' life challenges. The fact that one also meets and enjoys similarly predisposed people and the fact that one can also enjoy the outdoors makes the game all the more appealing.

Footnotes

1. In looking at the occupations of my sample it is seen that they are working class. Green Acres is a working class golf course. It would be interesting to see if golf is the same quest for a challenge at an upper class course. I would hypothesize it would be but where golf would be only one of several challenges available to the upper class members golf may be the only challenge working class people have. It is then not surprising that my sample feels that they are addicted to golf.
2. One other group member not in the interview sample bets occasionally with a bookie.
3. Blaise Pascal in Ned Polsky, Hustlers, Beats and Others, Chicago, Aldine Publishing Co., 1967, p. 41.

Chapter IV

What Would You Do Without Golf?

Golf is really important. Without golf what are you going to do, you know what I mean, what are you going to do without golf?

Reg

Introduction

Although not all of the sample members are able to express their sentiments as vividly as Reg does, they do have similar feelings towards the game. In this chapter the strength of these feelings will be elaborated on.

These feelings towards the game will first be examined by comparing them to member's feelings about their work. In the previous chapter it was stated that golf has become important (perhaps disproportionately so) to the sample because it represents a challenge to the individual. It was further posited that this quest for a challenge needed to be actualized in leisure time because these men are not given sufficient oppor-

tunity to challenge themselves on their jobs. It is unfortunate that my interview questions were not specific enough to ascertain this directly, however, I feel there is enough evidence gained from other questions and from observations to make such a case. In discussing this idea I will draw heavily from the question about golf-wife-work and also from responses to the question whether or not jobs are discussed with people met in tournaments.

After comparing feelings about golf and work, the importance of golf will be further operationalized by looking at some of the weather conditions that these men play golf in. Noting that some of these conditions are so far removed from ideal golf conditions only serves to emphasize how important it is that these men play golf. Observing that the Bandits continue to play golf in wintry conditions leads one to hypothesize that there is no desire on the Bandits part to take up other sports. This will be shown to be the case. The importance of golf will lastly be discussed by examining the clarity of respondents' memories and by looking at the responses to the question, "How important is golf to you?"

In concluding this chapter the responses to the question, "Is golf just a game?" will be analyzed. As suggested in the title of this work the answers to the

question are predominantly negative. It is no surprise that these men view golf as being more than a game or that some of those who view it as a game also view life as a game.

Golf and Work

Through participant observation prior to my drawing up the first interview schedule I noticed that many of the Bandits seemed to put golf ahead of their job (some of them frequently took time off work to play golf) and also some positioned it ahead of their wife and/or women (they were constantly playing golf and they often expressed 'low' opinions of women). It was in response to these observations that the questions, "Is there any way you can compare golf with your wife (women if the respondent was single) and work? How do they compare? i.e. can you rate them in importance?" were formed.

Albeit that it is my intention to use this question to compare feelings toward golf and work, the additional inclusion of feelings toward wife/women in the question proved to be very interesting and I will also report on this aspect of the question.

Of the 22 respondents, two felt that they could not rate golf, work and wife/women. Of the remaining 20, six

of these rated golf first. As Trevor put it,

Golf is number one because golf is part of me
where my wife is another person.

Coincidentally Trevor played golf on his wedding day
before the ceremony.

Bruce is of the same opinion,

Golf is obviously before work, I fuck off early
to play golf. Golf is also ahead of my wife,
maybe 55-45.

Of the six men who rated golf first, four rated
women second and the other two did not distinguish between
work and wife/women. Three of the six are single and
all of the single men distinguish between work and women.
Women for these three rated second behind golf.

Only two (one single and one married) of the 20
rated work first and both of these rated golf second in
importance.

Of the remaining 12 who rated wife/women first
there are some interesting uses of terminology. Although
I consistently used the words wife, women only seven of
the 12 mentioned wife as being primary. Two of the
other five re-interpreted the questions as sex and they
rated sex first, followed by golf. One of this two
represents the only single member of the twelve who
rated 'wife/women' first. The other three who did not
use the terms wife/women rated their family as being

most important.

Of the 12 who picked some variation of wife/women as being most important five picked golf as being least important. Adding them to the two who rated work as being most important we have seven out of twenty people picking work ahead of golf. Two of the seven immediately qualify their remarks by saying that they have to work.

Fred says,

Home comes first. I have to live so I have to work, otherwise I'd be here all the time.

Eliminating these two leaves only five who rate their job ahead of golf.

Digressing for a moment, of the 22 interviewed 13 said jobs are talked about with people they meet at tournaments outside of Green Acres. Although 10 of these 13 said jobs were only discussed briefly their replies were very different from the nine who did not discuss jobs. Peter says,

We don't talk about jobs, I don't care where they work.

Ralph adds,

Golf and handicap problems. I make it a practice not to talk about work.

Carl is much more adamant,

Predominantly golf, I hate it if they start talking about jobs, I want to forget my job. I put up with it because it coincides with golf. (shiftwork)

Of the ten who briefly discuss jobs at tournaments Sam's reply is typical,

Not really, but it's the obvious thing you'll ask somebody. It comes right after, gee it sure is a nice day.

Now juxtaposing the replies to this question with the replies to the golf-wife-work question it is not surprising to find that of the five members who rate work ahead of golf four of them say that they talk about jobs at outside tournaments. The same four average 52 rounds of golf per year, which is about half the sample's average. The fifth plays over 150 rounds a year and elsewhere in his interviews says, "Golf makes me tick," and "It's the best thing I've got going." Although he never comes out and says it, it seems he too rates work high because he has to do it. Like Fred he views it as a necessary evil.

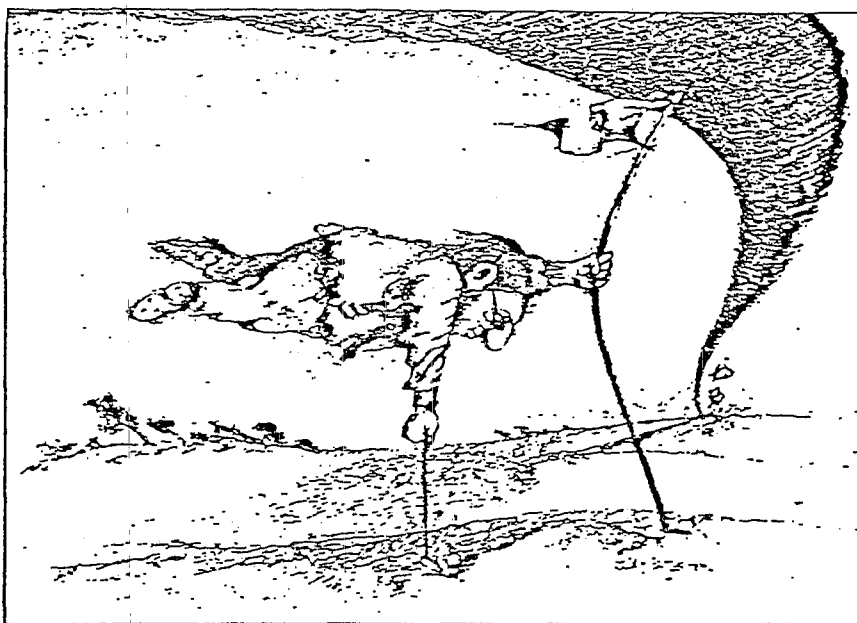
What then remains is that only four people of the entire sample rate, without qualification, their job ahead of golf in importance. The occupations of these four are: internal auditor, sales co-ordinator, supervisor in shirt manufacturing and tool and gauge maker. In comparing these jobs to the occupations for the total sample it seems that on average these four jobs offer relatively more opportunity to actualize the sample's

quest for a challenge. Therefore it is not totally surprising that these sample members rate work above golf.

Remembering then that the sample members golf because golf represents a challenge to test and prove themselves and now seeing that: (1) the majority of the sample rate golf as being more important to them than their job and, (2) that sample members either do not like to talk about jobs at golf tournaments or if they do, they do it very peripherally leads me to conclude that their jobs are given secondary importance because they have little to offer in any intrinsic sense.

Is it snowing out?

Green Acres usually opens for play in the middle of April and remains open until the end of October. Before the golf course's opening in the spring and after its closing in the winter the Bandits play at other golf courses in the area. Green Acres closed during the first week of November in 1977 but the group continued playing until December 4th. In 1978 Green Acres opened late in the 3rd week of April but on March 24th over thirty Bandits travelled thirty miles to play at the nearest open course. On this date the high for the day was -6°C



"DEDICATION"

Golf Magazine, September, 1978, p. 53.

and the players were able to take short cuts at the golf course by walking across frozen ponds.

Nineteen of the 22 interviewees play every year at other courses before Green Acres opens. In discussing some of the worst conditions that they have played in the following replies were given,

Cold, around 10⁰F. Blizzards aren't much fun either. Snowstorms, rainstorms, hail.

Frozen greens, frozen fairways freezing cold, snow, sleet, heat, you name'em.

Snowstorm, standing beside my ball and not being able to find it because of the snow.

Snowing so heavy you couldn't see your tee shots, you couldn't see 100 yards.

Snow, so when you puttred the ball it became the size of a tennis ball with the accumulated snow. Also the usual thunder and rain.

Playing in snow is done matter of factly and is just seen as something one does when playing late or early in the year.

The fact that the Bandits try to expand the golf season as best they can is totally consistent with the fact that practically all of their spare time is devoted to golf and also that they have no desire to take up other forms of recreation. Only two members do any activity other than work around the house in the summer time. Randy plays tennis and Sam runs and shoots. Randy does

not play much golf, in fact he plays the least of anyone in the sample (15 rounds) and Sam is currently unemployed and as a result has extra spare time. Not surprisingly Randy rates golf third behind his wife and work. On the other hand Sam rates it second behind his wife and as stated he does other things because of his free time.

He says,

My wife is 1st, golf 2nd and work 3rd. I'm not concerned with job security, nobody in my generation is. I'm not concerned with getting ahead, work is just a way to get through life, not to starve.

Representative of the answers to the question, "What do you do in your other spare time?" are the following,

Doodle art in the winter and the odd function. Nothing else, in the summer I'm a golfer.

Chores around the house.

I like to drink. play cards but they don't interfere with golf. Golf is number 1.

I work.

Read in the can, watch T.V., drink and smoke dope.

The current phrase "I've found it." used by people who have recently discovered or rediscovered religion would apply to how these men feel about golf. Just as the people who have recently found religion do not expect to find something to take its place in the future, these

men do not have plans to replace or even supplement golf. Only one person expressed a desire to start participating in another summer sport. Eight people said that they have no plans to take up any other sports and 13 of the remaining 14 expressed some desire to find some winter activity. Bruce says he might take up,

paddleball, handball or cross-country skiing in the winter because of my shape. They will let me play golf longer because I'll live longer.

Carl also might take up,

cross-country skiing to keep in shape. Just something in the winter.

The sample frequently mentions cross-country skiing as a possible future endeavor because it will keep them in shape and because they want something to do in the winter.

The Bandits are satisfied that they have 'found' golf and accordingly may be considered 'lucky' in the sense that they have 'found' something so intrinsically satisfying. Observing this causes one to wonder how many people have not been as fortunate to find something similar. Concomitantly one questions why the Bandits have not found something in addition to golf. Work is immediately thought of being such a possibility but as illustrated earlier this is not the case.

How Important Is Golf?

During my interviewing two questions seemed to 'stop' the interviewees. The questions, "How important is golf to you?" and "Is golf just a game?" consistently seemed to set the respondents into uncharted waters. Over and over again I heard, "It's very important," in a very solemn tone. The replies did not vary from yes it is important to no it is not important but rather from "It's important," to "It's very important," with "pretty important," and "quite important" being somewhere between. As Ralph says,

It's very important. There is nothing I'd rather do.

and Darryl not only says how important it is but also why it is,

It gives me something to think about. It's frustrating at times but that's what makes it so good,

The idea of a challenge surfaces again and again.

On weekends roughly two hours after the bets are all settled there are about ten of the day's participants left in the clubhouse. These people are usually joined by a couple of others who did not play that day but have dropped by for a beer. From separate tables these men usually converge on one table and start to recount stories. These stories might be recent or distant adventures and

given the number of golf rounds that these men have played over the years there is a bottomless story well from which they can draw. Because of this activity I assumed that the Bandits would have 'particular fond memories' and/ or 'stories that would sum up the importance of golf for them' but when they were asked these questions sample members found it hard to pick out particularly special moments. Instead it was just said that "they had lots"but not any paramount ones.

On the other hand when I posed the series of questions,

Do you remember your best shots, holes?
describe. Have you ever had a hole in one? do
you remember this clearly? How far back do your
memories go?

the vivid replies showed that they easily recalled incidents but they could not claim one memory was particularly fond or that it summed up the importance of golf.

The 22 people interviewed had 20 holes in one between them,² Along with breaking par a hole in one is one of the most satisfying things that can happen to a golfer. As a result it is not surprising to hear some of the lucid recollections,

My hole in one was at the second hole at Medad. I decided it was a full 9-iron plus more, I hit the shot, beaver up, it hit in front of the green, right in front of the pin, and just kept on rolling straight in, terrific, scream:

Hole in one at 20 Valley, the 9 th hole, hit a 7-iron with the wind, it took two hops and disappeared. The other guys were more excited than I was, it happened too fast.

Here at the 13th hole last year, it was in a match. We tied after 18 holes and we had to play another round, and I had just lost the 12th hole to go even again. The guy I was playing hit it stiff and I thought I better hit it good, it landed a couple feet short of the green, took a couple of bounces and started heading for the hole. We were playing with two other guys and one of them said, 'It's going in' I remember thinking 'fuck off buddy' and all of a sudden it went in. I couldn't believe it. The guy I was playing with tried desperately to make his putt so he could say he made two on the hole and still lost the hole. He missed.

But not all the clear memories are holes in one,

Last year at Kings Forest on the 18th hole. I toed my 2nd shot, a 3-wood into a bush 135 yards from the green. I hit a 8-iron that had a restricted swing that caused me to swing flat with a strong grip because I had to try and hit a very strong hook out of the 3 to 4 foot bushes. I was also in a clump of sumacs about 12 feet high. I hit a shot that I was very proud of, that I had nipped very nicely, it came out in between two sumac trees with a very pronounced draw, it went just over a bunker that was just in front of the right corner of the green took one big bounce and rolled up about 15 feet pin high. I missed the putt by about an inch. I made par.

Many gave memories going back to their first game.

Syd recounts,

I remember hitting my first shot 15 years ago. I hit it crosshanded, it went 150 yards. I thought it was extraordinary, I was immediately hooked on the game, I fell in love with it. It was another challenge to conquer as a competitor.

About half of the sample remember their first game and all of them described distant memories.

It's Not Just A Game.

One day several years ago while Lou and I were out golfing we were joined by a single looking for a game. On the 9th hole Lou pushed his drive into the trees and started marching down the fairway in a tirade. In an attempt to console Lou (I knew better) our friend for a day said, "It's just a game." On hearing this Lou immediately turned and started to approach the unsuspecting player with his club raised above his head as if to hit the man yelling, "It's not just a game!" I was then forced to jump in front of Lou to stop him. It is doubtful that Lou would have struck the man but that last action is for my purposes inconsequential.³ What is important is the anger raised in Lou by the seemingly simple comment. In recently recalling this adventure we both agreed that the only thing that has changed for Lou is that the anger derived from such a comment would not be overtly manifested now, instead Lou and I would now just exchange glances to confirm mutual feelings about the remark. For many of the sample not only is golf not just a game, there is no desire for it to be so.

Seven of the twenty-two said it was a game but of these seven we have Howard's observation,

It is for me, but not for others.

Barry's qualification,

If it's just a game, it's the most important game there is. Any game is the competition, but golf is the most competitive there is.

Randy's consistent remarks that,

Golf is a game. Life is a game. Golf is like life.

and Trevor's clear idea,

Yes and No. It's a window of the real world. It's a game per se but it's more than just a game as far as your ability to translate what you can get from this game into something that will be valuable in your normal life.

Only three of the twenty-two view it as a game in the total sense.

As was stated earlier, this question really seemed to set back the interviewees but it also produced some of the most emotional responses. Ted puts it poetically,

No, It's an absolute total way of life, it's everything a writer would write about, man vs. man, man vs. nature, and man vs. self.

For Sam,

No, it's a way of improving myself.

Similarly Simon says,

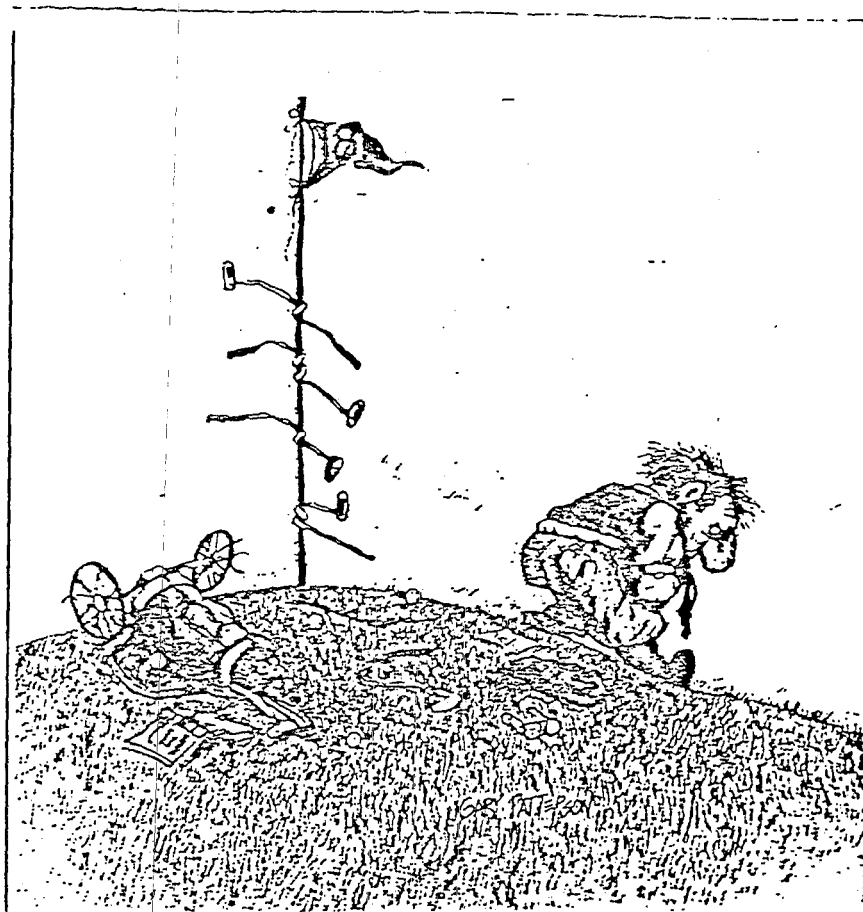
It's more than a game, it's something where you can measure yourself.

Darryl who has golfed for 55 years says,

It should be, but I doubt that.

And finally Fred romantically believes,

No, it's a man-like way of life.



"IT'S ONLY A GAME"

Golf Magazine, September, 1978, p. 53.

Summary

In reviewing this chapter the importance of golf is obtained in an equation like manner. On the left side of the equation are several observations: (1) the majority of sample members rate golf ahead of their job and several rate it as the most important thing that they have, (2) the Bandits play golf as long as the weather is bearable, (3) in summer outside of golf the Bandits have no spare time and do not desire any, in order that they may take up other forms of recreation, and (4) golf is not thought of as being important versus unimportant, rather only in degrees of importance. Summing this equation up gives the answer that golf is extremely important to the Bandits. Given this it was not surprising to see that golf is viewed as being much more than a game. I think these men are extremely lucky that they have found such a thing but unfortunately it seems that it begins to assume disproportionate importance and in the next chapter this aspect will be investigated.

FOOTNOTES

1. Trevor is not unique in this. One other Bandit also played golf the morning of his wedding day.

2. Hole in one odds

In one round

Average golfer	10,738 to 1
P.G.A. tour pro	927 to 1

Source: Golf Digest, March 1978, p. 106.

Given that the sample averages 100 rounds per year, using the above information the Bandits would have to play 107 years to get a hole in one if they were average golfers. Also given tht there is almost an average of one hole in one per Bandit interviewed, it is seen that these men are above average golfers.

3. Of course it would have been significant for Lou and the person he hit.

Chapter V

Addiction, Golf, and the Bandits

I bowl once a week in the winter. I used to play hockey in the winter and swim in the summer but now golf takes up 99 percent of my time. All other sports are less attractive since I started golfing; golf is number one. I'm hooked like a junkie.

Reg

Introduction

Similar to Reg's comments about being hooked on golf are Graham's and Gord's replies to the question, "Will you ever quit golf?" In recalling Graham's response, "I can't, I've tried." and Gord's reply "I don't think I can quit," we are given the impression that they too might be 'hooked like a junkie.' During the interviews, three other respondents also mentioned an addictive aspect of golf. And in observing Bandit conversations during the study period it was noticed that an idea of 'golf addiction' periodically was discussed.

What was particularly striking about these addiction conversations was the mood that surrounded them. It was not an exciting anticipatory mood in

that these men were synthesizing previously discovered information in a manner that had not been tried before and were as a result, on the threshold of a new discovery. Nor was it a despondent mood in which the participants were discussing someone who had fallen into golf's equivalent of 'the bottle.' Instead, addiction to golf just seemed to be a 'given'. The idea was not open for debate; it was just accepted.

If addiction is to apply to golf, addiction would have to be thought of in a non-chemical way. Recently the term 'workaholic' has been used to describe someone who gives work disproportionate weight in his/her life, but this term is usually used in a merely humorous manner. Referring to someone as a workaholic does not typically mean that this person's relationship with work is viewed as the same as the relationship between the 'user' and drugs. Warren Oates, however, in his book Confessions Of a Workaholic, believes that addiction to work is no different from addiction to drugs,

Although it (workaholism) is far more socially acceptable than alcohol or drug addiction, it is nevertheless an addiction. It is more profitable than drug addiction, let us say (unless you are a pusher as well as a user) or than alcoholism (unless you wholesale the stuff as well as drink it). Nevertheless when it comes to being a human being, workaholism is an addiction that can be almost equally destructive.

Oates makes a start, but his argument for thinking of addiction as being non-chemical is not as well developed as Stanton Peele's argument as presented in his book, Love and Addiction. Just as Oates wants us to think that work can, at times, be thought of as an addiction, Peele feels that love can become an addiction. It is not my intention to recount Peele's total case, rather, I intend only to present his argument for changing the emphasis of addiction from the chemical realm to the social one. I will supplement Peele's case with data on 'former heroin addicts' and then look at how his non-chemical definition of addiction applies to my sample.

Peele on Addiction

Peele does not argue that addiction is non-existent. Instead he argues that currently held conceptions about dependence are wrong. People do not yearn for a drug because they physically require it rather, they crave a drug because of its peculiar 'escape' properties. Heroin, for example

detaches a person from feelings of pain, lessening the awareness of physical and emotional discomfort. The heroin user experiences what is called 'total drive satiation'; his appetite and sex drive are suppressed, and his motivation to achieve-or his guilt at not achieving-likewise disappear. Thus, opiates remove memories and

worries about unresolved issues and reduce life to a single striving. The heroin or morphine high is not one which in itself produces ecstasy for most people. Rather, opiates are desired because they bring welcome relief from other sensations and feelings which the addict feels unpleasant.² (emphasis mine)

If the source of addiction were physical, Peele first queries, why does not everyone who experiments with a drug become addicted? Secondly, he wonders why would one drug not be viewed constantly over time. At this point he recalls how Persia, Russia, parts of Germany and Turkey all at some time made the production or use of tobacco a capital offense. We are also reminded of how coffee was outlawed in the Arab world around 1300 and in Germany in the 1500s.³ In summarizing Peele says,

What seems dangerous and uncontrollable at one time or in one place becomes natural and comfortable to deal with in another setting. Although tobacco has proved to be injurious to health in any number of ways, and recent investigations suggest that coffee may be equally harmful, Americans do not, by and large, strongly mistrust either substance. The ease we feel handling the two drugs has led us to underestimate or disregard their chemical potency. Our sense of being psychologically secure with tobacco and coffee, stems, in turn, from the fact that energizing, stimulating drugs closely fit the ethos of American and other Western cultures.⁴

Peele goes on to say,

The addict heroin or otherwise, is addicted

not to a chemical but to a sensation, a prop,
 an experience which structures his life.
 What causes that experience to become an addiction
 is that it makes it more and more difficult
 for the person to deal with his real needs,
 thereby making his sense of well-being
 increasingly on a single, external source of
 support.⁵

Just as addiction is not physical neither is
 withdrawal. Drugs produce a sense of well-being
 and consequently when the drug is no longer available,
 neither is the sense of well-being induced by the drug.
 It is revoval from the emotional state of well-being
 that is withdrawal.⁶

It is in search of the nebulous state of well-
 being that a circle of addiction arises. The addict

seeks artificial infusions of a sensation,
 whether it be one of somnolence or vitality,
 that is not supplied by the organic balance of
his life as a whole. (emphasis mine)

While satiating their void the person is in a state of
 escape or suspension from his/her real world. When the
 drug wears off it is just all the more apparent
 to the user that his/her life is not supplying the
 desired sensation. Now that a means for temporarily
 relieving the void has been discovered, it is repeatedly
 sought out. Satisfying the need in this manner, however,
 is just a stop-gap measure as it never addresses the
 fact that this need is not being satisfied elsewhere.

Where the non-addict seeks to satisfy his/her needs in different ways, by confronting and challenging, the addict only wants the certainty, the predictable environment, that the drug provides. Originally the addictive substance was pleasurable in itself, but later it is desired because it is 'safe'.

A cigarette addict or an alcoholic may once have enjoyed a smoke or a drink, but by the time he has become addicted, he is driven to the substance merely to maintain himself at a bearable level of existence.

Elaborating further on the addict,

Who, then, is the addict? We can say that he or she is someone who lacks the desire-or confidence in his or her capacity to come to grips with life independently. His view of life is not a positive one which anticipates chances for pleasure and fulfillment, but a negative one which fears the world and people as threats to himself. When this person is confronted with demands or problems, he seeks support from an external source which, since he feels it is stronger than he is, he believes can protect him....Disbelieving his own adequacy, recoiling from challenge, the addict welcomes control from outside himself as the ideal state of affairs.

Not surprisingly, given that he is a psychologist, Peele believes that the solution lies within the individual. Granted he does acknowledge that our society produces a seemingly large number of dependent people, potentially addicted people, but he feels that the malady may be remedied by seeking out

personally challenging experiences. In reading this one is reminded of the train that goes, "I think I can, I think I can." What Peele ignores is structural obstacles. What happens to the train who thinks it can, when it runs out of fuel? This, however, is not critical to what is being discussed here. The important thing is Peele's belief that addiction is not addiction to drugs but rather addiction to a state of mind. Drugs can provide the transportation to the desired state but they do not necessarily have to be the vehicle.

Crucial to accepting Peele's argument that drugs are not the addictive agent is an argument that there is not physical dependency in drug taking. To bolster Peele's case I will present highlights of an interview done with Jerome H. Jaffe, Nixon's drug chief, in which he discusses the heroin experience of Vietnam.¹⁰

Heroin, Vietnam and Our Good Clean Cut Boys-Dispelling the Heroin Myth

Just as there were media reports about how the U.S. was doing in Vietnam so were there reports on the extended drug use by the troops. What was especially 'frightful' about these reports were that

they told of widespread heroin use. 'Knowing' that once a person tried heroin he/she was immediately hooked made these reports all the more alarming. What was going to happen? In fact, not much. Jaffe's comments are extremely informative.

Jaffe reports that at the peak of the heroin epidemic 35 percent of the enlisted men had tried heroin and half of these felt themselves to be addicted. In response to the interviewee's remark, "I remember the great fear about returning vets who might turn on the country," Jaffe replies,

First of all, a lot of users in Vietnam were not injecting the drug. Two thirds of them were smoking heroin in cigarettes, 24 percent of them were inhaling the drug, or 'snorting' it. Only eight percent ever injected it.

Second, nobody came back from Vietnam actively addicted after June 1971. We devised the urine-testing program to prevent that. When we identified a man as a user we treated him over there for a week or so. They had to be treated before they came home, and we thought it was important not to reward the users by bringing them home before the non-users. When these men got back to the U.S., most of them had better things to do than to go back on heroin.¹¹
(emphasis mine)

When pressed about the idea that heroin users cannot turn back, Jaffe reports,

Robbins took a sample of 469 enlisted men who failed to pass the urine test to leave Vietnam in September of 1971. Between 11 and 12 percent of

the Army enlisted men scheduled to come back home that month showed up heroin-positive on the test. This group was not only experimenting with heroin, but they were apparently using it so heavily that they couldn't stop even when they knew they would be delayed in going home. Even this group was doing well. Only seven percent had been addicted at any time since their return-in other words of this group of users 93 percent did not become readdicted back in the States, at least within the first eight months.

Even in this group only one third ever bothered to use heroin at all once they got back to the United States. What we are learning is that you can become addicted in one environment, and if that environment changes enough-and if the addiction is not the kind that comes with hard-line intravenous injection it may be possible to stop using.¹²

What we see here is a change in the official argument against drugs. An unforeseen 'side effect' of the Vietnam war was heroin taking by the troops and as a result it had to be explained how the non-draft resisters were taking the same drugs that the draft resisters were accused of taking. Given 'medical proof' that heroin was physically addicting there was great public concern. Jaffe downplays the previous medical arguments, or at least gives them a refined twist, the hard liner, and supplements the medical argument with a social one. But what else could he do?

I don't know why an addict feels a craving, but the

whole answer is not metabolic. Part of it may be environment, pressure from friends, a sense of not knowing what to do with all his time. More likely it's all those factors together. But I don't believe methadone is correcting any permanent metabolic defect. Once an addict gets his life stabilized, once he has a new set of friends, new goals and activities, then he wants to make the payments on a new car, and get back into the mainstream of things. (emphasis mine).

Here we have a former United States drug chief bragging about how addicted heroin G.I.'s are provided with 'better things to do.' The possibility arises that they are now just addicted to something socially approved.¹⁴

Non-Drug Addiction

Jaffe's comments about how former heroin addicts will want to replace heroin with payments on a car and how once they get back to the United States they will have better things to do makes one wonder if such things as payments on a car might be considered the same as drug taking. Could payments on a car, payments on a house, etc. possibly be part of a non-chemical set that does the same thing as drugs? To prove this one would have to show that payments, or the previous stage-buying, provide similar satisfactions to drug taking. In Peele's terms, a sense of well-being

that is temporary and is just a temporary escape from an unpleasant reality and not something that is intrinsically satisfying in itself. Would removal from buying cause withdrawal? Given Jaffe's remarks, Peele's arguments about chemical addictions seem to be proved, but are his hypotheses about addicting agents also true?

It is evident that I do not intend to test buying or making payments as addicting, but, if payments on a car can possibly be substituted for heroin taking, cannot golf also be? Jaffe is admitting that drug taking is not all metabolic, that part of it is social. By substituting car buying for heroin taking he is just providing a more socially acceptable fix. Golf is clearly not a stigmatized thing in our society and looking back at how 'devoted' to golf my sample is, raised the possibility for me to consider that they were a group of socially approved addicts. My second interview schedule was drawn up to focus on this possibility.

Addiction and the Bandits

In trying to ascertain whether my sample members were addicted to golf, I asked two types of questions. The first set of questions were designed to test Peele's notion that the addict no longer enjoys the object

that he/she is addicted to. Investigating this, I asked the interviewees, "Do you ever get bored with golf during the year?" Believing that a positive answer to this question with a further statement that even when bored they continue to play golf would be an important initial step in accepting the application of Peele's concept of addiction to my sample of golfers I subsequently asked, "Do you keep playing at this time?" I also asked if they were bored only when they were playing badly, and why they kept playing (if they did, of course) when they were bored. In a similar vein I also asked, "Can you play too much golf?" and if the respondent replied in affirmative, I asked, "What do you do at this time?"

In addressing the previously mentioned idea that some of these men stated that they were addicted, and others took golf and addiction for granted, I asked, "Do you think people can get addicted to golf?" If the respondent felt that people can become addicted to golf (half of them felt themselves to be addicted) I queried, "Why do you say that?"

In response to the question about boredom with golf, 12 members of the sample said, "Yes." and ten replied, "No." while the others replied in the negative and added, "pissed off sometimes", "totally frustrated",

"when playing bad I get disappointed but not bored", and "I might get pissed off, but not bored; then I just try all the harder."

Of the twelve respondents who get bored with golf at some point in the year, eight reported that it was only when they were playing badly. Only two of the eight do not continue playing at this time; both of these men, "take a couple of days off." The six men who get bored with golf only when they are playing badly and who continue playing anyway continue in order to, "snap the slump" Trevor explains,

There are two reasons: first, force of habit, and second I like to further challenge myself; that is, if I learn to play well when I really don't want to play, than I should become a better golfer.

Stan has only become bored this year for the first time because he is golfing more due to his unemployment. He continues to play when he is bored and playing badly because,

I was brought up it's work, work, work and that's the only way to break out of a slump.

Eugene does not know if he only gets bored when he is playing badly, but he continues to play because, "I like doing it." The three men who get bored when not playing golf poorly are Peter, Lou and Darryl.

Peter, the only member of the sample not to mention competition in his interviews, admits that the socializing at the club is now the most important aspect of golf for him. Lou, recently married, gets bored when he feels golf is interfering with his home life. Peter now plays only 25 rounds per year and Lou 32, well under the sample average.

In looking at the responses to the question, "Can you play too much golf?" the replies will be looked at in two groups: the Bandits who never get bored with golf and those who do. Of the ten golfers who n ver get bored, six can play too much golf. Reg, takes a day off once a week, and Syd, works around the house, but continues to play. Ted and Lanny can only play too much when they are playing badly, but they both continue to play. Fred and Carl take a couple of days off. Not surprisingly, these ten men average 40 more rounds a year than the 12 men who can play too much golf. Of the 'bored' players, ten can play too much golf, and the line, "take a couple days off," was uniformly mentioned as the solution to playing too much golf. Peter, "Will not play too much golf," and Howard, "Can't play too much." Howard, although he gets bored when playing badly, cannot play too much golf.

Given that almost everyone mentioned taking a couple of days off at some point, but never more than that, and given that, for the sample to average 103 rounds a year in just over 200 days they could not take too many days off, the replies to the question, "During the season what is the longest you go without playing a round of golf?" were not surprising. Only five people took more than five days off at a time. Tim took eight days off for a holiday with his family, Eugene and Graham took two weeks off because of work and Lou and Randy took one month off. Not surprisingly in the golf-wife-work question both Lou and Randy rated golf third. They take this extended break to spend time with their family (they average only 23 rounds per year between them).¹⁵

In response to the question, "Do you think people can get addicted to golf?" all 22 sample members answered, "Yes". Of the 22, half said that they were addicted. In addition two others had previously mentioned that they were addicted. Thus, 13 out of 22 sample members expressed the belief that they were addicted, without being asked directly if they were. Four of the Bandits compared addiction to golf with addiction to drinking and/or addiction to gambling. Darryl says,

Oh yeah, definitely. They're like alcoholics, they'll neglect their families; they're like alcoholics, no way they can stop.

Lou adds, "It's like alcohol; it gets in your blood."

Of the 11 people who said that they were addicted to golf in response to the addiction question, six of them said it was due to the challenge of golf.

Likewise of the 11 who did not say that they were addicted, six felt that people become addicted to the challenge that golf offers. Barry describes the addiction,

Yes, it seems it just gets a hold of you, that's all you can think about. You hit one good shot and you wonder why you can't hit all of them like that; it's a challenge, the challenge is the thing.

Ralph succinctly replied to the question, "Yeah, cause I am, because of the challenge."

Of the ten who said people can get addicted to golf but did not mention challenge as the reason why, only two offered other reasons. Reg said, "you get addicted to the green." and Fred offered, "You get addicted because you do, to something you like." The remaining eight did not know why people were addicted, but they based their decisions on observations. Howard observes, "Some people have it as their major priority." Trevor adds,

Since I feel I am, naturally I feel others can too. Various reasons why I believe this- observing people ducking other responsibilities to play golf, seeing people playing when hurt and seeing people play when bored.

Back to Peele

In trying to decide whether the idea of non-chemical addiction can be applied to these golfers, several things must be considered. The fact that half of these men consider .himself to be addicted to golf; that all of them consider addiction to golf to be real; that over half of them get bored with golf but continue to play, and that three-quarters of the sample can play too much golf but take at most only a couple days off to remedy the situation, leads one to believe that these men are addicted to golf .

Remembering that Peele believes that what one is addicted to is a sense of well being created by the addicting agent makes one wonder where the line is drawn between something that is addicting and something that is repeatedly enjoyed and done but is not addicting. Recognizing a potential problem Peele clarifies,

while we might be tempted to refer to the dedicated artist or scientist as being addicted to his or her work, the description doesn't

fit. There may be elements of addiction in a person's throwing himself into solitary creative work when it is done out of an incapacity to have normal relationships with people, but great achievements often require a narrowing of focus. What distinguishes such concentration from addiction is that the artist or scientist is not escaping from novelty and uncertainty into a predictable, comforting state of affairs. He receives the pleasure of creation and discovery from his activity, a pleasure that is sometimes long deferred. He moves on to new problems, sharpens his skills, takes risks, meets resistance and frustration and always challenges himself.¹⁶ (emphasis mine)

'Challenge' a word, an idea, that has surfaced continuously through this work. Peele sees challenge and addiction as antithetical to each other, the Bandits do not. Eugene in his reply to the question about addiction says,

Yeah, look around, look at all these guys for fuck sakes, show me a guy in this group that isn't addicted. Why? Because you got so many chances, you finish a hole and you start fresh again. Every hole is different, a new challenge.

One is reminded of Trevor, who sees himself as addicted, who plays when bored to further challenge

himself. These men have uniformly adopted the concept of addiction, sans stigma, but they like golf because of the challenge.

In synthesizing Peele's ideas about addiction with the Bandits golf participation I would conclude that they

are not addicted. Peele suggests an unsatisfied alienated member of our society can fight her/his world to make it challenging or she/he can slip into addiction, the Bandits play golf because it is a challenge, they are not addicted.

Footnotes

1. Warren Oates, Confessions of A Workaholic, New York, World Publishing Co., 1971, p. 2.
2. Stanton Peele, Love and Addiction, Scarborough, The New American Library of Canada Limited, 1976, p. 45.
3. Ibid, p. 32.
4. Ibid, p. 32. Shirley Cook in her article, "Canadian Narcotics Legislation, 1908-1923: A Conflict Model Interpretation," Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology, 6 (1) 1969, pp. 36-46., gives an example of social, non-medical factors influencing drug legislation. She argues that one of the major reasons why opiates were outlawed in this country, was their use by the Chinese. It was a result of racial prejudice and opiate indulging by the Chinese that led to the opiate ban.

Had the racial conflict between whites and Asiatics been absent the moral indignation against drug use and the energetic enforcement of the law might have waned gradually as it has in the case of tobacco and liquor. The agents responsible for the manufacture of tobacco and alcohol were high status citizens, many of British ancestry, whose industries contributed much revenue to the various governments in Canada. These people could not be vilified with the level of intensity directed against the Chinese. Furthermore, the latter continued to remain in a low status level in Canadian society because of immigration restrictions, their occupational skills, and their high social 'visibility'. They thus remained a despised social category until after World War II. (p. 45)

5. Peele, p. 23.

6. Ibid, p. 24.
7. Ibid, p. 47.
8. Ibid, p. 63.
9. Ibid, p. 55.
10. T. George Harris, "As Far As Heroin is Concerned the Worst is Over", Psychology Today, August 1973, pp. 68-85.
11. Ibid, p. 75.
12. Ibid, p. 75.
13. Ibid, p. 79. Jaffe admitting that the reasons behind heroin use are social as well as medical is stunning. Recognizing that depressents do not fit the ethos of Western Society he realizes new arguments must be made against them. He still has 'medical reasons in explaining non-chemical heroin addiction i.e. his intravenous argument, but this is not so for marijuana. His arguments below against marijuana are probably no more than a foreshadow of future arguments against heroin. The old chemical ones will no longer due because they just are not true.

We don't know yet whether long-term marijuana use causes physiological damage equivalent to cirrhoses of the liver or lung cancer. But the social damage from heavy marijuana smoking can be real and costly. To be chronically 'stoned', to take little interest in putting your shoulder to the weel, can hurt society. With the changing economics of the world no country will be able to let a substantial number of people drop out and still produce an ever higher standard of living for all of its citizens. I know this sounds more like an economic analysis than a medical analysis, but heavy marijuana smoking will probably minimzze people's capacity for productivity. (p. 78) (emphasis mine)

Jaffe's argument sounds more economic than medical because it is. He goes on to say,

The issue reflects the different values of different groups within our society. I think that the majority of Americans have the right to say, We don't need another drug around. Alcohol and tobacco are bad enough. We don't want marijuana legalized. We want some penalties that will keep it unavailable. We have enough trouble when our kids drink too much. (pp. -78, 79)

14. Andrew Weil in his article, "The Natural Mind" in Psychology Today, October 1972 also discusses medical arguments against drug taking. Like Peele he does not feel them to be viable. In discussing Synanon, a quasi Alcohol Anonymous (for information on Synanon see Johnson and Cressey, "Differential Association and the Rehabilitation of Drug Addicts"; in Earl Rubington and Martin Weinberg, Deviance, The Interactionist Perspective, New York, The Macmillan Co., 1973, pp. 436-452.) for heroin addicts he introduces the argument that the addiction to heroin is just transferred to Synanon (see Psychology Today, October 1972, p. 95).
15. Tim's comments about taking time off for holidays raises an interesting point. Most of the sample take their holidays at the same time to play what is called the tour. The tour, the last two weeks of July and the first week of August refers to weeday touring of Bandits at local golf courses. During these weekdays the Bandits play courses other than Green Acres. They travel from Niagara Falls to Brantford on the tour. The time for the tour is determined by the Westinghouse shutdown. Many of the original Bandits are employed by Westinghouse and thus they have this time off. Up to 35 players will play on a tour day.

There is also a winter tour in February where approximately eight Bandits go south for two weeks together without their wives.

16. Peele, pp. 61,62.

Chapter VI

Conclusions and Areas Requiring Further Research

In this concluding chapter I will present chapter summaries to provide a background for what I feel to be the major findings of this work. Following this, recommendations concerning the nature of possible future studies which have suggested themselves in this thesis will be outlined.

Chapter Summaries

Initially it was stated that this work would examine the motivations and feelings of participants in leisure activity. The desire to undertake such a work came out of the assumption that games and leisure activities represent an attempt by the participants to realize some human potential that is not actualized elsewhere. Golf was chosen because of my familiarity with the game and because of a general societal outlook that accepts a golfer's dedication as being unmatched in a mass participant, leisure activity. One does not have to golf in our society to know what a 'golf widow' is and

what she represents.

A combination of methodologies were employed in this work, these being participant observation and interviewing. In the first chapter I explained my use of the 'total participant' variation of participant observation and outlined that I initially entered the field with no hypotheses to be tested. Conversely, it was explained that I intended to let the theory emerge from the data. It was seen that the first interview schedule was to cover a wide variety of items, and that the second was more concentrated, investigating in more detail prior observations and information obtained from the first set of interviews.

In Chapter II my sample of golfers was introduced. At this time we saw that this study is not investigating a random sample of golfers, but rather a highly organized cohesive group of golfers at a local civic golf course. I acknowledge the fact that these golfers are more dedicated than the average golfer and thus may be considered atypical, I do not acknowledge that basing this work on 'extreme' golfers weakens my findings; on the contrary, I believe it strengthens them. I feel that these men have the same feelings toward golf as do less active players and that their high level of involvement is

due to a clearer understanding of what golf has to offer them. Consequently they are better able to express their feelings than less active golfers.

Chapter II also introduces the betting and the desire for competition of the sample members; Chapter III elaborates further on these things. In the third chapter it is seen that the Bandits golf, and golf with each other because golf and their group gives them a much desired opportunity to challenge themselves and to compete. Betting is the key variable linking golf, the Bandits, their search for a challenge and competition. Betting is how one competes, competition is the challenge, and challenge is the allure of golf.

After seeing that golf is desired because of the challenge offered, Chapter IV goes into detail as to how important golf is to these men. It is discovered that work is generally considered less important than golf; that many of the sample members 'hate' talking about their jobs with people that they meet at tournaments emphasizes the importance of golf in relation to work. Observing that they do not view golf as being just a game and that inclement weather conditions do not deter these men from playing golf reinforces the idea of the importance of golf for this sample. Reading

Chapter IV may initiate feelings amongst the 'uninitiated' that golf is taking on 'sick' proportions for these men, that something is wrong with them to allow a game to become so important. The possibility that golf is an addiction arises; this possibility is investigated in Chapter V.

Chapter V investigates the possibility and accepts the idea that addictions are non-chemical. Instead of addiction being addiction to drugs, addiction is viewed as being addiction to a sense of well being. This sense of well being is an escape from everyday life into a safe predictable environment. Chapter V looks to see if this is what golf represents for the Bandits. It was found that these men view themselves as addicted, but what they feel they are addicted to is the challenge of golf. The whole idea of non-chemical addiction was viewed as antithetical to challenge, and as a result, despite the fact that these men consider themselves addicted to golf, it was concluded that they are not.

Conclusions and Suggestions for Further Research

Over and over again the idea has emerged that these men are seeking a challenge. It may be said that not only do they want a challenge, it seems that they need

a challenge. Golf has been chosen as their outlet and their zealous involvement not only serves to emphasize that they need to test themselves, but also goes to show that they are not able to test themselves elsewhere.

Golf was compared to drugs above, in addition to this Blum adds,

Drugs have been employed as tools for achieving an endless catalogue of motives. One suspects that the statement of intentions is at least an expression of the view of any one man, or of men in any era, of what man is and ought to be.... The catalogue also suggests that what men say they seek with drugs is also what they say they seek without them.¹ (emphasis mine)

In viewing Blum's remarks about drugs one notices how similar they are to Cockburn's ideas about games.²

Both of them allude to unrealized human potential, the search for something that society does not offer.

In this study an individual challenge is desperately sought out, it was seen that the respondents' jobs, and their daily existence, did not provide an adequate challenge and consequently had to be supplemented.

The repeated surfacing of the need for a challenge by these sample members demands further attention. Dedicated leisure enthusiasts, such as these men, must be investigated with this challenge motivation in mind.

Similarly comparison studies must be done. These men do not rate their job highly, but what happens with leisure participants who do hold their job in high esteem? I hypothesize that their level of leisure participation will not be as high because they simply do not have the same need for another challenge. In fact, leisure activities may not be a challenging endeavor at all for such participants, rather, it may just be a social activity, a place to make and maintain contacts. In any event, this study links the need for a challenge to heavy leisure participation, this link now 'needs' to be further investigated.

Footnotes

1. Blum, Richard, Society and Drugs San Francisco,
Jossey Bass, Inc., 1970, p. 7.
2. As presented in pp. 3, 4 of this work.

APPENDIX

Interview Schedule #1

Name:

Age:

Occupation:

Number of Years Golf (a)
(b) in group

Average Weekend Score:

Weekend Participation:

Marital Status (a)
(b) does wife golf
(c) Children-age
-sex
-do they golf

Rounds/Year

How many rounds will you play this year?

Is this average? If not what is your average over the last couple of years?

Do you play the tour? (a) how much?
(b) are you working or are you on holidays at the time?

Do you play the winter tour or go south at any other time during the winter? Does your wife go?

Do you play before Green Acres opens in the spring?

What are some of the worst conditions that you have played in?

How much do you spend on golf during the year?

Do you practice much during the year? How much? How does this compare to the time you spend playing?

Do you work shifts? If so what shifts do you golf on?

Outside Tournaments

Do you play in any outside tournaments during the year? Company or otherwise? How many?

When you play in these do you usually mix with the guys you play with and others or do you usually go down with the group and stay with them? How do you find the people you meet? What do you usually talk about? Just golf? Do you talk at all about jobs? What type of jobs do the people you meet have?

The Group

You mentioned that you have golfed with this group for ____ years, why did you start to golf with this group?

How many rounds/year do you play not in the group?
How many of these are without any members of the group?

How many people in this group do you see away from the golf course? Do you see them a lot? Are they considered to be close friends? Is there a regular activity (eg. hockey games, drinking) on which this is centered? Were these people friends before you joined the group or did you meet them in the group? Do you associate on an individual or family level?

How has the group changed over time? Why? What do you think of the group now as compared to when you started golfing in it? What would you like to see changed in the group?

How do you think other members (not group members-rather other course members) feel about this group? Illustrate with examples?

Last year the committee was set up, what do you think of the committee (generally)?

On what basis were these people elected?

Specifically, what do you think of the instituted changes:

- (a) seeding captains
- (b) regular picking order
- (c) team cleaners
- (d) Checking up on names. Do you think they are successful?
- (e) Standardized lightning rule and quitting because of bad weather

Do you play at Green Acres because of this group?

Sidebets

How many sidebets do you usually have? What type are they?

What is the maximum gain or loss for these bets?

Are your bets automatic or do you bet only on certain days?
If you only bet on particular days what are the factors
that determine whether you are going to bet?

Do you adjust your bets? How? Do you keep track of
how your bets with specific people go over the year?

Why do you bet? How do you weigh sidebets versus the
team bet? How does betting affect your game?

Were you in cleaners just before team cleaners went into
effect? Why not or how did you do?

Do you bet on things other than golf? What? Regularly?
How Much?

Golf

Do you participate in any other sports regularly? How
often? Did you? Why did you stop? How do these
compare to golf?

Are there any other games or sports you are thinking of
taking up or plan to take up in the future? What is it
about these sports that attracts you?

What do you do in your other spare time?

What is there in golf that makes you like it so much?

Are there any other reasons that other people have for playing golf?

When you are playing good (also bad) does it affect your work and/or homelife?

Similarly if things are going bad at home or work does it affect your game?

What do you think effects the other the most (golf the outside world or the outside world-golf)?

What percent of golf is mental?

How important is the social part (the 19th hole)? Do you just drop by the club at times for a drink or to see who's around? How often?

Is there any way you can compare golf with your wife and work? How do they compare?

Do you know your ringer score? Could you calculate it?

Do you remember your best shots, holes? Describe. Have you ever had a hole in one? Do you remember this clearly? How far back do your memories go?

Do you remember other people's good shots that they made while playing with you? Are there particular team bets that you remember? How long ago did these happen?

Is there any particular fond memory or memories that you have?

Do you think you will ever quit the game? Why or why not?

Have you learned anything about yourself from golf?

Is there any story or memory that sums up the importance of golf for you? How important is it to you?

Is golf just a game?

Interview Schedule #2

Do you ever get bored with golf during the year?

if yes-Is this only when you are playing bad?

Only then?

Do you keep playing at this time? Why?

Can you play too much golf? If yes what do you do at this time?

During the season what is the longest you go without playing a round of golf? Any particular reason? Why?

Do you think people can get addicted to golf? (If he says he is-Why do you say that?)

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