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The piece was provided by Bob Tindall's widow, Trudie through Jackson Men's Club Director, Dan Puetz, Sr.. Read to the end for the rest of the story.

Dick Rovig

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A PUBLINX PRO

**Bob Tindall, of Seattle's Jackson Park, is one of an army of unsung professionals who perform minor wonders for rabid golfers who plod the nation's municipal courses.**

By EMMETT WATSON

BOB TINDALL is a tall, wiry, energetic fellow whose name will cause no flicker of recognition in the faces of 99 per cent of golfdom. There are hundreds like him. Tindall is a "working stiff" pro, sort of a pick-and-shovel guy in what is (to mince no words) a frequently snob-bish game. Tindall is a publinx pro.

He shoots in the low 70's and takes pride in his game. If, by some misshapen quirk of chance, Bob went up for sale in the Las Vegas Calcutta, you could buy him for a used cocktail napkin. He simply is not (nor has he any desire to be) one of those highly-tuned tournament pros; nor is he likely to land a job in some fat-cat private club, where he might win \$50 a round from the retired president of Gold Seal Mulch Co.

But without Bob Tindall, and many others like him, golf would wither to a narrow aristocracy of semi-ath-letes. Companies making some of the fantastic millions now being made in sales of equipment would go bank-rupt. There would be fewer Littlers, Souchaks, Mangrums and Middlecoffs. And it would be economically wiser to plough up a lot of golf courses and plant spuds in them.

Because it is guys like Tindall who, over the years, have taken the "sissy" label off golf; who have broadened its base of appeal and made the game a healthy, worthwhile pleasure for millions of gas station attendants, house-wives, truck drivers and grocery clerks.

Tindall, now forty-one, has been the pro at Seattle's Jackson Park Municipal Golf Course since 1945. His earnings are none of our business, but he gets no salary; he makes a comfortable-to-nice income from group lessons, private lessons, sales (frequently on credit) and rental of equipment.

Bob's average summer working day would 'make a longshoreman shudder. Each morning, he arises before seven, breakfasts at his home which fronts on Jackson's twelfth green, and, if he's lucky, he'll make it back by eight P.M. After that, he'll work on his books to keep the tax collectors off his back.

Each day is typical of every other day, yet each day usually has a surprise in store. The other afternoon a boorish cheapskate tried to punch Bob in the nose. Tindall caught him starting at the second tee in order to evade the city's modest \$1.50 weekday green fee.

Each morning Tindall knows that sometime during the day he is going to stand before somebody who has never played golf before. The subject may be a millionaire who is too self-conscious to start playing where he might be recognized. The subject may be a stout lady, whose ambition is laudable, but not lofty---she just wants to walk off a few inches. Or the subject may be a middle-aged accountant with all the coordination of the average camel.

It could be Thursday, Tuesday or St. Swithin's Day. So let's take a kind of composite pupil Bob will face, say-, at ten



**Bob Tindall 1959**

A.M. of a cloudy, sort of gloomy Monday morning. She is about thirty-five. She is wearing an un-golfish costume—maybe some pedal pushers, a pair of unsiked loafers, a cardigan sweater and a bandana around her head. After all, she can't afford to tie up \$100 in clothes to play a game she's not sure it's a lady beginner. Sometimes they buy equipment before swinging a club, as she did; others take lessons, then run down to some store where they have a live charge-plate.

"As a rule, I get first crack at them," Tindall says. "I try to help them, show them the importance of good clubs, properly weighted for their strength.

"Doggone it, I get mad when I think of the golf equipment that's being sold around. Some companies shouldn't be permitted to manufacture the stuff they do. It's just plain junk.

Getting back to Monday morning, where our composite lady novice is about to take her first swing at a golf ball: She is a pretty nice gal, really, and not a bit stupid. She was smart enough not to throw her money away on fancy golf clothes until she learned something about the game; her attempt at economy in clubs can be charged up to a total unfamiliarity with the game, along with a limited family budget.

Za-whingo! Whoosh! She just took her first swing. The safest thing on the Jackson Golf Course at that moment was a small bug that had climbed on top of the ball. She missed it by a tidy three inches.

"Don't be embarrassed," Tindall says. "Let's try something a little different, though. Now you take the club like this, and . . ."

More likely than not, after five lessons, and some practice, the lady beginner will be playing a serviceable game of golf. She'll get a little lonely sometimes, because she'll be off the fairway, away from her partners, hunting for a lost slice. Then one day, maybe a month after she started, our composite beginner will hit one good—a crisp, low, straight sizzling drive, the kind that's good for the soul and opens up a bright new window in the life of a duffer. She won't even pause to wonder what she did right.

She'll call up her neighbors to tell them about that shot; she'll drive her husband daffy with lyrical descriptions of it. A few more shots like it, and she's a gone gal on golf. Not much later, those bargain clubs will wind up on a Salvation Army truck, and Tindall will sell her (probably on credit) a set of good clubs, exactly suited to her size and strength, for around \$75 to \$90.

She no longer comes to Jackson in pedal pushers. Now she has a white golf skirt, a jacket, spiked shoes, a cap *and* a tanned, healthy look. She has slimmed down a bit, too, and guys give her the double-take when she comes into the clubhouse. Furthermore, she gets to be a pretty good golfer.

Our composite subject need not be a woman. More than 73,000 rounds of golf were played at Jackson alone last year. Foursomes and twosomes can be subdivided by sex, by color, by creed, by religion and by condition of servitude. There are no barriers at Jackson.

"Time and again I've seen a millionaire playing with an ordinary working stiff," Tindall says. "I know of one wealthy guy here in town—heck, he could buy a private club if he wanted it—but he likes to play all over. He plays here and he plays everywhere, and he doesn't care who he plays with, just so he gets a game.

"The people who play our course don't care how much a man makes. All they want to know is what his handicap is."

For \$100 a year in Seattle, you *can* buy an "annual ticket" and play as much golf as you want at any of the three Municipal Courses. "To me," says Tindall, "that's the biggest bargain in golf today."

Paradoxically, Tindall doesn't get much chance to play golf himself during the summer. That is when he has to make his money. In addition to private lessons, he gives group lessons (seldom more than ten in a group) and, by agreement with the city, he helps coach golf teams at three large Seattle high schools.

Clearly, the public pro has a different function from the private club pro. The latter theoretically "works for" the members, and he *can't* very well refuse to play with them. "In one sense," says Tindall, "I'm pretty much my own boss. I'm at nobody's beck and cail, but I have an obligation to everybody. I should play more—it

won't help my business—but I usually don't have time, because I'll have two or three groups waiting to take lessons."

In a general way, Tindall is kind of a city-employed supervisor of Jackson, even though he draws no pay. He has to settle beefs, keep an eye on the help, check the tickets, run tournaments and, for the most part, keep the golf-playing taxpayers happy.

At Jackson, you can rent about everything except a handicap: clubs, bags, golf rubbers, rain pants, carts, jackets and even umbrellas. Tindall is lucky, in a way, because he used to be employed by Puget Sound Power & Light Co. as a bookkeeper, before he turned pro at the age of twenty-eight. Figures don't scare him, so he has little trouble keeping track of his own private records, in addition to such records as the state sales tax, city business tax, unemployment and social security deductions.

Tindall employs one young assistant pro, Herb Magnusson, age twenty-five, along with a kid during the summers to help around the pro shop. Jackson's other help is city-employed, but Bob is kind of a loosely-defined superintendent of the whole lash-up.

The Jackson course opens at 5:30 A.M., although Bob doesn't arrive until shortly before eight. He spends the next hour or so checking rental carts, cleaning out the pro shop, checking his inventory, doing a few club repair jobs, okaying bills and perhaps shipping off some clubs for refinishing.

By nine o'clock, he's ready to give a lesson to a beginner. If he's lucky, she'll be kind of pleasant to look at, and have good coordination; he isn't always lucky, but Tindall has learned, after teaching thousands of golfers, to adopt a policy of *c'est la vie*. At 9:30 he'll go back to the pro shop, unless he has another private lesson scheduled, then he's back on the course at ten for an hour's work with a group of nine YWCA women who have signed up for a series of lessons.

Each lesson costs \$1 per person.

From eleven to noon, he may have still another group, this one consisting of eight neighborhood women from nearby Laurelhurst.

Tindall usually goes home to lunch, after which he may have another half-hour private lesson. From 1:30 to three, there usually is another group waiting, with perhaps a half-hour private lesson thrown in. If his schedule gets too difficult, Tindall frequently works in Magnusson, splitting the lesson fee.

From three to 4:30, he might have three more private lessons in a row or, during the school year, he might have the golf team from Roosevelt High School on hand for a few pointers. From 4:30 to five, until dark, Bob usually is back at the pro shop, checking in rental equipment. But this also is the most profitable part of the day for selling equipment. For some reason, buried in the subconscious of a golfer, the leisure period from about six to 8:30 is the time when he is most likely to buy a new shirt, a new driver, or a sweater.

Tindall usually makes it home by eight or 8:30. After dinner, he'll spend perhaps 30 minutes to an hour updating his records or writing letters to manufacturers. "My only complaint about this job isn't new," he says. "It's common among all pros. The hardest part is convincing people that they need help in all phases of the game.

"They wouldn't let a plumber fix their teeth, but they let some guy who has never played golf pick out their equipment for them. Our prices might sound high to a beginner, but in the long run we'll save him money. Like I said before, a duffer needs all the help he can get."

Tindall never will "follow the sun," as some private club pros are able to do. He has to stick it out during the winter, because public golfers are hardy people—they play when they can, and they play in any weather.

Bob Tindall makes no claims that he has developed top golfers—although he has had a hand in teaching some of the Northwest's best products. He has taught them in every age bracket, eight to eighty, but possibly the one he is most proud of is the kid who works in his pro shop. Tindall started this boy out at the age of ten. The kid's name is Bill, and he happens to be fourteen and that age, he won the City Amateur crown—an event that attracted some of the best golfers in the Northwest. The kid's name is Bill, and he happens to be Tindall's own son!

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