PRO REMINDS HIMSELF OF WHAT HE OWES HIS MEMBERS

We have a lot of talk among our club officials about an article in March Golfing magazine, entitled, "A Lesson in Being A Golf Club Member."

The article discussed the member's obligation to deal with the pro, who must make money so he will be able to serve the club as the club desires, and as the pro wants to serve it if he is a first class man.

I was, of course, very glad to have my officials take so much interest in this publicity to improve pro business. They agreed that copies of the article should be sent to each of our members.

One of our directors, a fellow with whom I went to high school, tells me what goes on at the board meetings. It has helped me do a better job for the club than a pro ordinarily is able to do when he is working in the dark as to the general picture.

General Education

When I was telling my friend that I appreciated the help I got in mailing the Golfing article to our members, he said: "That piece of education wasn't entirely intended to help your department although it looked that way at first sight. The whole club operation needs members who know how to be members. To tell the truth, quite a few of our members don't have much of an idea that being a private club member calls for something more than paying dues and holding liquor reasonably well. They've got to learn how to support the club or the club won't have prestige or volume and character of business needed to make it an efficient operation."

"In other words, there is no reason for belonging to a club unless it is a success."

To make it a success requires the informed cooperation of every member," said my friend. "This cooperation isn't an easy thing to get because belonging to a club costs money and any number of our members have expenses that come ahead of club bills."

We got talking about individual cases of probable incomes and expenses of the members and mentioned a man who had a big domestic appliance business.

My club official asked me, "Have you
ever done any business with him?"
I replied that I had.
"Did you pay straight retail prices like
his other customers?"
I had to answer that I didn't.
"Do you buy 'wholesale' every chance
you get?"
I had to answer "yes" to that.
"How much of the golf stuff that our
members buy do you think you sell to
them out of your shop?"
"It's hard to tell, Somewhere between
80 and 90 per cent," I guessed.
"Considering that so much buying is
done at trick discount houses and at whole-
sale as a general thing, and that you your-
self buy wholesale, I'd say you are getting
a pretty good break from the members."
That put a different light on problems
that have been bothering me and other
pros, problems that have been especially
troublesome the past few years with the
increasing cost of operating a pro de-
partment, the smaller net profit and the
higher living costs of my family and my-
self.

Worries Love Company

It struck me that my worries probably
have been the same as those of the ma-
jority of my members during the last few
years of inflation.
I got to thinking that when I had to
buy something at home that cost what a
set of woods and irons and a bag costs
at my shop, I might not show the same
loyalty I expect my members to have to-
ard me. I wasn't willing to pay the retail
prices to one of my members for things
I needed, but would buy them 'wholesale,'
especially when that's so easy to do these
days.
Then, all of a sudden, it dawned on me
that what I have suspected so long is the
absolute truth. My members are a grand
bunch and deserve everything I can possi-
bly do for them in expressing my thanks
for the way they stand by me.
Certainly, some of my members buy
golf goods elsewhere. But why?
They didn't think much about it That
means I didn't become close enough to
them for them to think about me when
they were thinking about buying golf
equipment or accessories.
Another reason is that they believed
they couldn't afford my prices. Maybe
that means I haven't done a good job in
convincing them that my quality type of
merchandise is really a bargain over the
period it will be used. Perhaps I should
have more of a price range in my shop
stock, or should have a time payment
plan. I'm not sure. I've got to do some
more thinking about that.

Compromise Is Costly

I do know that a great danger to pro
business right now is offering golf mer-
chandise of a sort that can be bought for
considerably less money through other re-
tail outlets.
I also know that the golfers aren't going
to be enthusiastic about merchandise that
offers more profit to some pros but at
the same time costs the golfing consumer
more.

Then there is another class of members—
very few of them, luckily for me—who
are just simply tight.
Nothing but money means anything to
them. Maybe I can cure them with kind-
ness. Anyway, I'm not going to be cool
to them and not give them a chance to
change. They're human beings and club
members. I know some pros who are as
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Municipal Lease
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or in a fair percentage of the invested capital in a period of stress.
16. Payment should begin at the point where estimated profits begin; a minimum payment may be desirable.
17. No payments should become due until income begins; a little extra time at the beginning of the lease costs little and may be a great factor in aligning cooperative interest.
18. Provisions for securing an operator should be based on operational experience, knowledge of the whole of golf course and club management, on character of the lessee; not primarily on price bids.
19. Time may be extended in the lease in place of capital outlay in any reasonable amount.

Lean Over Backwards to Avoid Elimination in Flying Hills Blind Bogey Tournaments

There's a great deal of enthusiasm for the blind bogey tournaments Frank Rodia stages for his members at Flying Hills GC, El Cajon, Calif. It isn't unusual for as many as 400 or 500 clubswingers to get into the events because it's tough to get eliminated, there is a lot of fun involved and Frank makes things even more interesting by offering a substantial supply of clubs, shoes, sweaters, etc., as prizes.
The blind bogey usually runs over a period of four weeks. Players pay an entry fee of 50 cents and choose their handicaps so that their net scores will fall between 70 and 80. At the end of each week a number between 70 and 80 is drawn and all players having the same net as the number drawn, qualify for the final playoff. A player may enter the tournament as many times as he wishes, taking a different handicap for each occasion if he cares to, in order to qualify for the playoff.
On playoff day survivors play an 18-hole blind bogey round. On this occasion, handicaps also are chosen before starting time, a number between 70 and 80 is picked out of the hat, and players with nets that match it become finalists. An 18-hole putting contest decides the winner among the finalists. There are plenty of consolation prizes to salve the wounds of those who don't quite reach the final putting phase and, of course, all finalists are handsomely rewarded.

Housekeeping Hints
(Continued from page 44)
Each green has its own border landscaping. Risks about the greens are gentle. The bunkers of yesterday are out of place. The harsh lines of old age have given way to the fine contours of youth.
This contouring of the shoulders of the greens and traps is the essence of the modern course. It is the golfer's challenge. It directs his play, yet challenges his skill and determination to accept a problem and solve it as adroitly as possible.

Tell Them You Saw the Ad in GOLFDOM