

SHOWS & CONVENTIONS

Southwest show gets 400 pros to Dallas

Quickly becoming one of the biggest regional pro shop trade shows in the country, the Southwestern Professional Golf Salesman's Association fifth show brought a record number of club professionals to its Dallas site in late September.

According to SWPGSA President Leon Faucett, 415 pros were on hand for the three-day run that included a record 90 exhibitors at the North Park Inn Center Complex.

Doubling the number of exhibitors over its past five years, the show brings the pro closer to buying when the new lines first hit the market.

Several national firms had their top sales personnel on hand at Dallas including Miller Golf's Dick Marchetti, who said, "Besides the PGA Merchandise Show, this is the only real selling show I have ever attended."

"When I was invited down to Dallas, I thought it was just another regional show. My salesman couldn't believe they can do it for the price they charge," said Al Donahower of the Kimberton Co. Bill Miller, national sales manager for ProGroup, Inc., said, "It was good to get back to Texas, but it was better to do this type of

business."

Faucett and his association started their show in 1972 in cooperation with the local chapters of the PGA in Texas, and the pros have given their full support to the effort with their attendance and, obviously, with their buying.

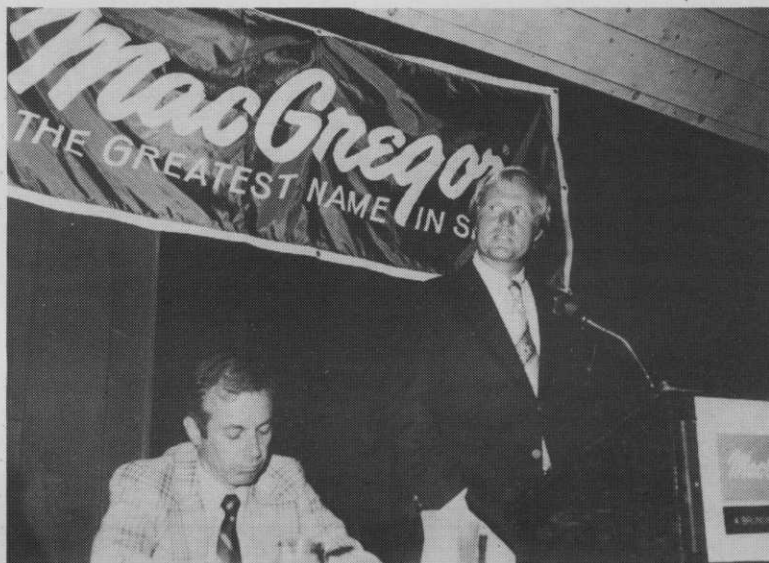
MANAGEMENT

'Talk to your pro' superintendents told

"Communications is still the biggest problem in clubs today." Those were the words of Joe Black, pro at Brookhaven Country Club in Dallas and one of the most prominent club professionals in the Professional Golfers Association, as he spoke to the Northern Ohio and Central Ohio Golf Course Superintendents Associations recently.

A candidate in this year's PGA elections for national treasurer, Black told the gathered superintendents that talking about the day-to-day operation of a club was one of the best ways to stop problems before they start.

"Scheduling is an essential ingredient to running a club properly," the member of the GOLF BUSINESS editorial advisory board said. Admittedly, Black commented, there are club professionals not interested in being the friend of the superintendent, but the Texan felt this attitude was managerial suicide.



MacGregor introduced its new golf products for 1977 at its annual sales meeting, including three different varieties of the Tourney ball, an enlarged selection of custom specialty clubs, and the Jack Nicklaus-inspired VIP golf clubs. Speakers at the awards banquet were General Manager Jack Curran and, naturally, Jack Nicklaus. Also in attendance were two other MacGregor pro staff advisors: Ben Crenshaw and Tom Weiskopf.

Selling a program to a board is probably one of the areas where the club professional and the superintendent can cooperate most effectively, Black insisted. "What is good for the superintendent is in the end good for the professional and for the club."

Black elaborated on his public relations effort at Brookhaven with superintendent Quinton Johnson. "Both of us play with the members to find out what they really want. At first, Quinton didn't play golf, so I gave him a bunch of lessons, bought him a bag with his name on it, and got him to go out on the course. I think he has a whole different perspective from playing with the members."

Another thing Black elaborated on was the effort the PGA is putting into its educational program; he is convinced the organization has been doing a better job than the GCSAA in getting its members ready for other golf management positions.

Some controversy was sparked when several superintendents became involved in a heated discussion on the impact of the tour on the course superintendent, referring to Black's long-running involvement with rule interpretations on the tour. Some felt the TPD pros demanded too much from the superintendent and in turn

memberships were asking for the same near-perfect conditions — without keeping in mind the demands of heavy play, weather, and disease on the golf course.

MARKET TRENDS

Decrease in golfers reported in survey

Golf ranks 14th in public popularity out of 27 sports surveyed by A. C. Nielsen Co. recently. Swimming, bicycling, fishing, camping, and bowling (in that order) are the most popular sports according to the report.

Projected figures from Nielsen for 1976 place the number of golfers at 16,568,000, a three percent decrease since the last study done, in 1973. That study included 23 of the 27 sports examined in 1976.

The survey was taken among 3,000 U.S. households, with the results being representative of the entire country. Tennis and snow skiing were reportedly the two fastest-growing recreations, with tennis ranked ninth at a 45 percent increase since 1973; skiing ranked 18th at a 42 percent increase.



Planning was the key to the success of the 1976 SWPGSA show. Show committee members were (from left): Robert Anderson, ProGroup, Inc.; Eddie Connor, Spalding; Paul Hargrave, MacGregor; and Leon Faucett, chairman and association president. Unidentified male at right was not part of the committee.