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Yardage on the Shawnee course is 3397 out and 2962 in, with 37 out and 35 in, making the course's par of 72. When you consider that the leading lights of professional golf have shot at that figure for years and only once made it bow to a five stroke humiliation, you may reflect that if you also will take your time, think it all over carefully, and then do your altering, you need not worry about your course being "burnt up" by the most brilliant field of players.

A Pro for a Day

By "NINETY NINE"

Here is something that was sent in to Golfdom by the president of an eastern golf club. He is a nationally known sales manager so what he has to say about professional merchandising may do the boys some good.

I WOULD like to be a professional for just one day. At the end of that day I would undoubtedly be "canned," not discharged with all the nice formalities that expression implies, but promptly and firmly "canned."

But in the meanwhile I would show what could be done with a professional's shop and I also would show our members what the professional has as his due from them, the latter being the reason why I would be so quickly out of work.

Until this year I thought that being a pro was the easiest possible way of making a living. Nothing to do but play golf and take orders—not sell, because most of what I thought a pro moves out of his stock was simply that for which his members asked. The latter part, I thought, would be easy because my store would have no rent, no delivery charges and no credit risks, and what merchant could ask for a better set-up.

Then, by some curious twist of fate, I was elected president of a golf club. There was no reason for this as I am jubilant when I cut one stroke off of a hundred, but I have lived in our community for a number of years and lately have reached that happy position in life that allows me the enjoyment golf affords to the man who no longer is harrassed by business affairs.

One of the first problems that confronted me as I was ushered into the presidency of our club was the matter of helping to get a good professional. During the last five years we had three pros and none of them satisfactory. This year we were fortunate in getting a young fellow who is on his first job as a pro, having been assistant for one of the well known professionals for five years prior to making his connection with us.

The golf committee chairman, the directors and I are taking an interest in this

boy and he looks like the answer to our prayer. In keeping closely in touch with him I have made up my mind what I would do if I were a pro, even if for only 24 hours.

Right at the start I would have the shop cleaned out so it looked like a place for the sale of high quality merchandise. I would spotlight in my display space some of the items that I was most anxious to move. The balls, wooden tees and other quick selling necessities I would locate so that when players came in to buy them they could not help but see some of the other supplies I was anxious to sell.

I would make a good display of the advertising material supplied me by the manufacturers whose goods I had for sale. I would keep this display fresh for there's no business man so heedless of the power of national advertising that he doesn't try to cash in. I would set my assistants a good example of courteous and interested attention to everyone who even remotely looked like a possible purchaser. I'd make the atmosphere of the shop such that people would like to tarry and "shop around." I would keep my eyes on what my members had as their playing equipment and tactfully suggest, when the opportunity permitted, that I had something they needed. When some new clubs came in, I would ask my members to look them over. Lots of times the sight and the feel will do all the selling work necessary, and there's no harm or expense to asking. So much for my own efforts.

Here's the Rub

There's one thing that is common in many clubs, and was in ours, that I'd hop on right away if I were a pro and that is beating me out of sales by frantic efforts to take advantage of discounts.

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of connections where they could get balls, clubs and bags at wholesale prices. Our other pros, I see now, used to watch business get away from them on these discount deals, never make a murmur to headquarters, and finally get disgusted and lose all interest in the job.

Now, if I were a pro for a day, the first time I saw evidence of this I'd probably go right straight up in the air for I would see how hopeless it was for me to try to make a decent income out of my job unless I had a good shop profit. What I'd probably do is ask some discount-buying member what he'd do if he took a job at only a nominal salary with the understanding that he would make a respectable income out of the reasonably exclusive privilege of selling supplies to the group for which he was working. If he would reply that he'd quit the job, I'd tell him that's what I was doing, and if he asked me what business that was of mine, what I'd tell him would get me fired.

As a matter of fact, I should be fired, for where I should make my complaint is to the president or any other official who hired me. But in this short space of time I have had fairly close contact with a pro shop I believe this to be the most thoughtless treatment to which the pro is subjected. I attribute a good part of the satisfaction we now are enjoying from our professional to the prompt action we took in appealing to the members' fairness and putting a stop to this discount buying practice. We only had to send out one general letter to the membership and it did the work.

If I were a pro I'd see that my own house was in order first and then tackle this outside buying matter with some justification for my complaint. The pro who is putting forth diligent and sensible selling effort will find very few clubs that won't be glad to give him plenty of support and co-operation. The members, as business men, appreciate business-like methods and many a pro would do well to make this the keynote of his work.

Pros may be criticised for poor business methods until the imps are skating, but why "ride" them and not say anything about the lack of wisdom of the architects who design and locate so many of the pro shops? It's a fortunate club and a lucky pro who can get to the architect's ear about the pro shop design before the clubhouse is built.