

The Harrisons *Star Operators of Algonquin's "Service Station"*

By JIM CRAIG

Sales Representative, A. G. Spalding and Brothers

DURING the eleven years I have called on golf professionals from Pittsburgh west and from the Canadian border to the Mexican line I have been in hundreds of pro shops. They have ranked from dimly lighted closets, shoved back under an out-of-the-way staircase to well lighted spacious showrooms. Some of the smaller ones were overcrowded with displayed golf goods and old debris, while others looked barren by having too little on display. Of all the shops that I have been in there is one in particular that stands out clearly above the others and that is the shop of Elmer and Donald Harrison at the Algonquin Golf Club, Webster Groves, Mo., a popular St. Louis golf club.

Quite a distance from the first tee and off of the direct path from the locker-room to the starting point, stands the shop, housed in a one-story frame building that has seen many years of service. There is nothing on the outside to attract the attention of the golfer. Inside what a difference is to be found. Practically everything needed by the golfer can be had there and all articles are displayed in a most orderly manner. As one walks in the front entrance the first thing to attract him is the absolute cleanliness of the shop. The old board flooring, laid years ago, has been oiled and scraps of paper, ends of shafts or other articles never litter it up. This is due to the fact that neither of the proprietors is too proud to wield a broom and keep the shop floor clean.

The next thing to strike the visitors' attention is the orderly manner in which even the smallest item is put on display. The golfer has before him a selection of clubs of any of the popular makes. The same is true of golf balls and other accessories. One large glass showcase is devoted entirely to knickers, sweaters, hose and caps that the Harrison Brothers import themselves from abroad. They also carry a complete line of both street and golf shoes of one of the world's leading brands. The shoes are also imported.

Then comes the most important things, perhaps—the cheerful personal service that

these two professionals give their members whether the want is for a small box of tees or the most expensive set of clubs in the shop. Service with a smile may not have originated with these two likeable boys (who but a few years ago were lugging heavy bags over St. Louis golf courses with scores of other caddies) but it certainly has been adopted by them and practiced. They run their business like any big, successful downtown establishment. They make replacements with the same smile they make sales and a sale is not completed by them until the customer is satisfied.

It has been my pleasure to sell the Harrison Brothers for the past few years and it really has been a pleasure. They insist on quality. Price making no difference to them, for they well know they in turn can get their price for real merchandise. They are up to the minute on the market and when something new comes out and there is any demand for it, there is always room for the article in their shop. Another big point in their buying, in contrast with the way many of pros buy, is that they forget their personal likes and dislikes in selecting merchandise. Many a pro has turned down a good selling golf club just because he didn't like the model for his own game.

Dust may light on their displays of golf clubs and on the tops of their heavy glass showcases but it never rests there long. Their stock is groomed carefully and is always in fresh looking condition. In many golf professional shops around the country can be found an accumulation of golf clubs that did not sell, an accumulation of years, yet it grows each year. This condition does not exist at Algonquin for by the middle of the season the Harrisons know if they have among their stock items that are not moving and they at once mark these down to cost or even less, and they are sold to make room for merchandise that will sell and bring in a profit.

Day in and day out, Algonquin gets more play than any private club in St. Louis and the Harrison brothers have done their part in bringing this about.