



Faunce and two of his assistants in a corner of the shop from which he directs his selling warfare.

Fee-Course Pro Beats Stores at Price-Cutting Game

WISE ones in this golf business are watching the development of the pay as you play courses for business ideas that can be applied to the operation of private courses. Already there are a number of fee club details in house operation and in course maintenance that have been adjusted to private clubs with beneficial results showing on the annual statement and in member satisfaction. The pro shop also can benefit.

The private club pro can pay a good bit of studious attention to the work of some of these pros at the fee courses and he will pick up some hunches that he can use in his own business performance. There will have to be plenty of adjusting done, of course, for you can't use the same

rather high pressure and obviously commercial sales methods at a private club as you can at a fee course. However there is much to be learned from these fee course pros—the real bright ones—who are stepping right out and making dough despite competition that would make of the weaker brethren fold up and retire from the ranks.

There is a fellow with a lean and hungry look named Norman Faunce who has been doing business at the Mid-City daily-fee course in the Chicago district and tucking away a neat little sum at the end of each and every year. His competition of the down-town stores and the neighborhood radio, drug, automobile accessory and every other kind of a store

is downright murderous. A few blocks away from Faunce's place, this writer, conscientiously investigating the pro merchandising situation, even ran across a display of cut price golf balls in a speak-easy. But Faunce still keeps on increasing his sales each year and getting smarter as a merchant who can keep ahead of competition. This Mid-City course is close in. It is only about five miles from the heart of the city; so close in that part of the property recently was condemned for a new high school. Bill Langford and Ted Moreau built a fee course on this leased property that is quite distinctive. There are a lot of holes that would do credit to many of the private courses. Now, with part of the property unavailable, they are adding more short holes to the remnant and doing it in such a way that play will not be slowed up seriously nor will the players go around in battle ground danger.

This combination of location and an interesting course gives Faunce the set-up for a lively shop business. The big handicap that he had to overcome was the cut-rate store buying habits of the course's players; so he went after this business fighting the devil with fire.

Price Is Featured.

His shop is moderate in size but he has a well selected stock of merchandise, practically all of it moderately priced, and the prices are displayed on the merchandise. He has a window display facing on a busy street. The window display is frequently changed, and here, again, the prices are featured.

"Your one hope in any sort of a course where there are a lot of new players is selling on price." Faunce makes that statement as the foundation of a successful merchandising policy for the daily-fee course. You can do some business on the better, higher priced stuff after the players have been at the game for a year or so, but to get them started with you, you have to make them know that your prices beat the stores and you are giving the players the additional value of personal selection and fitting of clubs.

"When manufacturers have discontinued models for sale, in the fall or any other time, I grab as much of this low priced stock as I can handle. It is very seldom any of the big cut-price stores can beat me on prices. I keep the players informed of the bargains I have in stock.

I keep pounding away at the idea that I defy competition. When some of the stores have big newspaper ads at bargain prices I even paste up some of these ads on my bulletin board and write alongside the ad such comments as, "I beat the price 35 cents on the same identical model, but probably a much better club as I personally picked it from the maker's stock.

Look for Bargains.

"That sort of stuff goes over great because it is the truth. I get a lot of business from players who have a dozen fee courses closer to them than ours is, just because this news of my low prices for good stuff is passed around. The pros can't complain about manufacturers selling discontinued models or overstocked items at low prices to the stores. The makers have to get their money out some way. What our fellows ought to do more is to pick up some of this bargain price stuff when it is really good value for the money.

"I have picked up some steel shafted woods at sacrifice prices so low that when a shaft is broken I can sell a fellow a whole new club for only a little more than the repair would cost. The boys have to figure that this business of wide-awake buying begins the operation of profitable selling."

Faunce is a great believer in developing steady, repeat business. If a fellow just buys balls at his shop Norman and his smart and hustling assistants put in the plug for selling the merry villagers some of the "Saturday specials," usually some good club at a low price. Norman sells a fair number of high priced matched sets by taking in old clubs as part payment. The clubs he takes in are refinished and put into acceptable condition for use by the beginners. In this way he can take care of business at any price.

Accounting Important.

It is Faunce's notion that the greater part of the pros have nothing much to fear from just the selling part of their business when they get right down to it and use an ordinary amount of brains and energy on the job, but that the real job connected with the business operations of most pros is the accounting and clerical end. Behind the scenes in Faunce's merchandising is Mrs. Faunce. The books are kept right, the bills are handled right and the business always knows just where it stands.