

Smart Pros Should Give Gate to HIP-POCKET Bookkeeping!

—says

DAN GOSS

Pro, Highland Park G. C.

Birmingham, Ala.

IF I WERE to tell you that if you really knew your own business you would make a lot more money out of it you would take it as an affront. You'd want to know where I headed in telling you about YOUR business. Yet, and I speak for the benefit of hundreds of pros, the same identical conditions are still being employed in operating golf shops that were in vogue when they had to cut their wood heads from the block; when they were damning or praising the "old gutty" which was in existence long before the Haskell lively ball made its appearance.

It would surprise many to know the number of pros that still use their right hand trouser pocket and the flat bill fold in their hip pockets for their records and "books" on their business. Some have gone a little further and are using a check book. Some few more have modernized their places with a little paint; still a few more have installed a few showcases and a set of single entry books. And a bare few are running their business in such way that they know whether their profit the previous months came from merchandise sales and lessons, if the bulk came from balls gotten from the lake on the course and sold to a driving range or if it was due to a few good breaks in some two to five dollar Nassau bets throughout the month.

To the average pro a set of books means countless hours of work at night trying to find a dime so his books can balance—if he knows that much about books. To others it means an added overhead so he can get a lot of figures, beautifully typewritten, at a cost of about a dollar per stroke on the typewriter that—as many put it—can't be helped if no profit is shown; and was there anyway if there was a profit.

What Pays the Pro?

A few, and what a meagre few, can turn to their books and tell if any item they stock is a paying item. They can tell if

—who discusses in this installment of a series appearing in GOLF-DOM the importance of price-tagging all merchandise in the pro shop.

it pays to take chances on unknown brands because of an "extra ten" or stick to standard merchandise because of faster turn over; less sales resistance, etc.

"What?" as one pro asked me, "does it matter if I'm making my profit one month on clubs and the next month on something else? It's profit, isn't it?" And when I asked him "Why shouldn't you make the same profit on clubs the second month PLUS the other profit?" he had no answer—because he couldn't answer it. If he shows an average sale of, say, \$200.00 a month on clubs for three months and the fourth month it drops to \$30 there is a vital reason for it. Things like that just don't happen without some reason.

I'm not forgetting the seasonal feature of the merchandise. I'm averaging every thing as a whole.

There are many jobs that should be paying double what they are now paying the pro and would be if the pro would only ask for it. But the trouble is they don't know how to ask for it—properly. It will astonish many pros to know that a good set of books will show them how.

Figures Tell Business Ability.

Just as the laws of average provide for an insurance company so can the law of average be applied to a pro's shop. Whether there are two, three or four hundred playing members in a club, they will spend so much money regardless of who is the pro; regardless of the pro's prices; regardless of the way the pro keeps his shop and regardless of downtown competition. How-

ever if he's likable they will spend more; if his prices are reasonable they will spend still more; if he has a complete stock he will sell still more and if his merchandise is properly arranged, properly priced and displayed, that too will add to his gross sales. The pro will agree to all this but will also think that all these features can't be measured in terms of dollars and cents. It will surprise him possibly to learn that with a proper set of books these seemingly intangible assets can be gauged so accurately as to prove a revelation.

Just as a checker sent out to investigate a new chain cigar store location can tell weeks before the store opens just what that store can be expected to do, to a surprisingly accurate degree—by methods of their own based on averages—so can a pro tell what he should do in his place of business, per month, after the first few months, regardless of where he is located or regardless of conditions.

Now let me take you back to the merchant with his price tickets. You would ordinarily imagine that the merchandise is priced so that the employees will know what to sell it for. It would appear that a price on the box would be satisfactory. But as boxes are constantly shifted around on the counters and cases it would mean that the employee would have to twist the box this and that way to find the tag. Then again if the table is full of shirts and only the boxes are marked some may be shifted from one box to another which would either add a fictitious value, affecting sales, or result in obtaining less for it affecting profits. That's why **EACH ARTICLE IS MARKED.**

Pricing Is Automatic Selling.

But aside from that; supposing the employee is out for lunch and an employee from another department serves as relief. Or during a special sale extra help is added. Can't you now see the value of pricing each item. But more logical is supposing your assistant or you are busy; or both of you are busy with customers and one, two or three more walk in. If everything is plainly marked they can almost sell themselves before you get to them. In any event they can shop around a little.

Just as the lines of a club may appeal to a customer, just so the price may appeal to him. If he likes a club and it is too high he may, and often does, pay the price because he likes it. Have you ever thought that it may work the other way

around? Have you ever considered that if you have a sweater you want to dispose of and you priced it very low, a customer may buy it **EVEN THOUGH HE DIDN'T LIKE IT.**

In that case the price did the selling, not you or the merchandise. It will astonish you to learn, and quickly too, how much more merchandise you will sell—**WITHOUT ANY SALESMANSHIP ON YOUR PART**—if you will simply show the retail price.

But aside from the additional sales I'm sure it's readily apparent to you that the motive of the largest and most successful merchants price tagging each item is for more reasons than simply to tell his employees what to sell the item for.

Every day you open your shop you have just so much expense. The expense is there regardless of whether you do or don't make a sale. If it's so much a day and that figures \$250.00 a month and your profit is 33 per cent you know you must sell at least \$750.00 a month before you will make any net profit—profit above expenses.

Yes, yes, sure, I know you know that. But how much more than that do you know that you use?

You, like every business man, would like to know how you stand every day that you close. You can take a daily inventory but that is out of the question because of the expense. You always think you know but at certain stated intervals every concern **FINDS OUT** by seeking definite concrete facts. The bank will tell them over the 'phone how much money they have. Their books will show how much they owe. All they need then is the amount of stock they have on hand.

They can either wade through tens or tens of thousands of invoices, depending on the nature and volume of their business or they can forget they ever had an invoice and go right to their stock and begin inventorying it because they have their costs on every item.

Can You Take Inventory?

Suppose you wanted to take inventory—**COULD YOU?** I don't mean to think, guess and imagine how much your merchandise cost because if you do you will only have an imaginary statement and if you are satisfied with that, just imagine you made \$50,000 and let it go at that. But you must know because unless you do some

day someone who you think is a customer coming in to buy that matched set of clubs you have been trying to sell may be the sheriff coming in to GIVE YOU A LOCK for your door—without the key.

If you have your costs listed on the merchandise you don't have to guess. You can easily find out even though you've lost the invoice or have forgotten where you bought one or more items. So cost-marking the merchandise not only shows you the profit on the sale but enables you to find out quickly, accurately just where you stand in the easiest possible manner.

Can you appreciate now why merchants show their costs on every article as well as their selling price and how much more important both are than simply to tell employees what to sell the item for and how much profit they make on each item. I hope you do.

I've taken you in a roundabout way to tell you two things that I could have told you in one-tenth the time. I chose the longer method because I thought it would enable me to show you better that every phase and function pertaining to accounting (which is nothing more than enabling you to know what you do with the money that passes through your hands) has more than one meaning. Invariably the most important meaning is overlooked just as the major reason for keeping a set of books, properly, is overlooked by the average pro.

Making Your Books Help You.

The average pro thinks that a set of books is simply a record of transactions. It is that. But it can also prove a means for reducing your expenses, increasing your sales, increasing your profits on sales, reducing your stock investment, increasing your turn-over—and all with less agony and effort that is used up in one round of 18 holes when everything you do is wrong.

I've given you just two instances. You can confirm either by asking any prosperous merchant in your city. Or you can prove it to yourself by practical experiment.

Just as I've attempted to show you what wonderful benefits are derived from two business practices, more than you may ever have imagined, so you will find that practically every feature of your business that you have hertofore done in a haphazard way will, if done properly, bring you rewards beyond belief.

Rutgers Turf Short Course Has Fine Program

APPLICATIONS are now being received by Prof. F. G. Helyar, director of short courses, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N. J., from greenkeepers, greenchairmen and others interested in attending the 1931 short course in turf management to be held February 16-21. The course outlines the fundamental principles that underlie the successful establishment of turf on golf courses and its effective presentation can be judged by the list of instructors, which include Dr. H. B. Sprague, E. E. Evaul, Dean J. G. Lipman, Dr. J. S. Joffe and H. R. Cox.

The work will consist of lectures and discussions supplemented by laboratory demonstrations where possible. Such subjects as soils, and soil management, use of fertilizers and lime, drainage, turf plants, insect pests, diseases, seeds, and methods of management will be included.

Residents of the United States over 18 years of age are eligible, and the cost is \$5.00 for registration and \$1.00 for a lecture outline. Classes will run from 9:00 o'clock in the morning to 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon, with an hour and a half for lunch.

For those who have taken the regular one-week course in turf management, advanced work is offered during the three days, February 23, 24 and 25. This course, which will be restricted to twenty people, will deal with the following subjects: *Problems in Irrigation and Drainage*, Prof. E. R. Gross; *Soil Analysis*, Dr. H. B. Sprague; *Commercial Fertilizers and Lime*, Mr. H. R. Cox; *Study of Disease Organisms*, Mr. E. E. Evaul; *Seed Analysis*, Miss J. G. Fiske; *Identification of Turf Plants*, Dr. H. B. Sprague.

Registration fee for this course will be \$3.00 and applications must be received by February 20. Unless ten persons apply for this course it will not be given.

Louisville Park Board Tells of \$1,500,000 Investment

Louisville, Ky.—Special report of the Board of Park Commissioners, Louisville, tells with pictures and data how the city's \$1,500,000 park bond fund was invested. The book is a splendid presentation of public play facilities, featuring the city's municipal golf courses.