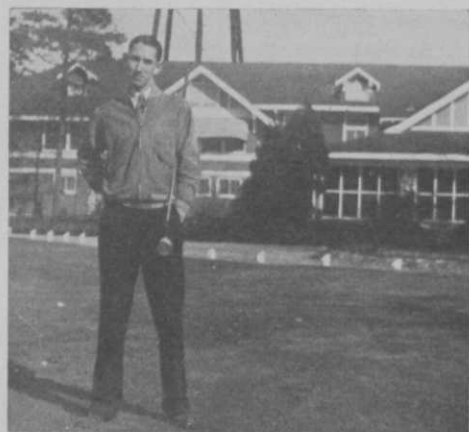


Wide Awake Assistant Big Aid To Busy Pro

By DON MURPHY

Assistant to H. C. Hackbarth,
Country Club of Little Rock, Ark.



Don Murphy, who tells in this article how a good assistant pro can keep busy.

A GOLF professional is a very busy man. Especially is this true if he happens to be one of those who is professional, manager of the club, and superintendent of grounds, all in one. At any rate his time is too valuable to always be in his shop, even though it is one of the most important factors in determining the amount of his income.

Most professionals employ an assistant. That is, the young fellow employed accepts

the position of assistant and too often merely performs the duties of club maker or shop-boy. The success a young fellow will make as a professional is relative to

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the interest he shows in his work as assistant. There is a routine of work to be followed but the wide-awake assistant is not satisfied with barely performing routine duties; he is always on the lookout for means of making the shop more attractive, for ways of selling more merchandise, or doing additional small jobs which make the players better pleased with the service he is rendering.

Professionals usually charge each member a small fee (a dollar at my own club) every month for taking care of their clubs. This is most frequently called a charge for cleaning clubs but I think it would be well to consider the cost is for servicing clubs, as the interested assistant does more than clean the heads of iron clubs. He watches for loose strings and replaces any that may have become untied by new ones. About once a month he oils and shellacs all wooden shafts. He cleans the faces of wooden clubs when they need it and shellacs the heads when they become dry. All other minor repairs are included in this charge for servicing clubs. In other words he takes care of the clubs in such a way that players say, "Well, my game is not quite up to par but my clubs certainly are."

Building Business.

There are some players who do not have their clubs serviced regularly but who would be glad to pay a nominal fee every now and then to have their clubs cleaned and put into better playing condition if the assistant would make such a suggestion as this:

"Mr. Smith, those wooden shafts of yours need oiling," or,

"Mr. Smith, in looking over your clubs I noticed a number of strings loose. Shall I clean and service those clubs for you?"

Such a suggestion will nearly always bring the reply:

"Sure, Don, fix them up, I am glad you noticed that."

The golf shop must be kept clean. The best bit of advertising for any goods is the fact that it is free from dirt. Clubs

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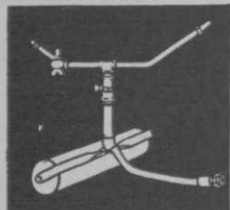
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covered with dust are not alluring to the players' eyes. Bags filled or clouded with dust are not attractive even though they be made of the best leather and are being sold at moderate prices. It is not a simple task to keep a shop clean but it can be done and an assistant who is sufficiently interested in his position will not shirk this part of his work.

Displays should be arranged in the shop in as attractive manner as possible. In this matter, any assistant would do well to get suggestions from the professional.

One satisfied customer is worth more to a golf shop than a dozen sales where the purchasers never come back; therefore, professional and assistant should make it a point to see that all their sales give satisfaction. The smart assistant will ask players their opinions of any new equipment they may be using. He will let them know that he is interested in their viewpoints and in their game. Any golfer has enough conceit to appreciate that.

Lauds His Chief.

The greatest boost for any employer is the fact that his employees respect him. An assistant should speak well of his own pro. I can honestly say that my employer, the professional of the club where I am assistant, is in my opinion the best in the United States. Oh, I know there are better golfers than he but as instructor, manager, salesman and all around pro, he is my ideal.

Right here I want to say something to the professionals. In my opinion the most unjust thing you can do is to employ any young man in your shop who you know is not fitted for that work and has no chance to make a success in the golfing field. You know how varied are your own duties, so in employing an assistant keep in mind that in all probability this young fellow will some day be a professional himself. Employ one whom you know is anxious to make golf his life's profession; one whom you know is willing and capable of handling your shop as near as possible to the way in which you yourself would take care of it. Golf is a field in which there is a great future for the right persons. There are capable fellows for every assistants' job in the country. Employ them and help them to make a success but do not employ or keep the young man in your employment who would be unsuccessful or unhappy as a golf professional but who might attain contentment in some other line of work.

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