

There's No Sand in Gear-Box of Sandy Leith's SMOOTH MERCHANDISING



Lake Merced's pro, Sandy Leith, displays the same intensity at the top of a mashie shot as he does in his no less skillful merchandising efforts.

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Country Club Magazine

a tournament here yesterday. The heavy rain didn't stop them from playing or from buying whatever they needed," was his answer. "I sold over three dozen balls and a few clubs to them besides a number of nicknacks that women always seem to need for a round."

Women Easier to Serve

"Do you like to do business with the women members?" I shot at him and in a flash he said, "Most certainly I do. They are easier to serve than the male species—if they have confidence in you and your merchandise. But you must have their confidence both in the matter of selling your merchandise and in giving lessons. I find them better advertising boosters for my merchandise and it is only natural that I like to wait on them whenever the opportunity presents itself."

At this point my eyes scanned the several sets of clubs resting in the main showcase, all extremely inviting and most attractively displayed. "Is this your entire stock of clubs?" I asked Sandy. I was rather surprised at what appeared to be a meagre display of woods and irons after I was informed that the club boasted of a membership of 350.

"Oh," said Sandy, "I only carry sample clubs. See there, I have six sets of women's wood clubs—all matched. These are only samples. And over there I have five sets of women's irons. I sell my clubs to order. Nothing shoddy. Everything of the finest. I sell a great many women's

A FRIEND of mine who represents a big Chicago sporting goods firm told me a short time ago that Sandy Leith, professional at the Lake Merced G. & C. C., San Francisco, was one of the most business-like professional golfers in all America. "The merchandising world and maybe the banking world lost a leader when Leith took to golf as a livelihood," remarked this friend of mine. All of which interested me.

When I visited San Francisco a couple of weeks ago I decided to look up Mr. Leith and get whatever story I could from him for the readers of GOLFDOM. The moment I stepped into his shop and told him what I wanted, he lost no time in sitting me down at his desk and handing me several sheets of paper along with a couple of short pointed pencils. This was service de luxe. Sandy was wise. He didn't want me to run out of paper or pencil.

Realizing I was in the presence of a very business-like person, a man of action and imagination, I started to question him without a moment's delay. "How's the business?" I asked of him. "Fine. We had more than 100 women players play in



The clubhouse at Lake Merced, with practice green in foreground

clubs because we have a very large membership of active women golfers.

"Then men's clubs are sold to order just the same. I never did carry much stock and for that reason I never have anything stale or out of date on hand nor any unpaid bills to worry about. When a member wonders why he can't come into my shop and pick a brassie right out of stock, I inform him that he can't walk into a first class cafe and expect to be served a properly cooked steak 'out of stock.' It has to be cooked to order—so has his brassie.

Smart Club Cleaning

Over in a corner of the work shop I noticed a lad cleaning clubs with the latest modern cleaning equipment and I also noticed the shiny condition of all the clubs which were stowed away in the racks. "How many sets of clubs do you have to clean?" I inquired. "How many do you think? We have 350 members—now guess." I thought that at least 75% would have their clubs cared for in the shop so I ventured to guess the number about 250. I was truly astonished when he told me he had 340 sets to look after each month, but I later was told that this included the wives of the members proper.

"I take great care of the clubs left in my charge. The iron heads are CLEANED—not merely scuffed over in a half-hearted way. And the wood heads are always rubbed with a mixture of oil and shellac. This process seems to please my members to a marked degree and I receive many compliments on this touch of service. It doesn't take my boy long and the expense is practically nil. I pay my own help. I have all the concessions and the club takes care of

all the payments of my bills. They mail out my monthly statements and give me a check for the total indebtedness on or about the first of each month which relieves me of all this collection worry. My club treats me like a prince and I very much appreciate all it does for me."

All Roads Lead to Leith

While talking to Sandy over these matters I noticed several players walking into his shop by one door, sign a book, and march out to the first tee by another door. "What's this one way traffic system you have here?" I asked of him. With the canniness of the Scot he told me he had it arranged with his board of directors that all members had to sign their names on a record book every time they played the course and the only way to get into the shop to do so was to enter by one door, march through a lane lined with attractively displayed merchandise on both sides of the alley and make their exit at the opposite end through another door. This, I thought, was a masterful stroke—if it worked. IT DOES WORK at Lake Merced and Sandy Leith, because of that ruling and his attractive personality, plus inviting merchandise, sells a vast amount of merchandise to his members and guests that might otherwise be bought at some downtown store. That showed to me very clearly the sort of merchant Sandy Leith was. It showed him to be on his toes every minute and that his eyes and ears were wide open to every iota of service giving and profit making. I do not mean to infer that Sandy is a mercenary chap when it comes to doing business. Far from it—he is ever ready to give his customer the break instead of grabbing it for himself.

I was much interested in Leith's system of bookkeeping—its simplicity and yet its thoroughness. It is partially made so by the fact that the mailing and the collecting of all his bills is done by the club staff which eliminates all collecting worries from his mind and does away with a lot of books. When a member makes a purchase in Sandy's shop he signs a charge slip in the usual way. At the end of each day's business the original slip is filed away in a visible name folder and

it, rests with the duplicate charges that remain in the book. That book is kept in his shop and never gets out of sight.

Franklin Smith, manager of the Lake Merced club, told me of a clever trick Leith had of adding what I might call super-service to his playing members. The moment a member arrives at the club grounds he is spotted by the caddie master (this is especially so on busy days) from a wee nook in the golf shop and he, in turn, notifies one of the boys in the rear of the shop that Mr. So and So has arrived. That member's set of clubs is at once taken out of the rack and handed to a caddie so that by the time Mr. So and So has changed his clothes and appeared at the shop, his clubs and his caddie await without.

The caddie is handed a caddie pay card, a reproduction of which is shown here for the benefit of those who may be interested. At the bottom of this card there is a space called "Equipment check." This is something new and was thought out by the thorough Mr. Leith himself. In this space is jotted down by the helper who handed the clubs to the caddie the number of wooden clubs, the number of iron clubs along with the exact number of balls contained in the bag. These are carefully checked when the bag is handed back to the helper at the end of play and if anything is short, the caddie has to give an account of the why and the wherefore.

Leith told me this rather elaborate system of checking and double checking has proved very successful and that he has never had a single complaint about missing articles since the day it was installed.

After the member has punched out on the card the amount due the caddie, the lad keeps the upper or punched portion of the check and is handed the amount due him at 3 o'clock the same afternoon or as soon after that time as possible. Under this system the caddie doesn't touch any cash coming to him until handed his wages, a system which minimizes the tipping habit—not approved of by the club officials.

The board of directors of the Lake Merced G. & C. C. are very proud of their lanky professional from Aberdeen and they may take it into their heads to build for him a sales shop worthy of his hire some time in the not far distant future. Sandy Leith is known for his teaching skill and his business propensities more than for his playing ability and, that suits his board of directors to a T.

CADDY PAY CARD No. 10708	
LAKE MERCED GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	
Player's Name _____	
Please Punch with Pencil No. of Holes Played	
<input type="checkbox"/> .50 - 9	<input type="checkbox"/> 1.50 -27
<input type="checkbox"/> .75 -13	<input type="checkbox"/> 2.00 -36
<input type="checkbox"/> 1.00 -18	<input type="checkbox"/> 2.25 -39
<input type="checkbox"/> 1.25 -21	<input type="checkbox"/> 2.50 -45
Practice Hrs. _____ Min. _____	
Caddy No. _____ Date _____	
FEE _____	
Sign _____	
Do Not Pay Caddy—Pay Caddy Master. To Charge Please Sign.	
CADDY RATES No. 10708	
1 to 3 Holes25	Carrying Two Bags Double Fee
4 to 9 Holes50	Practice 50 cents Hr. Pro Rata
10 to 13 Holes . . .75	<input type="checkbox"/> Double <input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Practice
14 to 18 Holes . .1.00	Please Punch with Pencil
CADDY RULES	
TRAPS must be raked.	
CADDY whose player is nearest to flag must take same.	
CADDY must not sit on benches at tees.	
CADDY permitted to smoke at caddy station only.	
CADDY must replace all turf.	
CADDY is not permitted to accept pay from player.	
EQUIPMENT CHECK	
Woods _____	Irons _____ Balls _____
Misc. _____	

Lake Merced's caddie card.

safely deposited in a file. Every member has a folder of his own with his or her name boldly written thereon and alphabetically arranged so that Sandy can tell in a moment's notice just how much a certain member may be owing him.

Knows Where He Stands

On the last day of each month he takes all the folders out of the file, totals the amount of each member's indebtedness on an adding machine, pins the adding machine tape to the original charges and sends them to the office of the club for them to do the rest and assume all financial responsibilities. Sandy's check or double check, whichever you care to call