



Show-window of pro shop at Olympia Fields is attractive and frequently changed

## Bag Inventories, Show-Windows and Prices Make Big Sales

By C. J. HORN

**W**ANDERING AROUND the pro shops after talking to fellows in businesses other than golf, brings to the mind of the wayfarer that this golf business is a great one for a live hombre even during a period of depression. Some of the pros have been up against tough problems this year with the general business depression, burned-out courses and prolonged heat wave, but they have come smiling through in commendable fashion. The set-up against them has served to make them better merchants. Next year, with an even break in general business conditions, the pros are going to profit from the baptism of fire they have had during this season.

One of the conspicuous cases of pro business this year being ahead of last year is seen at Olympia Fields C. C. (Chicago district) where Jerry Glynn fell heir to the pro job when his mentor, Jack Daray, left to care for the growing demand for his services as a golf course architect. Olympia Fields, with its four 18-hole championship

courses, is the largest private golf club in the country. Its membership includes some very wealthy people, some people who got bumped almost for the count by the market, and a lot of people who are representative of the average membership of the good metropolitan district country club. The pro shop business afforded an accurate cross-section of metropolitan district club operations.

The serious-minded Irish laddie began his season's merchandising by making an early inventory of the equipment in the bag racks. He continued to make that inventory at frequent intervals during the season. He and his assistants, Willard Hutchison and Chuck Tannis, would get a good idea of what their players needed and between the three of them they would lose no opportunity to deftly suggest the purchases. There was not the slightest suggestion of high-pressure selling about this suggestion for the boys out at Olympia go on the basis that they are doing a valu-

able service to any member when they see that this member is playing with the right equipment.

Glynn puts it this way:

"I'm taking money from the members when I don't come out and tell them about something they ought to have. For instance, when some man or woman comes to Bill or Chuck or me and wants to take a bunch of lessons to cure hooks or slices that come from having clubs that are headed wrong or have unsuitable shafts, what is the honest thing to do—take their money by giving them lessons that will correct their trouble by introducing a compensating fault, or see that they get the right clubs and learn to hit right? When you see many clubs that have been bought by members at stores you are bound to see a lot of members that are trying to play with clubs that don't fit them. That shows one of the big pro jobs at any club, and ample justification for pro service."

### Sales Quotas

The sales quota idea of pre-determining just what salesman ought to sell to his part of the market, is old and sound stuff in general business but in the pro field there are very few cases of quotas. Olympia Fields has one of them. From the inventory of equipment Glynn and his buddies took they were able to get a fairly definite idea of what market possibilities laid before them. Now, when the fellows' sales are not keeping up with the pace they set for themselves, they don't fold up and be content with moaning that business is slow, but they begin to examine themselves and see if they have missed opportunities to serve their members by selling clubs. They get a dash of the old turpentine in the right place by that examination for what one of us ever can see that we have missed no bets?

One thing that this examination of the players' equipment has done for the Olympia Fields' pro staff is to whip the cut-price ball competition down for the long count and out! When the boys found that some of the members were making a practice using balls that they had bought elsewhere, they would gently ease up to the member and ask him if he ever had tried one of the shop's balls at the same price as the ball the member was using. This tipped off the member that the pro shop could meet all price competition and it's very much to the credit of Olympia Fields' membership that the little act served to remind them it is part of a member's club

duty to patronize his own pro shop. If the member was hard-shelled and was buying a lot of cheap balls elsewhere, or was using private brand balls that had been given him, the Glynn gang would slip the prospect a free ball for a try-out. This got 'em. The members who got these balls got with the balls the hunch that the pro was genuinely interested in their games and in them personally, else why would he pass on a free ball to them? The law of averages and the luck that rewards the laddies who are on the job accounted for the recipients of the free balls turning in some fairly good scores which they attributed to these balls. The outcome of this attention was to make the Olympia Fields pros boast that a very small per cent of their members are buying balls elsewhere than at the club.

Glynn has a fine show-room that is kept immaculate. Price tags abound on the merchandise and he always has some specials displayed with prominent and attractive price signs. He is a great believer in show-window display and regrets that the clubhouse architects have not provided the pros with a chance to do more member selling service by neglecting show-windows in the pro shops. The Olympia Fields' window is located on the veranda where it catches the eye of thousands of people who might not have occasion to walk deliberately into the pro shop for purchases of anything other than balls or tees. Glynn changes the window frequently, making sure that the price range is given consideration and that anything that is new gets a prominent spot.

### Big Dough from Rentals

Glynn picked up a sleeper among money-making ideas when he started out to supply high-grade clubs for rental. He had a manufacturer's demonstration set that was doing pretty fair work in helping his sales but he conceived the notion that the set ought to be working more of the time. When guests would come in for a rental set, he offered them this demonstration set at a slight advance over the rental price of the ordinary set. The proposition went over so well that the demonstration rental set earned \$116 up to the latter part of July and helped him sell some clubs. Maybe there's a tip for the rest of the fellows in that slant on the rental business. Usually the rental sets one gets are weapons that the best of the pros couldn't hit a ball with. Naturally they don't do anything to help a pro's business.