

# Trick Offer Tempts Pros in Ball Retail Price Cut

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**S**OME OF the professionals\* are being tempted with a small profit that may mean serious losses in net income from ball sales. Evidence of this peril is seen in a letter which was sent a few weeks ago to a number of the eastern professionals. The letter, signed by a representative of a company purporting to supply corporations, read:

*"Kindly let me know whether or not you would care to sell the writer from one to three hundred dozen Krofite balls per week, at 10 per cent profit to you. This, of course, would be all cash."*

Professionals who got this letter fortunately saw through the deal, which obviously was intended to acquire a stock of standard balls sufficient to unload in big quantities at cut prices and ruin the retail market price. It would not be long before each pro who supplied balls under this arrangement would be feeling the effects of a retail price cut that would far offset his 10 per cent profit.

It should be unnecessary to warn professionals that attempts made to buy standard merchandise from them at slight profits are made because the manufacturer of such merchandise refuses to supply the intended buyer direct, for good reasons. The pro has been victimized frequently by supplying quantities of balls to acquaintances of his who have importuned him to do their buying. These balls invariably show up at some nearby point at cut-price outlets and the pros suffer.

I have been advised of a case a year or so ago in which a chain of drug stores was selling a popular golf ball at a substantially reduced price, much to the distress of the pro market in that section. Professional complaints resulted in an investigation made at considerable expense by the manufacturer, as the offending chain had been removed from the manufacturer's customer list some months prior, due to persistent refusal to maintain the established price. Investigators found that the

balls had been picked up in gross lots from professionals in a territory rather remote to that in which the chain did business. Unsuspecting professionals had sold these balls at slight advances in gross lots and consequently were unwitting parties to the destruction of the ball market and profit for their comrades in the territory affected.

Manufacturers have given the professionals assurance that it is the intention to maintain the present retail selling prices for the leading brands of golf balls so it behooves the professionals not to weaken their right to protest against failure to live up to such statements by the pros themselves contributing to the decline of the retail price.

## Present Price Seems Just

There does not appear to be any substantial reason for the retail price of good golf balls being reduced, granting that the ball retail prices in the past have been right. Financial statements of the leading golf ball companies and even a cursory consideration of the processes required in the making of first-class golf balls point to the previous price structure being sound.

It is not my province, as a representative of the professionals, to be concerned with the manufacturing and distribution costs of golf balls, so long as these items are fairly reflected in the retail prices made to the players in whose service the professionals are engaged. But it is the duty of anyone connected with the Professional Golfers' Association of America to carefully guard against unjustified price cuts that may spread to the extent that one of the pro's major profits will approach to the vanishing point. For that reason it is advisable to warn professionals against allowing themselves to be made unsuspecting factors in the ruination of the ball retail price situation by supplying schemers whose propositions may sound alluring at the moment but whose operations ultimately are certain to be costly to the pros.