

# Invite Pro Prosperity by More Thought of Clubs and Policies

By ELMER BIGGS  
Pro.-Supt. Peoria (Ill.) C. C.

**T**HE YEAR of 1932 promises to be a trying one for the professional, particularly in view of the average club's difficulties. Probably no other year has brought the tests that this year will present.

The average club needs more help and support from the professional than it has gotten in the past, and it is my idea that the average pro can help his club to a great extent if he will be more concerned with the club's activities. In other words, give the club more of his time and services than he has in the past, help it to reduce its maintenance and operating costs, and stimulate club interest. This can be done by taking an interest in the general activities of the club. The average pro should have a better working knowledge of the club's finances. After all, the clubs pay the pro a salary and can expect, during these trying years, more for that salary than they have in the past.

The merchandising end of the pro's business will require a thoughtful study of the manufacturers' attitude as a change in manufacturers' policies will require a change in the buying and selling policies of the average professional. The pro is entitled to protect his value as a prime mover in the golf market and see that he is not encouraging his own elimination by building up brand assets on which other dealers get preferential distribution rights. The manufacturer has his problems of preservation, it must be admitted—but so has the pro.

I am in hope that the manufacturers, all of them, will make definite statements to the Professional Golfers' Association of America as to what kind of selling policies they will have on their articles. Also what policies they will use in regard to selling through their various offices and warehouses golf merchandise at dealers' prices to buyers who are not legitimately entitled to such prices. But then there will be the menace of the dealers offering courtesy

cards to companies for the use of their employees, offering a discount to an employee of that concern. This is a point that the average professional should know before buying his stock of merchandise, and I think it is a duty of the manufacturers to definitely answer these questions. After all, the professional's income is derived from his shop, as it requires practically all of his salary to pay the operating cost of his shop.

## Profit Cut Possible?

The question as to whether the professional should continue with high class merchandise or try to meet competition by cheaper merchandise will remain the same. The individual himself must determine that. However, we have built up a business on high class merchandise. I wouldn't think it wise at this time to go in for cheaper merchandise, but I believe that the average professional might be able to reduce the margin of profit on his shop business despite his heavy operating expenses and limited market. As the pro business has been the backbone of a price structure on golf merchandise that allows the manufacturer a profit, that profit might be reduced both by the manufacturer and the pro in view of the present conditions.

I am sorry to suspect some of the salesmen are not using good business foresight in the selling of their merchandise this year. In their efforts to hold up production, they are selling merchandise to some pros probably in excess of the volume those pros would be able to handle under normal conditions. Consequently, there will be criticism thrown at us in the next year or two, as there has been in the past, in regard to the delinquencies in pro credit, which we have gradually improved.

## Watch the Credit

It would be very gratifying to carry on this year with a credit rating such as we had last year with the Ball and Club manu-

facturers' associations. According to the report of the Ball and Club manufacturers' associations, the P. G. A. members were responsible for only 8 per cent of the total delinquencies. I have since learned that this has increased slightly, and it would be wise for the average professional to follow the trend of general business in his buying for this year. In other words, hold this delinquency down as much as possible, as that would give our organization a chance to get on the same credit basis as the dealer accounts these manufacturers now have.

It is very noticeable this year that pros, occasionally, have lost a certain amount of interest, and are condemning the clubs and their members for the loss of business. This is the one year we should hold our chins up, make that shop more attractive and keep it cleaner than ever before. Have a big broad smile as you used to have, even though it is hard, and greet everybody in an optimistic manner. Picture yourself as a member after having financial reverses, coming in from a bad round of golf and having the golf professional greet you in a pessimistic mood. I think that a club's success depends upon a happy, cheerful and industrious atmosphere in a pro shop. It should be the duty of the professional to assist the member in every way possible to forget his business troubles.

## PRO'S PET PEEVE

### "Lessons Just for Beginners"

Riles Golf Doctor

By R. W. ("DOC") TREACY

Pro-Supt., Woodmont C. C.

**N**EARLY EVERYONE is subject to a mild form of disease popularly known as a "pet peeve," that sensation of the nerves being grated or rubbed together and caused by too often seeing or hearing an action or a phrase which seems to be senseless.

If you have ever felt the urge to take a divot out of a fellow human, you know the symptoms and you know the particular strain of virus to which you are susceptible.

As this malady takes a sharp upward curve during the summer months when the army of golfers is recruited to its full strength, it behooves the victim to employ

every means of defense at his command. Hence this story. It is written in the hope of obtaining relief from the only peeve to which I have been unable to build up immunity.

The answer for the amateur golfer is simple. Defend yourself as you always have, by avoiding the irritating bug. If you happen to get badly infected, use the only known specific cure, the niblic.

As a professional golfer, I have a "peeve" that can not be managed so easily. Here it is: "We can't afford a regular professional, so we just have (or want) a young fellow to give lessons"—or—"Can't you fix my clubs and give me a few lessons? Our public course's budget doesn't provide for a professional, so we just have a 'young fellow' to sell clubs and balls and to give lessons to the beginners."

My answer to these people is to this effect: "See your veterinary at least twice a year."

Some kind-hearted scientist who reads these pages should be able to think up a more effective cure for this microbe that is undermining the health of the game of golf in this country. It would seem that the professional golfer, under whose care is placed a goodly share of the job of keeping the American People happy in soul and sound in body, should be an efficient, highly trained individual, and if such a man is not available the beginner would be far better off to follow his own natural bent than to have inflicted on him the ideas of the "young fellow who gives lessons."

Some group that might correct this situation is badly in need of a lesson. If you think it is the P. G. A., or the U. S. G. A., or any other group, give it to them. They are not too old to learn.

## S. California Greensmen to Have Equipment Exhibit

**S**ECOND ANNUAL turf equipment exhibit held under auspices of the Greenkeepers' Assn. of Southern California will be at Brentwood C. C. (Los Angeles district), Monday, April 11. Demonstrations will start at 10 a. m. Invitations are being sent to greenkeepers, golf club officials, estate superintendents and gardeners.

This Coast equipment demonstration is rated as one of the important shows of the year since few western greenkeepers are able to attend similar demonstrations in the East.