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Pros and Makers Decide to Work Together

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AT A SESSION between representatives of the PGA and members of the golf club and ball manufacturers' associations held Saturday, November 19, at the Palmer House, Chicago, the pros presented 14 points of present practice in golf merchandising for the purpose of clarifying the relations between the pros and the leading manufacturers.

The items on which the pros suggested collective thought and action:

The PGA invites and should have from the manufacturers every possible help in improving the credit standing of its members and tenders the cooperation of a committee to be appointed by the PGA.

The PGA does not endorse the practice of returning goods and invites conference on this question to the end that it may be eliminated so far as possible.

Selling merchandise on consignment is considered bad practice and neither beneficial to the manufacturer or consignee.

The manufacture and sale of private brand balls vitally affects the professional in his merchandising and we believe it should be eliminated, and no grade-A or plastic center ball be made without the manufacturer's name.

The professional believes that credit discounts ought to be expressed in dollars and cents rather than in balls and merchandise.

The practice of some manufacturers in seeking positions for professionals who are not in good credit standing, merely for the purpose of collecting past due accounts, is believed to be harmful to the best interest of the professional golfer.

The PGA feels that the manufacturer should not contract with a player for the use of his name on certain lines of clubs and balls without first submitting to a committee of the PGA samples of such merchandise so to be marketed. The name of a PGA member upon inferior merchandise is believed to be harmful to our Association.

In view of the fact that the PGA is attempting to increase the credit standing of its members to the great benefit of the manufacturers, the manufacturers should cooperate wherever possible by urging the employment of PGA members for positions open.

Believing that the playing professional is of great value to the industry and a direct benefit to all golf goods manufacturers, we feel that such manufacturers should make available from their advertising appropriations to the PGA a fund for the purpose of carrying on tournaments and other promotional enterprises including the promotion and financing of the Ryder Cup competition.

Should there be a withdrawal of the trade-mark from all manufacturers, it is felt that consideration be given the question of future discounts on merchandise.

The use of the word "Pro" in any form upon golf clubs manufactured should be eliminated and that no merchandise be made with the word "Pro" stamped thereon.

It is also felt to be desirable that balls be not made bearing the name or initials of any sectional Association.

It is desirable that a committee be appointed by the PGA to cooperate with the

manufacturers and be in a position to inform its members on prices and models in advance to enable them to improve their stock in credit.

We do not endorse the practice of selling amateurs at wholesale prices.

Preparation of these specific points had engaged the pro executives and committee-men for some months past and in getting them down to brass tacks the pros went into a huddle for many hours preceding the conference with the manufacturers.

In presenting the pros' case, the PGA spokesman said: "The interest of the manufacturers and the professional golfer is identical and both should cooperate to the fullest extent for the interest of the industry at large. That such cooperation should exist is the earnest desire of every member of the PGA."

Reception of the pro proposition by the manufacturers was such that the outcome of the Chicago meeting gives solid promise of ushering in a new day of mutual understanding and profit for both manufacturers and pros. That consummation is something devoutly to be wished by both interests. The golf playing-equipment business in its entirety has been conducted at a loss. A pro was fortunate this year if he made a fair living out of his business, to say nothing of a profit on money invested in his shop stocks. Considerable of the lost profit opportunities in the business were the result of expensive misunderstandings and antiquated policies in distribution that both parties to the Chicago conference hope to eliminate.

GOLFDOM, since its inception, has strenuously and persistently advocated a group session between manufacturers and pros. With the conditions of 1931 vividly impressing the wisdom of such a mass attack on the problems, the PGA invited the manufacturers to sit in prior to the pro organization's annual meeting at Peoria. President Charles Hall, George Jacobus, chairman of the PGA Ways and Means committee, Jack Mackie, treasurer, and Elmer Biggs of the Ways and Means committee and chairman of the former Merchandising committee were active in setting the stage for the collective session, which, in Biggs' original suggestion, was scheduled for Peoria.

Later thought of the pro officials was that such a group session could be most resultfully conducted between smaller bodies of executives on both sides.

For the first time, the manufacturers

had a chance to see a dozen or more pros present a case and so precisely and convincingly did the pro representatives handle their job that manufacturers volunteered to GOLFDOM's reporter that they got a bright and impressively favorable idea of pro knowledge of business.

So far as the manufacturers' reflections on the general spirit of the meeting is concerned, it may be taken as gospel that the manufacturers now have a rather profound conviction that the business ability and general status of the average first class pro is such that the pros are going to command the golf market of the future even more widely and effectively than they have in the past.

The next move is up to the manufacturers and it is expected that a statement for publication on their attitude concerning the 14 points soon will be forthcoming.

Considering the mutual satisfaction with the deal on the PGA and other pro brands of ball, it is believed that there will be no difficulty in meeting the pros' suggestions with action for the common good. The way the ball deal was settled was to clean the whole slate and in making the clean-up, split the price concession between the pros and the players. After all, it is the players who form the court of last resort, and to keep the cost of golf low to them without driving the manufacturers into bankruptcy and the pros and other dealers out of business, is the prime purpose of the pro-manufacturer conferences.

The PGA appointed, as its committee on manufacturers' relations, George Jacobus, Tom Boyd, John Inglis and Jack Mackie, chairman. Appointments were from the East to save expenses on the frequent meetings it is expected this committee must have. Each man on the committee is qualified by considerable experience in contacting the manufacturers and for his extensive, authoritative knowledge of the pro viewpoint.

NO SYSTEM of weed control will substitute entirely for the old-time weeding knife. Hand weeding should be made an important part of the routine work throughout the growing season.

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FAIRWAYS should be rolled once a year, in the spring after the frost is out of the ground. Particularly on courses where the soil is a clay, further major rolling is liable to pack the topsoil and interfere seriously with proper drainage and aeration.