

Something New at Every Visit Is Pros' Selling Idea

By HERB GRAFFIS

MANY SALESMEN of golf equipment in the Chicago district have volunteered favorable comment on the business being done by Pat MacDonald, pro at Rolling Green C. C. Pat is one of those young fellows who attends strictly to his knitting and like the able and active Jack Drucker of the eminent Chicago G. C. establishment, is one of those quiet, modest guys of whom little is heard but who rate "sir" from the income tax man.



Pat MacDonald

Stories of particularly good pro shop business during the early part of this year call for an investigation.

Dropping into Pat's shop early one morning, GOLFDOM's snooper was greeted by a courteous kid named Orlo something-or-other, Pat's assistant. Orlo and the club-cleaning boy were going over the shop stock with broom and dust cloths. It was no casual job. Every club in the stock was being wiped off. The boys were doing it thoroughly because of an evident interest in their work, not simply because they had to.

"What's the idea of your Gold Dust twin act?" queried your correspondent. Orlo explained even though he didn't know the reason for the question or the identity of the questioner. "Our idea around here is to keep everything looking fresh and new. The road to the clubhouse runs past the shop and there's liable to be a lot of dust collected on our goods in the course of a day or so. Then the members might think we are not interested in seeing that they get attractive looking merchandise."

Variety in Display Pays

Pat walked in when the boys were rearranging the club display racks. "Why don't you spread those sets out in a fan arrangement?" he asked his team. The boys' answer was a tip-off to one of the

important details of selling. "We had 'em fanned out for the last four days and now we are arranging them staggered so people will think we've got something new."

"Swell!" decided boss MacDonald and by his expression you got it straight that he is proud of how those kids have picked up the shop policy and are using their heads in trying to offer the members some

new picture every time they come into the shop.

MacDonald, replying to interrogation about his big business this spring, said: "I got a break. Our club took in a lot of new members this spring and new members always make pro business good. That's why I think every pro ought to have his club's membership problem close to his heart and keep his eyes and ears open for some way of getting new members when he can do it without appearing too noseey."

Yes, Pat did get a break, but getting a break is something that a fellow does for himself a lot of times. When Rolling Green's membership was smaller MacDonald worked just as hard and with just as much loyalty and brains. He was bound to click.

Pat Loses no Sales Bets

"What golfers want is something new every time they come out to the club. You can't let them lose interest," continued MacDonald. "They want to see everything at their club they could get at any other golf club. That's why I got aboard the spring sales deals of Spaldings and Wilsons. I didn't know how they would work out but I was afraid that if I didn't take a chance my members would think I was missing something that might interest them. It panned out O. K. for me, as I sold 12 sets of the Spalding sale irons and 5 sets of the Jones irons the

first week of the sale. It's too early to tell what I'll be able to do on the Wilson deal, but anyway I got my name in the papers with a lot of good company and that means something when a fellow is kept so busy on the lesson tee and in the shop he doesn't get much publicity for his own scoring or tournament play.

Sales Effort Sells Shoes

"Just what these lower prices are going to do for the pro business I don't know, but we have to keep our customers with us through the storm and not let the other retailers get them out of the habit of buying from the pro shop. When the storm is over and the distress and obsolete goods are cleared out then we ought to be able to make a little profit so the pro field will attract good young newcomers. On some of the stuff, like shoes, the lower prices have given the pro a chance to get in, where he was afraid before because of the investment involved. This year I put some sales effort on shoes and with the season not fully started I have sold 15 pairs of Sportocasins. They've got a fellow selling them in this territory who is a star at picking out the sizes a pro ought to stock, so I am not having my dough tied up with frozen sizes.

"Bags are the damndest things for a pro shop to move but I think I am going to lick that. You see this shop of ours is one that didn't make any architectural provisions for fancy display of merchandise and the bag racks are right behind the ball and accessory counter. Well, look at those bags. I have a membership that's probably above the average in buying what they need for golf, but 75% of those bags are in tatters right now. It's a great demonstration of how buying a cheap golf bag is throwing money away.

"I'm trying to figure out a sign above this bag rack that will call attention, without offense, to how sadly the outworn bags stack up against the quality stuff I sell in my shop and tie that sign in with a display of first class bags at honest bargain prices."

Women Golfers Important

MacDonald is doing a good business with women golfers. The Rolling Green club has a fine 9-hole course for women and junior players exclusively. Thus the women can play at any time on an excellent course of their own while the men are pounding around their 18-hole layout. This

27-hole arrangement looks more like the right idea every day.

Pat has found that the free class lessons for kids get him in strong with the women. They put on the necessary sales talk in appreciation of this entertainment and instruction for the children. A typical instance was related by one of the Rolling Green members: A woman whose youngster was enrolled in Pat's class asked another woman, prominent in club affairs, what Pat got out of the deal as the announcement of the classes made it plain that the lessons were free. "Why don't you know, my dear," answered the older member, "he does that free so you bargain counter hens will feel like it's the nice thing to buy your golf ball from him instead of shopping around the drug stores for a ball at 19 cents." It would mean any pro's job to put it that plainly, but leave it to the straightforward chatter of the women, and the work is done.

There's another crack made by MacDonald that strikes us as being good sense. Says Pat: "There's no need of the boys going crazy on cheap stuff and thinking they can't sell only on price. There are many members who still have dough and who are golf nuts. See that they aren't given the idea that the pro shop is turned from a place where the best golf goods is featured, into a bargain basement. I have one member who spends from \$10 to \$20 every time he comes into the shop; \$5 of which goes for \$1 balls. And he comes in often too. Now, if I am to do my duty by our club I have to run this shop so I'll be serving him just as much as those members whose interest and necessity lies in the lower priced stuff. Fix it so all of them get what they need to get a lot of fun out of the game, and then see that you bring it to their attention. That's what pro shop selling means to me."

Just then a big caddie, apparently a high school kid, came in and wanted a golf bag. The interview was over for Pat, good business man that he is, went after the boy's bag order with the same helpful interest he shows in taking the frequent \$20 orders for the big spending member to which previous reference was made.

DUE TO difficulty and expense of obtaining sand for traps several of the Australian courses are using sawdust as trap filler.