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## Here's a Picture of High Spots In Club Liquor Situation

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**E**ARLY returns on GOLFDOM's survey of the liquor situation at golf clubs give ample reason for estimating that the 1934 beverage sales at golf clubs will be considerably in excess of \$15,000,000. Although net profits on beverage sales have been sharply hit by necessity of bar and bar equipment purchases, licenses and insurance, the remainder in most cases is sufficient to put clubhouse operations well in the black for the year.

Managers' fears that beer and hard liquor profits would be offset by reduction in long profit set-up sales of pre-repeal years do not seem to be borne out by the actual figures. Net profits of beverage sales are reported from 10 per cent to 50 per cent, which is probably more of an indication of variation in club bookkeeping methods than of wide variations in club retail prices.

In some districts managers complain that they are compelled to charge too low prices in line with hotel and commercial bars where a great part of the liquor is out of "the barrel in the basement" and sold in first class brand bottles, notwithstanding government efforts to do away with this phase of bootlegging. As it now is, the clubs are about the only place where one can be sure of getting the brand of liquor requested or information that the brand is not in stock.

Taking 50 of the returns at random out of the questionnaires a rather accurate pic-

ture of the general situation at golf clubs is presented.

Of these returns, 43 clubs are serving beer; 36 are serving wines; and 37 are serving "hard" liquor.

Of the 50 returns, 18 clubs (including, of course, the clubs at which liquor is not sold) have no bar facilities. Of the remaining 32 clubs having bars, 6 clubs believe their service facilities are inadequate, and 9 managers report that their bars are not satisfactory in appearance.

With only 2 exceptions, all clubs selling liquor will give service in the dining room, as well as in the bar and locker rooms.

Nineteen of the 50 clubs selling liquor do not have a service bar in connection with the regular bar at which a member may stand to drink, and 5 of the remaining 31 clubs report that their service bar is inadequate and something will have to be done to enlarge the facilities for taking care of mixed and fancy drink orders.

With the advantages of a portable bar for mixing drinks on the lawn and around the dance floor on party nights, GOLFDOM is surprised to find that only 7 of the 50 clubs have any portable equipment. In two of these cases the portable bar is nothing more than equipment for serving draught beer on the golf course.

### Report \$3,109 Average Profit

Of 43 clubs selling beer and liquor, 11 furnish GOLFDOM with no figures on annual

gross beverage sales in former years as compared with 1934. The remaining 32 clubs report a total beverage sale prior to 1934 of \$139,700, and these same clubs estimate their 1934 gross sales will approximate \$375,550. Estimated profits on these sales amount to the amazing total of \$99,500, but GOLFDOM believes that this figure which averages \$3,109 per club on estimated average gross sales of \$11,736, probably does not take into account a number of expense items that should properly be charged directly against gross sales before arriving at a gross profit figure.

Interesting information revealed by the questionnaires with reference to sales is the comparative total of beverage sales in 1934 as compared with prior years when prohibition was in effect and club beverage sales consisted almost entirely of gingerale and mineral water.

Here are some figures from the New York metropolitan district:

Club:	Sales—1934:	Sales before 1934:
A.....	\$12,000	\$3,000
B.....	10,000	1,800
C.....	8,000	300
D.....	25,000	9,000
E.....	8,000	2,500
F.....	16,000	4,000
G.....	15,000	5,000

Similar figures in the Chicago District are:

Club:	Sales—1934:	Sales before 1934:
A.....	\$12,000	\$ 8,000
B.....	16,000	6,000
C.....	10,000	7,000
D.....	7,000	3,000
E.....	50,000	20,000
F.....	13,000	4,600

Similar increases in beverage business are reported from other metropolitan centers.

Of these 43 clubs serving liquor 14 report that no increase in dining room business has been noticed since repeal, but the other clubs say that there has been considerable effect noticeable, some managers reporting as much as 33% better business this year than last, due to the fact that liquor may be legally sold in the club dining room.

One of the questions GOLFDOM asked was, "What estimated percentage of your members order liquor by brand name?" The returns on this question are surprisingly varied, some managers claim that as high as 80 per cent of liquor bought is ordered by brand names, while at other

clubs the managers feel that less than 5 per cent are particular about what brand of liquor is served them.

Approximate division of sales which may be quite at variance with the final figures are as follows: Beer sales, 28%; highballs, 42%; cocktails, 15%; wines, 5%; mineral water, 5%; gingerale, 5%. The biggest selling "hard" liquor is gin, with Scotch running a close second, immediately followed by rye in the case of eastern clubs and bourbon in the case of clubs in the Middle West and the Far West.

### Women Account for 25 Per Cent

The questionnaire reveals a surprising percentage of total liquor sales are being made to women at country clubs, preliminary returns indicating that they account for approximately 25% of all sales.

Both draught and bottled beer is carried at all clubs having bar facilities, with draught beer sales accounting for 70% of total beer business done. Twenty-five per cent of the remaining sales is bottled beer and 5% is ale. Of the free lunch items being furnished by the clubs, pretzels are almost uniformly offered, but a surprising number of clubs, to the number of 30, also offer cheese and crackers and 12 of them have bowls of peanuts, popcorn or parched corn available where the members can help themselves. Two of the clubs report elaborate free lunch counters with the above mentioned items and also hors d'oeuvres and sausages.

Members bringing their own bottles are a problem in some clubs. In several instances reported the club has successfully conducted campaigns to sell bottle and case goods to members for club and domestic use at a discount.

Miniatures are getting very popular at golf clubs, possibly due to the double assurance of quality a club member expects and the certainty of getting full quantity.

### Golf Balls and High Balls

One manager comments:

"What would happen to the golf professional who sold a member an unknown brand of 50c golf ball when a standard 75c ball was called for? There would be another 'position wanted' ad running every time this happened. The professional is too smart to try and hoodwink his players with something 'just as good' just to save a few pennies. Then why should the members put up with 'any old kind' of liquor



Here is a recent bar installation in the St. Clair Hotel, Chicago, that can very well serve as an inspiration to some club where luxury is a keynote.

*Brunswick-Balke Photo*

in a highball or cocktail on the false premise that the bar must make more money?

"This brings up another point: How much whisky should constitute a drink? The distillers themselves have placed themselves on record by bottling 'miniatures' or 'nips,' as they are commonly known, in 1 6/10 ounce bottles. That is a real man's drink. Less than that is just short weight.

"We expect a certain amount of banditry in roadhouses, night clubs and the like, but in a gentleman's own club he should be entitled to good liquor and good measure. The best solution is the use of 'miniatures' or 'nips' as sealed by the distiller. The cost of ten 1 6/10 ounce bottles is just a few cents more than a 16 ounce pint. It satisfies the consumer and more than pays for itself to the manager. They are easy to check in and out, no loss from spillage, reduces the risk of breakage and theft."

### Managers Study Buying

Managers are giving close study to qualities and costs in this liquor matter. Some fast ones have been put over on them, but seldom more than once. The business is closing down to a narrow field of responsible houses who show a realization of the major importance of the club market.

One phase of the liquor situation that perplexes the managers is the legislation.

There are local, state and national laws that call for the manager to be a legal expert. Where there is local option the members' liquor locker system usually is adopted as a convenience to the member who considers his club an extension of his home. Some income accrues from this, which, although not a lot, is better than the rap in the red clubs would suffer by taking out a \$1,200 liquor license fee, as in Minnesota.

Managers all say there are fewer drunks than during prohibition and practically no young souses. However, the folks stick around the golf club bar leisurely drinking so late that managers have lost a lot of sleep until closing hours at the bar were strictly enforced.

At some clubs there is a service charge on drinks served in the locker-rooms. This charge has reduced locker-room drinking and the extra work for waiters and has centered service around the bars.

Unquestionably liquor net income is going to have some definite effect in increasing budgets all around, although managers yet are not hopeful enough to believe there will be any marked increases in managerial salaries to somewhere near the point where they used to be when the clubhouse was operating in a satisfactory financial manner. The first year net revenue

### AMOUNTS CHARGED BY LEADING CLUBS FOR POPULAR DRINKS

Below are tabulated prices charged for popular drinks at eleven metropolitan clubs, located mainly east of the Mississippi. The clubs are not identified, nor is any attempt made to adjust these prices for possible difference in size of drinks or quality of ingredients.

The table will prove of value to club officials in checking the prices charged at their club with what other clubs are asking. It will also serve as evidence that the club is maintaining a price schedule strictly in line with or below current levels.

Club	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
<b>HIGHBALLS</b>											
Rye .....	35	35-40	40	25-35	30-40	30-35	35-60	40-50	40	40-60	25-50
Bourbon .....	35-50	35-45	40-45	25-35	30-45	30-35	.....	40	50	40-45	25-35
Scotch .....	35	35-40	40-45	25-35	35-50	35	45-60	40-50	35-50	45-50	35-40
<b>COCKTAILS</b>											
Alexander .....	..	35	40	35	..	40	50	50	35	60	35
Bacardi .....	35	35	35	30	35	35	50	45	35	35	35
Bronx .....	30	35	..	25	30	30	35	30	30	25	25
Clover Club .....	30	40	40	40	30	40	50	50	35	40	30
Manhattan .....	35	35	30	25	30	35	35	30	35	35	25
Martini .....	25	25	25	25	30	30	35	30	30	25	25
Old Fashioned .....	35	35	45	30	35	40	40	45	35	40	25-50
Orange Blossom .....	35	..	30	25	..	35	30	30	30	30	25
Side Car .....	40	40	40	45	35	50	60	50	35	50	35
Whiskey Sour .....	35	..	40	30	..	40	45	45	40	45	..
<b>MIXED DRINKS</b>											
Tom Collins .....	35	25	40-50	30	30	40	50	40	40	45	..
Gin Buck .....	30	20	30	25	25	..	45	25	..	..	..
Gin Rickey .....	30	25	30	25	30	..	..	40	30	35	..
Silver Fizz .....	35	35	40	35	35	..	45	45	..	40	30
Golden Fizz .....	35	35	40	35	35	..	45	45	..	40	30
Mint Julep .....	35	50	60	40	..	50	60	50	40	65	..
<b>BEER &amp; ALE</b>											
Bottled Beer .....	20	..	20	15	20	..	25	25	20-25	30	..
Draught Beer .....	10	..	15	10	20	..	25	15	15	..	..
Ale .....	35	..	30	25	..	..	..	25	..	35-65	..
Brandy .....	35	35	40	35	35	40	40	30	35-50	40-65	..

from liquor, if the club is lucky enough to make some, will go to pay off liquor equipment costs and urgent work in the clubhouse and on the course. Quite a number of managers say that their bar installations quickly paid for themselves.

Some comment of well-known managers on the club liquor picture follows:

#### Managers Must Educate Members

"The only party making any big money in the liquor business is the United States government.

"Clubs that have to put in extensive alterations for a bar, for storage facilities and extra help must do a large volume for several years before they can speak of a large net profit.

"Conditions of eating and drinking have undergone such a change during prohibition that I can safely say that the people up to 35 years of age do not know anything about quality, either in eating or drinking. Most people buy liquor because it is 100 proof; that is all that matters to them. It will take from five to seven years to educate the public how to eat and how to drink again.

"Most cocktail parties are still given at home, preceding the dinner, and instead of one, or at the most two, cocktails, they are having ten or fifteen. The result is: two hours late for dinner, food wasted. It is impossible for people to eat under these conditions. That today is the hardest problem for any club manager to handle.

"Every state has a different law. Here in Pennsylvania we must buy from the state liquor stores and we set out to buy only the best that can be had. We sell our liquor at cost, plus 10 per cent, so as to give the members the benefit, but we have not received the desired results. I have noticed since repeal that the younger generation is not indulging in alcoholic beverages."

E. T. Ashcroft of the Marathon (N. Y.) C. C. says: "We did not take out a license this year, unfortunately, but we will do so next. Although our membership increased this year by at least 60 per cent, we feel we could have bettered this with a license. Practically every member, before signing up, wants to know if the club serves liquor."