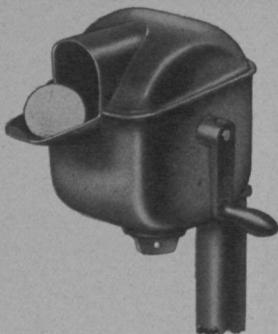


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## Supply Dealers Deserve Support of Clubs

**L**EAST appreciated of all factors responsible for present development of the United States golf business are the course equipment and supply dealers. Even with business conditions decidedly improved, prospects of dealers' profits are so dim that observers of the situation are alarmed.

If the various regional supply houses can't make a living in the golf business and are forced to leave this field, golf course maintenance will be up against a serious and costly problem. Repair parts, fungicides and other supplies that are needed on the instant at golf courses, quite naturally can not be stocked by the clubs. Someone has to pay costs of warehousing, emergency deliveries and rush repair facilities. For a number of years it has been the supply houses that have stood the expense of these service items without having an opportunity to pass on these essential charges to the golf clubs that benefit.

During the past few years the supply dealers have been looking dismally at golf clubs going around the dealers and buying from manufacturers when a few dimes could be saved. Those same clubs, the supply houses complain, do not hesitate to call on the dealers for free repair, or other service.

This matter stirred debate at the Golf section of the Recreational conference at Amerherst, Mass. in late winter. It's a touchy subject but was pretty bluntly handled. On one hand were the dealers and manufacturers whose stocks the dealers handled, and on the other were the greenkeepers as the clubs' representatives. Boiled down, here are the two cases:

### Governors May Miss the Point

Greenkeepers maintain they know the value of supply house service. They appreciate that it costs someone money when parts or supplies are ordered with instructions for immediate delivery, or when repairs or adjustments must be made with the cause of such work probably due to severe duty at the club or mishandling by the hastily recruited and unfitted help many greenkeepers must use these days. But what are the greenkeepers to do when the club insists that every cent be spared

on course maintenance? If fungicides or flags can be bought a few cents cheaper, the greenkeeper who passes up this immediate saving to pay a dealer a price sufficient to warrant the maintenance of service facilities, will be required by his chairman and board to give a long explanation.

Frequently such explanations are unsatisfactory to club officials. They can not be expected to be out at the course shortly after daybreak and discover an urgent need for fungicides not in the club's stock. Nor can the officials be expected to be in the equipment barn after nightfall and listen to the greenkeeper telephone the supply dealer's home on a hurry call for repair work that may take until the early hours of the next morning.

Not knowing the vital character of the dealers' service the club officials insist that the greenkeepers bear down on the dealers and place no business with dealers unless the quotations are lower than can be obtained elsewhere, even though other sources of supply may lose interest in the club the moment the bill is paid, or the C. O. D. charges collected.

Dealers' credit experience with golf clubs during the boom days was none too happy. In the last few years, however, the dealers have been too near to the end of their financial ropes to take a chance on credit. Frequently manufacturers dealing direct with golf clubs have no credit data on clubs and even those clubs of strongest financial rating pay premiums on purchases in the inconvenience of delay of shipments.

Realizing that it is physically impossible to have the lowest prices on everything, but careful to have a price range that represents economy and responsibility, dealers are beginning to get near the end of the line. Some are considering enforced price rises on staples to make up for the lack of income on specialties where they now are losing sales to those who quote a few cents less.

In summing up their case, dealers maintain that seldom can a metropolitan district club save more than \$50 a year by experimental and tedious shopping around among unknown, inexperienced sources of supply, and if the clubs can't see this amount as a bargain in the service the supply dealers are accustomed to give to the clubs, the dealers would be better off out of this field.

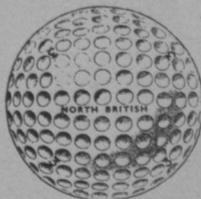
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