

Santa Claus Has Lost His Shirt

Is golf a business?

It had better be to a lot of the folks who are in it, or they will be inexcusably guilty of mufing a long over-due chance to make up for the lean, long years when they lost money.

Golf playing equipment and golf course maintenance equipment now *doesn't cost enough* to make golf the good business it should be.

And if golf isn't a good business it won't continue to thrive as a popular game.

The interests of every golf club—of every player—are tied up with the interests of the manufacturers in the golf field.

Golf has gone goofy and thrown away millions in possible profit by following the fallacy that making golf a "poor man's game" is the whole answer to broadening the golf market.

Consider one representative club GOLFDOM's editor visited recently:

The club is proud that it paid \$3,500 for a bar in its new clubhouse.

But its course maintenance equipment is obsolete, inadequate and patched up with wire, welds, and make-shifts by the club's ingenious greenkeeper.

Fifty-cent and quarter balls sell O.K., but most of the 75-cent balls are moved through the slot-machine. There are a lot of 75-cent balls sold through the machine—proving that it isn't the money that holds back counter sales of golf balls.

The pro is hard-working, able, resourceful. He has sold plenty of clubs this year, but many of them on trade-in deals.

The manager works 12 to 16 hours a day, spending much of his time trying to train and get results from a staff difficult to obtain and hold.

Membership prices in that club have increased twice since the first of the year. The \$3,500 bar will almost pay for itself this year. That bar, incidentally, would cost almost \$4,000 if bought and installed now.

But what has happened to the prices of the things that actually make golf? They're practically stationary! Yet, raw materials, labor, taxes, etc., have zoomed the past two years. Golf at last is the poor man's game, and the poor man is the golf manufacturer.

Current prices in the golf field can't last much longer.

If you need something for your course, you'd better order it this fall. Prices of golf course maintenance equipment are bound to rise. Club and ball prices are sure to jump, too.

As businessmen, golf club officials have been close enough to sharp increases in their own industries and professions to realize that the golf manufacturers cannot possibly continue to sell their products on current low price levels.

New players have come into the game by the hundreds of thousands these last two years because other people in other businesses are getting more money. They haven't bought "poor people's clubs." They bought beginner's sets. There's a difference that club and ball manufacturers haven't realized clearly enough.

The inevitable, over-due price increase is bound to start soon in golf. Better see what you are going to need and plan early action.

{ P. S. The paper on which this is printed has }
{ increased 40% in price during the last 18 months. }