

SHOP-DRESSING TIME AT HAND

... and the smart pro figures ways to give his salesroom new appeal each spring

“WHAT am I going to do to dress up my shop this year?” Many pros ask themselves that question early in March, for there’s a happy medium between having the shop look so monotonously the same that members pay no attention to it, and having the place so bright that it blantly screams “spend,” “buy now,” “bargains, bargains, bargains” and reeks with a commercial atmosphere all out of keeping with the country club keynote and the pro policy of quiet, efficient service.

Many of the fellows shift the cases around a little bit, paint the place white and let it go at that. Several years ago at a pro business conference an expert from one of the display fixture manufacturers spoke and counseled the pros against use of white paint. He said that it made the cold merchandise, clubs, look too dead. He advised what he then called “World’s Fair colors”—the light yellows, light blues and light greens. He said those backgrounds put warmth and sales attractiveness in pro-shop merchandise.

Several pros who heard him tried out his suggestion and it seemed to work. They noted that more people came to their club racks and snooped about. You might try the idea yourself but be careful that you don’t get color contrasts that nauseate a bilious man. Better have your wife O.K. the color scheme. Women generally are much better judges of pleasant color combinations than are men.

Good Lighting Is Sales Help

Get featured merchandise where it will show in daylight, if you possibly can. Many pro-shops are architectural afterthoughts and the pro tries to do a business that is concerned with pleasure from a shop that looks like the Black Hole of Calcutta. If you haven’t enough daylight, get more electric light in your place. Take up your problem with your local electric lighting company. That company’s experts ought to be able to suggest some inexpensive and effective solution of your lighting problem.

You might look into the matter of putting a display case in the locker-rooms, both men’s and women’s, with signs ad-

vising that the merchandise displayed is on sale at the pro-shop. Sales of such convenience items as underwear, shirts and socks might be handled from the locker-room case by arrangement with the head locker man. But be sure and keep watch on your inventory, for if the head man leaves the case unlocked, there’s going to be merchandise removed from it by other club employees or by members who “forget to sign.”

Experiment with shifts in the locations of your showcases. The downtown stores have spent millions of dollars studying just where to locate their various departments and how to lay out the displays so the maximum of business will be attracted and served conveniently.

Where to Put Ball Case?

In some shops it’s advisable to have the ball case right near the door where its sight will bring in members as they hasten by on the path to the first tee. In other shops pros have found by having the ball case to the rear of the shop they expose these ball-buyers to handling new clubs to the extent that club sales have been increased.

What location of the ball case will be best for your shop? Seldom can anyone tell without making actual tests. Usually the pro-shop is cramped. You have to spot your displays compactly and not try to show too much, but at the same time let your members know that the merchandise on display is but part of a large stock. You can do that by changing displays frequently and so conspicuously that they realize there has been a change around the place.

Look to your floor coverings. It is amazing how many otherwise neat pro-shops have worn rugs that look like they had been salvaged from the city dump. Not infrequently you will see putting carpets



A well-planned shop makes members feel like buying. This is a corner of George Aulbach's shop at the Dallas CC. Notice the easy-to-handle club display, the prominence given to haberdashery, and especially the immaculateness of the whole layout.

in pro-shops so frayed and filthy looking a fastidious woman would hesitate to handle a ball putted over that surface.

Try to reflect the atmosphere of your club in your shop, and at any rate don't ever let the shop fall behind other departments of the club in appearance and neatness. It should advertise you as an operator of a golf service station thoroughly qualified to serve ladies and gentlemen, expertly.

Tosh Has Smart Layout

One of the unique and productive shops of the country is that of Dave Tosh, pro at Sunset Ridge CC (Chicago district.) The Tosh shop is called the "pro lounge." It has paneled pine walls. The counter is painted to resemble knotty pine on the outside and is sky-blue inside. At first the lounge idea was carried too far. Balls were sold from a cabinet that looked like a liquor cabinet. Members weren't reminded to buy balls with them out of sight, so Tosh corrected that. Dave's place has comfortable up-to-date furniture, not the repaired or battered castaways seen in many shops. He keeps it immaculate. The place invites men and women to loaf awaiting the rest of their foursomes. The radio is kept on softly when there is some important news or sporting event being broadcast but it doesn't blare away just because some one neglects to twist it off.

Men and women's handicap racks are kept in the shop. Smart business, that. When members cut their handicaps they

often feel encouraged to buy some golf equipment, take a few lessons, and go out to lift Manero's crown. There's one danger always to the pro about women's handicaps. They get arguing and if the pro can't help getting drawn into the affair, it's generally his tough luck. The canny Tosh, like other smart pros, takes the air when those sprightly debates begin to arise.

Drapes Add Color to Shop

One generally neglected item in shop decoration that Tosh points out gives a lot of color and life to a shop is that of window drapes. He sees to it that his tastefully chosen drapes are kept as clean as they would be kept in a home.

The whole spirit of the place promotes a sporting geniality. It's an inviting place for the new members. They come in and get acquainted with the professional. The members can loaf there, in pleasant surroundings, and as they're killing time waiting for someone or hoping the rain will stop, they look at the shop's merchandise and begin to ask questions. Dave answers them. If it's what they want—and what they need—the sale is made on the most satisfactory basis; the member buys instead of having Tosh sell him. And that's the function of the properly appointed pro-shop; getting the members to feel like buying instead of having to go out and put a pistol to their ears so they'll come in and give the pro a chance to make a living.