

our profession where exclusive Fifth Avenue merchandising works. But as a whole it won't. The consumer base of golf is getting broader, and lower in price. We must not forget that most of the merchant princes have found it necessary to maintain a bargain basement beneath the smart, exclusive emporium that has made their names synonymous with fine merchandise.

Whether we like it or not, the beginner is the most important guy in the whole setup to us. He's a bang-up prospect for addition to our active merchandising list—a list that is never too large, even at its best. So we'd just as well make up our minds now as anytime to play ball with this boy—and at his own terms. He is at a loss to understand why we pros cannot furnish him with beginner's equipment

at the same price it is available downtown.

One of the most urgent problems in pro golf in these times is that of letting the public know that it doesn't have to pay a premium for buying in a pro-shop but gets plus value and expert individual attention as well as a select stock of merchandise at all prices by going to the pro.

Too long we've been doing business on the Broadway hit show box-office basis, and wondering why we're not getting more volume in club sales. The movie popular-price type of competition is cutting into our sales. The tragic part of it is that the pro could handle the lower-priced lines with the same command of the market as he has in the upper-priced lines, if he'd study this opportunity and keep his stock in a price balance best suited to the financial situation of all players at his club.

Gift Sales-Push Profitable to Pros

GOLF gifts for Christmas continue to grow in volume as a part of pro department business. Comparatively few pros were able to register substantially in this business up to a couple of years ago, despite the fact that store Christmas business in golf is a big part of stores' sports volume over the holidays.

Pros who have been most successful in getting this Christmas volume say that not the least of its profits is the education it gives in salesmanship and marketing policy. One discovery made by these pros is that women, in particular, make up a big market for Christmas golf presents. The pro who telephones, or calls in person, with a definite suggestion of golf equipment items for husband, son, daughter, or good friend is welcomed with his shopping help.

One thing active pros have learned about this Christmas present business is not to stall on it. One pro who is very active in Christmas selling found out that one of his big corporation prospects had placed an order for 600 gift duffle bags early in September. Duffle bags, head covers, balls and putters are items most favored by corporations that send Christmas presents to their customers.

On much of this business, despite the pro's "in" with the purchaser, there is keen price competition. Usually the ball price competition is keen, but pros who sell hundreds of dozens of balls as corporation Christmas gifts, do business by

pointing out that when a ball of the pro-shop grade and standard Grade A brand is sent as a present it really scores, whereas a private-brand ball is received as evidence of the giver's desire to get off as cheaply as possible while trying to observe the formalities.

Solicit Members Early

Because many club members are in executive positions and are responsible for the selection and purchase of their companies' gifts, the pro should lose no time in calling on them with his suggestions for Christmas presents. These men know the established retail price for the sort of merchandise that the pro carries, hence when the pro makes a price concession for quantity purchases it carries weight with the prospective buyer.

Several companies offer a personal name marking service on balls in quantity lots. This has been responsible for some large gift orders pros have received. This business must be solicited early as the Christmas gift rush necessitates plenty of leeway in delivery date.

A great boost to pro solicitation of Christmas gift business is the gift packaging and premiums various ball manufacturers make available. The pro who will call on his members with an assortment of these packages is set to do a lot of off-season business as a reward for his energy and salesmanship.