

Platform for Pros in '43

Recently, a well known professional has been discussing pro prospects for 1943. In the past, despite large shop sales, this pro has been slow pay; not a dead-beat, but just careless—operating too long on the other fellows' money.

As a perfectly honest but commercially haphazard fellow he got a shock when he was told that his normal way of doing business would be a handicap to the war effort of business and an obstacle to providing golf as a recreation needed by war workers.

The interviews gave this pro the basis for the article which follows.—Editor's note.

THE total inventories of all major golf club manufacturers, recently compiled, very definitely indicates that less than twenty-five per cent of normal peace time requirements will be available next spring.

Every major equipment manufacturer is now on war production and has been since early last fall. Production last spring was but fifty per cent of the spring of 1941, in compliance with War Production Board orders.

In fact, there is on hand only enough new golf equipment to supply the dire need for recreation to new players—Army, Navy and civilian war workers who have heretofore followed other sports, now unavailable to them because of time and travel difficulties.

These facts are pertinent to every golf professional in the country—whether he be engaged in war work and is not going back to his club next spring, whether he be enlisted in the armed forces, or whether, like some of us, he will just stick it out, for every single one of us wants to see some semblance of golf continued. We want to see the fairways mowed, if for no other reason than that we feel we are charged with the job of keeping the grass alive for those youngsters who will be returning again some day.

Times Are Different

But it will mean working for very little compensation. It will mean passing up a sale here and there to some pretty valuable old customer so we may provide equipment to new players. It will mean advice and lessons on the run for workers haven't time for the practice tee and it will mean a lot of advice must be given absolutely free. Yes, these are

things we will gladly do—or at least we think we will. But from here on it means a tremendous change in our business habits. Unless you love the game of golf and want above all else to see its fairways preserved, I advise you against reading on.

Making purchases and sales in our normal way is out for the duration, for we who remain behind are charged with preserving the game and it is in our laps to prove that golf can be and will be more helpful to the war effort than the spectator sports that have had the blessings of the "Chief" himself.

Makers Have Interest

With this in mind I ask "What will be the thinking on pro credit next spring?" for with large investments in idle stored machinery, etc., the manufacturers have a real interest in how we conduct our wartime business. They, too, want the game carried on, and can only depend upon us to do it; remember, with only about one-fourth as much to sell as they have had in past seasons, they may well afford to be choosy in where their goods are placed.

No manufacturer may set himself up as a dictator as to how you conduct your war time business. He cannot tell you that it is your duty to the game to talk any member into continuing with his present equipment so that you can sell a new set to someone who hasn't clubs at present. Nor can he very well convince you that holding a heavy stock of clubs in your shop when they are not moving is unfair to a brother professional, and unfair to the game itself—because this frozen stock might be giving some harrowed worker a great deal of deserved pleasure. Nor can he tell you that spending the money resulting from the sale of merchandise rather than paying your bills is akin to sabotage.

He has thousands of dollars tied up in idle machines specially built to make fine golf clubs. Other dollars tied up in inventory of golf clubs is frozen money that should be at work on the war effort, meeting war worker payrolls, etc. It is part of the pro's job to turn these clubs into implements that will give healthful exercise to war workers, and to turn them

into cash as soon as possible so that this cash may also do its part .

No! The manufacturer will not tell you these things and as usual he will fill just as much of your spring orders as he possibly can and depend upon you to conduct your business as a fair, patriotic American.

So let us resolve that:

1. We will do anything we can to convert as many workers as possible to the game, and will see to it that they have equipment.

2. We will not overstock our shop, nor will we hold any unpaid-for equipment in our shop after June 15th.

3. We will pay for all merchandise we have sold prior to June 1st, just as soon as it is sold.

4. We will endeavor to convince our members that they should continue to use their present equipment where possible.

5. We will not split sets and expect the manufacturer to take back odd clubs that he cannot any longer fill in.

6. We will not allow practice swings or rounds that will scar up new clubs, because of the critical materials spoiled and because of the critical shortage of manpower for their repair.

7. We will help war workers to improve; we will put out every effort to keep this grand old game alive by conducting our business with consideration to brother professionals and to the manufacturers who are dependent on us to play the game as we would like them to play it if positions were reversed.

HOW TO HOLD A TOURNEY FOR SERVICE MEN

THE way army camps and navy posts are spotted near smaller cities provides an opportunity and a problem for the smaller city golf clubs to help provide recreation for the uniformed men. Some smaller golf clubs are appalled by the magnitude of the task they see in the presence of hundreds of active young men and regard the club facilities so far short of the demand that they let nature take its course and allow golf for members of the armed forces to be conducted on a catch-as-catch-can basis.

This generally brought confusion that embarrassed the club members and bewildered the uniformed men. What makes the situation worse is that the people of the smaller cities and towns generally are very swell neighborly sort of folks who want to do their level best by the boys who are away from home, and because of this hospitable spirit feel humiliated when the haphazard arrangements don't work out.

But at Sioux Falls, S. Dak., where the army has a technical school, the Elmwood Park (municipal) GC pro, Ed Livingston, worked out plans that care for the enlisted men and officers, and which culminated in a Post golf tournament that



Lt. Dudley (left) presents trophies to Clare (center) and Mallory, runner-up and winner of Sioux Falls service men's event.

drew a field of 125. By enlisting the help of members and other pros, Ed got an adequate stock of clubs which he rented at 25 cents per set per round.

Tournament plans were worked out with Lieut. D. C. Dudley, Post Athletic and Recreation officer. Local merchants whose civic spirit and generosity in providing prizes for Elmwood's annual championship have made the affair big, kicked in for the prizes for this Post tournament. Not that the local merchants thought of the prize contribution as a smart commercial goodwill activity in view of the soldier money spent with them, but it did work out that way and got many a plug for Sioux Falls from men who had been at that post, when they talked with other soldiers who had the too frequent complaint of being bilked by smaller city and town merchants.

Qualifying scores in the event ranged