

# Susie Scores As A Golf Business Woman



Mrs. Floyd Farley

**M**ANY TIMES GOLFDOM has commented on the valuable work pro's wives have done back of the pro shop scenery in accounting for the business success of their husbands. In days before the war that work was mainly in book-keeping, in buying, merchandising and advertising advice from the wife's keen observation as a shopper, and in tactful sound advice on handling club business relations.

But during the war pro wives, in a number of cases, came before the golfing public as business women of impressively high ability. While their husbands were in the armed services or in war industry these young women gave demonstrations of pro department operation that often has brought the pro shop briskly and attractively to the favor of the golfing public. The performance of these pro's wives has convinced many in golf that the business woman influence is going to be a bright, lively and powerful factor in increasing pro business after the war.

These young women who were substituting for husbands who are very highly regarded as pro businessmen have, in numerous instances, pepped up business under difficult conditions. They have effectively applied the first-class business methods to which they as buyers have been exposed by the smartest merchandisers. In some respects this has caused almost revolutionary changes in pro shop

operation, hitherto considered almost entirely a masculine type of business with the women's trade coming as a sideline because of the instruction entree.

But now it is being demonstrated that basically the same clean-cut alert merchandising that sells women sells more to men at pro shops. There's a lot for all smart pro businessmen to study in the successful pro department management of pro wives who have filled in during war.

One who has done a notable job of pro department operation while her husband is in the army is Mrs. Floyd Farley, wife of the professional at the Woodlawn Public Golf Course, Oklahoma City, Okla.

We wrote Mrs. Farley asking for highlights of her experience as a pinch-hitter for Floyd. And here is her response, just as it came to us. Smart young woman, this Susie. See for yourself.

"When my husband gets out of the Army and back to this pro job again, I swear I'll never say a word when he comes home at night, eats dinner, then falls asleep reading the evening paper. Because now that I understand his job, I have a greater understanding of my husband.

"Floyd left for the Army just as the '44 golf season was about to start. He tossed me the keys to the clubhouse and said, 'It's all yours, Susie, Now you can play pro.' At that time the only thing I knew about golf was how to hold the pro; but I learned the hard way and enjoyed learning.

"Along with the keys, Floyd left an ample supply of golf merchandise including golf balls. I soon learned the 'trade 'em in' deal and have had golf balls for sale 98% of the time.

"I also fell heirless to a beverage and sandwich business, remnants of our old cafe, which had been moved into the golf shop for the duration. And believe me, profits from the drinks have helped greatly to take up the slack caused by a lack of full merchandise line and loss from golf lessons.

"Our biggest Annual City Tournament, the Four-ball, started only two weeks after Floyd donned the khaki, and the very thought of a tournament scared me. Why, I hardly knew how to ring up a green fee! We did all right, though, and by the time our club championship started I had a little more confidence. Several of our members helped me and 196 players qualified. We had a fine tournament but I

was relieved when the finals were played. "My cash and inventory required close control. I took a bold step—bold under present labor conditions—and cleaned house, so to speak.

"I advertised for an elderly man to work in the shop and found a fine fellow, age 62, who hasn't been one minute late nor one cent short.

"I also needed a boy, so I asked the coach at our nearest high school to recommend someone. He sent me a lad who has turned out extremely well.

"We had two draft-deferred course workers, but as summer rolled around I found we needed two more men. So I advertised again, offering 60c per green for a greens mower. We had over fifteen applicants for the job. I found two good men. The greens mower comes out early each morning getting through with ten greens by eleven o'clock. The other fellow does odd jobs, and both are regular as clockwork. So as far as labor problems are concerned, I have them solved.

"I've learned a great deal in two seasons about the golf business, but I realize there is a lot I don't know. I'm still pretty dumb about course maintenance problems, the nomenclature of golf equipment, and that sort of thing. But you should have seen how proud I was the day I wrapped my first club—it only took me thirty

minutes! I do all the simple repair work on clubs, and I have worked here at the finer arts of wielding a paint brush, broom, and mop.

"About post war planning; I feel that we here at Woodlawn will be wise to enlarge our golf shop merchandise and display area. Floyd has ideas on this and intends spending \$1,500 for increased space. We want to carry a really representative line of golf equipment and intend doing so. Our inventory should run about \$5,000. We have a daily fee patronage here now; and a hook-up with one of the finance companies will start our post war merchandise rolling out on the installment plan again. I think installment buying opportunities for the golfer is a *must* at a public golf course.

"If my husband gives just half the lessons that people say they want, he'll be a very busy ex-soldier when he returns. I can see where teaching paves the way to equipment sales at the same time holding the green-fee patronage.

"I'm going to help build up our Women's Association here at Woodlawn. I've never believed too much in the pro's wife mixing in this sort of thing, but my mind has been changed about what I can do to help.

"And do you know what, Herb—I don't even play golf! I haven't the time."

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