

# Where Does the Golf Pro Make His Money?

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"If I had knocked off a stroke for every book on how-to-play-golf that I've read, I'd break 60," says one of my club members. He breaks 100 when the wind is right and his game demonstrates that individual instruction still beats books and radio talks every time.

Most lesson profits come from the member who has made his pile and now wants to take time to learn to play the game of golf the right way. He is a poor golfer who will be made into a good one by skillful teaching, but never into a champion. The star-in-the-making shops about in his search for instruction hoping for that miracle touch that will make him tops over night. The teaching pro knows that "the dub is the man with the dough."

The busy teaching season at any club is in the late spring and early summer. That is also the heavy sales time. A \$3 lesson on the course can queer a \$100 sale in the shop if the assistant can't or won't bother to sell goods. On the other hand, teaching can be clear profit of itself plus a means of bringing sound business into the shop. It is good business to sell the golfer what he needs and teach him to use it. The satisfied customer is one who knows how to get the most out of clubs well grooved to his build and swing.

## Tie Shop Sales to Teaching

If the pro is sure he makes money from teaching, he should make sure that sales plus teaching make more. And if he thinks his members don't want lessons, build up good will with a sales plus teaching or playing plus sales project. Stores sell the same goods, but the pro has the added selling point of offering skilled advice in selection and teaching the player to get the most out of what he spends his money on.

Successful merchandising looks like a smart trick, but is no trick at all. Instead it's a combination of careful buying, estimating the needs of the golfer before he knows them himself, displaying goods for their best sales appeal, and knowing when to discount to keep goods moving and cut down unavoidable loss.

The pro's head can save his heels. Sales can make more money than sweating it out teaching. It can lose plenty too for the pro who won't study all its angles and

work to keep one jump ahead of the town stores.

Winning tournaments is good work—if you can get it. You place your shots with the idea that the king can do no wrong—and then, maybe, you decide that you just aren't king. Tournament playing is a specialty requiring years of training as well as special aptitude. Luck may determine special shots and short games, but winning names repeat themselves too often to have luck any part of it.

Tournament playing for most pros is a way to spend money, not to earn it. It can be a vacation with a chance to pick up pointers if the pro enters in that spirit, rather than expecting the gods of chance to create a marvel just for him.

## Club Cleaning About An Even Break

Club cleaning money comes in one pocket and goes out the other. It helps to pay the assistant and clubcleaner, and comes in when money is needed to buy stock in the spring. It is a steady little income in return for a routine drudgery that can easily be overlooked. The business man golfer is a good candidate for the club cleaning list. He expects a good buy when he gets his clubs and wants them to serve him well and to last. The professional man is accustomed to good looking equipment and likes to see his clubs well polished without rust or loose strings.

When some of us pros went into the business, the golf pro was hired as club-maker, teacher and player. Now the pro no longer makes clubs and often has never learned to repair them. But he may combine other services for the club. He may be a pro green keeper, a playing professional and probably is in charge of caddies, tournaments, supervising the course, and any number of other duties in addition to running the pro shop, teaching and playing golf.

Pay is usually in proportion to duties, and although he can keep busy enough in his own particular jobs, the more responsibility he can take for making things run smoothly for the golfers the greater will be his income. Most clubs will pay more for a more capable pro.

Playing with club members is part of the pro's job. This can be good will, sports-

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manship, or instruction. Teaching of course deserves pay whether the basis is by the hour or by a playing round.

If the game is for good fellowship, the pro must play with the high as well as the low handicap golfer. It is easy to get in the habit of playing with just a few good golfers, with a friendly bet to make the round more exciting. Avoid that. Get the duffer over being afraid to play with the pro.

There are too many amateurs who want to pay their dues at the expense of someone else to make gambling at a club profitable for the pro who plays too much with the hot-shot members. A sporting game implies the chance to win next time with the odds made even to give either side a hope of winning. This constitutes sportsmanship in the game, but is not a way to earn money.

When it comes to lining his pocket book, the pro needs to consider all his chances.

1. Headline the dub. He is the fellow with the money who wants to learn the game. Teach him with skill and patience for the main support of any country club is the poor not the good golfer.

2. Let your head save your heels. You know something about the game besides letting your muscles demonstrate good swing reflexes with a golf club. Keep a well-stocked golf shop and a reputation for paying your bills with the manufacturers. Help your members to the best equipment they can use well and pay you for. Show them it is good business to buy from the pro.

3. Go to tournaments to pick up new ideas about golf, to meet your friends, to revive your enthusiasm for your chosen life work, and for a vacation. Win the tournament if you find that you are king.

4. Don't neglect the routine, dirty job of club cleaning. The money it pays is just as good as any other kind, and comes in more regularly.

5. Be indispensable at your club so that you are worth a good salary. Your pro shop should be the first place to which visitors are taken because it will give them a good impression of the club and start them out right for a good game of golf.

6. Be a pro sportsman and not a pro gambler. The pro has a good business, but like any other he needs to stop and analyze every part of it now and then to make sure he is getting the most out of it.

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