

# Bag Cart Possibilities Call for Pro Studies

By JOHN BUDD

"These carts have come to my course to stay, and boy they sure do add to my income in days when income is not too easy to increase," stated a very successful pro from the Pacific Northwest, Chuck Congden. Congden thinks many of his players will continue to use carts far beyond that day when good caddies have returned.

At hundreds of clubs the same story is told. Many players choose the cart because they are awed by the kid who smirks when a shot is missed and lazes dreamy-eyed far behind while the foursome fumes about delays.

Numerous clubs will feel the caddie pinch for quite a few years. The old caddies returned from the wars and chose other means of making their dollars. During the interim the younger boys did not take to caddying and there is a sad gap due to lack of experience and competence.

On the average rolling golf course the present day carts are a cinch to pull or push. They are easy to use and biggest asset of all is that players do not have to stoop down and up to get the bag or a different club.

Sure, many players will buy their own, but more of them will not. Then again you can face the fact that most lockers will not accommodate the cart along with the other array of golfing do-dads and apparel.

So the need always will be there for something to help the players going about their game. The cart in use two or three times will convert almost any golfer to its ease of handling and value to his or her game.

## Cart Rentals Rise

Cart rentals build up steadily after the players start using them. First a player will timidly try one and may feel a little self-conscious rolling the little cart along the fairways, but then night finds him fresher and feeling better after his exercise. His shoulder does not ache and his score card shows better results too.

What is the pro side of this picture? Well, with misgivings six carts were probably bought at the start and after a few weeks things did not look too bright. The course was still soggy and the weather on the bad side. Then came the sun and dry fairways, and a host of players. Carts started their daily rounds and a frantic wire goes in for 12 more carts. A check-up shows that already four carts are paid for. This multiplies until the cart line

shows a roll call of 30 to 60 or more, depending on the size of the daily play.

Sights are set on paying for the carts the first year, which seems like a sizeable order. August rolls around and the books show that all are out in the clear except that last order of eight carts and a quick analysis shows that at the present level these will be out of hock by season's end.

A bright future looms. Next year prices can be adjusted downward, better service given because of more experience with the little carriers and a neat income will go into the bank.

## Tax Angle to Carts

A smart operator will not choose to pay his whole cart cost the first year but will depreciate the initial purchase price over four or five years so as to minimize his tax picture. This is of course entirely legitimate in better business circles.

Do you have your carts? If not, a word to the wise. Buy from among the best known tried and true models. They may cost more but you will save in the long run. Consider the way the bag is fitted on. A poor fitting cart can ruin a good bag in three trips around the course. Pad the spots of wear. Be careful of the straps. A holder to keep bag from sagging is a big asset and players quickly realize it.

## Inspect Cart Fleet

Check your fleet of carts regularly and be quick to correct faults. If a player seems dissatisfied, refund his money or give him another cart use free of charge. You are selling a service and the service must do the job well.

When the inevitable breakdown occurs, have a supply of spare parts ready to put the carrier back in use at once. There must be a sufficient number of carts to take care of the play or some will cease using the carts because they feel that they will not always be available.

Many of the successful cart operators have stated that good service in placing the bag on the carrier helps to build good will and better business.

These carts have the potential of solving many caddie problems and at the same time bringing added revenue.

They have a definite and ever-widening place in golf's future. Their value is to promote more and easier golf through easing the caddie need, bringing a better income to the pro or operator, and lowering cost of a round to a player.