

# How Murphy Master Merchant Serves His Market

By SPENCER MURPHY

Professional, Glen Oaks CC, Great Neck, L. I., N. Y.

The ideas in merchandising that pros have acquired and applied since Pearl Harbor have been concerned mainly with pro shopping to offset shortage of merchandise and with closer personal service to members so the members will be sold completely on the pro and his shop when competition does get tough again, and it will.



Spencer Murphy

In the wake of the war it was natural that members needed more clubs than could be manufactured. Most pros two seasons after the war ended can look over clubs in their racks and see that members still represent a big field for sales to bring the age of playing equipment down to the average of pre-war outfits.

My case at Glen Oaks differs from that at the majority of clubs. When it became plainly evident that war was coming on I did everything I could to get a big supply of golf merchandise. That was what merchants in other lines were doing and I certainly found that it paid my members and me, and other pros I was able to help during a period of acute shortage.

By showing members you are able to supply them with what they need and want you encourage their buying and keep them heated with interest in always having the newest and best and most distinctive. It's worth the investment the pro has to make at a really first class club.

I make extensive display and sale of the standard popular brands, Spalding, Wilson, MacGregor, Hagen, Burke, Kroydon and the others. Because I do a job of selling this equipment where it fits I sell a lot of it and get supplies that are adequate under normal circumstances. My sales of standard brands I imagine are at or above par for most of the leading clubs.

## Solves Club Shortage Problem

When the war came on and there was a demand for clubs that couldn't be supplied by the manufacturers I solved the short-

age by getting together some of the remaining expert clubmakers and going into the manufacture of my own clubs. Prior to the war I had the eastern rights to the George Nicoll irons. As the result of wartime operations I have been made exclusive agent for Nicoll irons in the U. S. and have given them a carte blanche order for all the heads they can send me. Norman N. Browne, Nicoll's manager, has given me excellent cooperation.

The woods are my own design. At a factory near my club a dozen of the top ranking clubmakers, working overtime six days a week, are keeping the factory busy meeting the orders. I have found, as most other pros have, that the pro endorsement and ideas in a golf club sell it to exacting trade anywhere. I've got several leading store accounts over the country and now can see the manufacturers' viewpoint in controlling quality store distribution of golf merchandise at a fixed selling price.

We as professionals can talk earnestly about controlling the market but the only way to do it is to give the customers what they want when they want quality merchandise. Catching a big volume of the lower priced lines is another problem but one which the pro can solve by beating the stores in better display and really expert fitting of the club to the player and his purse.

As a result of manufacturing my own clubs I have been able to provide women's clubs in considerable volume. Of course, when you keep the women happy you have an idyllic condition in any club. I, too, have supplied the women of many other clubs, which should keep them from squawking to their harassed home pros.

## Hunt for New Ideas

During the war and since the pro hasn't been under pressure to look for new ideas in selling clubs. Many of the ideas he picked up in selling apparel and accessories when he wasn't able to get enough clubs will pep up his club selling if he applies these ideas when the competition again begins to get tough.

One field for us to explore thoroughly in our hunt for new ideas is that of women's golf. That market is going to surpass the

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*Front Cover: 8th green at Pebble Beach (Del Monte, Calif.) during the final match in the USGA Amateur Championship.*

*Julian P. Graham photo*

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## MURPHY, MASTER MERCHANT

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present estimate of most of us and it is responding quickly to smart development work.

Here at Glen Oaks we have something new in the way of storing clubs. We have built an addition to the pro shop to store the women's clubs. Like most other clubs, we have a full quota of men's clubs and needed the addition which we reserved for the fairer sex.

We have a considerable number of new junior players and their clubs are stored with the women's. In addition, we have had junior classes, which operate at our new driving range, one of the finest in the East. It might be interesting to note that one of the juniors, "Cooky" Swift, won the Metropolitan junior championship at Cedar Creek club at Glen Cove. She, incidentally, is a protegee of my brother, Ed (Senator) Murphy.

As you perhaps know, Glen Oaks led the entire country in raising funds for the Red Cross, USO and the other service organizations. That's something else to be borne in mind by all pros, whether they are younger fellows who were in military service this time or men who were too old for active service this time. The club established itself as an active community factor during the war and the pro, along with his members, realized that his responsibilities ex-

tended even further than providing thorough and competent service to his members. He had to participate in community service and contributed to that work his capacity for developing an extension of club spirit.

We are seeing at Glen Oaks an unprecedented demand for lessons. I have added to my staff Pete Burke, brother of Billy, ex national open champion. I am sure that now, more than ever before, it is essential that the head pro have on his staff the best possible teaching assistants as it is utterly impossible for the head pro to care for all the teaching along with his numerous other important duties.

Most of us had to learn the hard way about caring for our members' needs of equipment during the war. There never was a wartime shortage of clubs or balls at Glen Oaks or at Lakeville which I operated during the war years. In fact during those years I went out of my way to assist other professionals who were not as fortunate as I in having equipment.

I learned something from them, and I hope that there was something they were able to learn from me, as all of us are in a business that is growing so rapidly and presenting so many new problems along with new opportunities we'd all better exchange experiences to promote the general good of pro golf.