

Pro Shop Arrangement to Lure Sales

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A correctly designed pro shop must shrewdly avoid registering the impression that it is for the purpose of making money for the pro. That is a delicate thing to do but, especially at a private club, the member must always have the idea that the pro department's sole reason for existence is to add to the members' happiness at the club. You sometimes hear that this pro, or that one, is "too commercial" and members shy away from the shop because of the fear of being high-pressured into buying.

This attitude backfires on the pro and drives business into stores where, even though they have high-pressure advertising and sales operations, the buyer knows that he is deliberately exposing himself to this type of selling. At the golf club the players have their minds on playing rather than on being sold something. Consequently the major element in private club pro shop design is creating an atmosphere and facilities encouraging buying rather than giving evidence of strong selling pressure.

The conditions differ at public and semi-public courses. There the type of market calls for more obvious effort in pushing into the players' possession what they really need for fuller enjoyment of the game. But in both types of club the pro must have his merchandising reflect a genial and genuinely interested personality.

The pro shop cannot look like the golf section of a department store's sporting goods department. It has to fit closer into the golf course picture to exert strongest selling influence.

Points I believe must be checked by the professional in making sure that his shop is set up for doing business satisfactorily include:

LOCATION: I prefer the shop being located in the clubhouse adjacent to both locker-rooms for several reasons.

First, it is convenient to the members.

Second, it is convenient to the pro for it enables him to be on the spot when a golfer desires something in a hurry.

Third, it gives a pro an opportunity to be on hand when functions are held in the evening. I have done considerable business just by casually being in the golf shop on a night when a dance or a card party is being held.

Fourth, with the shop in the clubhouse it can be handled with less help. For example: an assistant can take over the caddy-master's duties, whereas if the shop were separate it would necessitate two employees in order to give the proper service. These are just a few reasons which I can think of at present. There are many more I am sure.

One more thing, the shop should be located where all golfers must pass it or walk through it when going to the first or tenth tees. This is for the convenience of the members as well of the pro.

"Easy to Handle" Display

MERCHANDISE DISPLAY: Arranging merchandise is an art in itself. It takes a lot of thought and I have found that merchandise displayed in such a manner where the customer can handle it will move a lot faster than if it were all in show cases.

The most important thing in merchandise display is to have a very good representative stock. You can't sell it if you don't have it.

Changing the stock around is important. In building a shop this should be taken into consideration. Room is needed.

The display room should not be smaller than 20 ft. x 20 ft. This amount of space is ample to carry a complete line and does not keep one broke in keeping it stocked. There should be a large enough store room in which to keep surplus stock, a club cleaning room large enough to work with plenty of elbow room and definitely a space for a desk, files, etc. With all the bookkeeping to be done today a pro needs office space. The size of the store room, club-cleaning and repair room depends entirely upon the size of the membership and golf traffic throughout the year.

LIGHTING: Good lighting is essential, but not to the point where it takes away



POOLS KEEP YOUNG BLOOD STIRRING

Fort Wayne (Ind.) CC pool is gathering place of the smart younger set of the city. The pool represents a profitable \$90,000 investment by the club. With courses crowded the past few years swimming pools have been important in keeping the youngsters interested in the country clubs. Pros might well look over the youngsters who play around the pool and see that these kids all are enlisted for class or individual golf lessons. These boys and girls will be the life of the club a few years from now.

display space. I believe one large window located where the pro can see the first tee and the eighteenth green, if possible, and the caddy house, is sufficient. One corner window is all that a well laid out shop needs. Good sunlight minimizes the use of artificial lighting.

By all means I believe a shop should be made as theft-proof as possible. This problem can be overcome many ways. I am not going to attempt to enumerate. A good strong galvanized wire screen over the windows which can be removed when the shop is in operation is a simple and not too costly a way of taking care of this matter. I imagine there are many new ideas on this. Frankly I haven't had too much trouble in this respect. Of course insurance is a "must." Having the shop in the clubhouse is very safe. It is not as vulnerable as a shop stuck away back in the trees where a thief can be shielded.

The caddy house should be built as close to the shop as possible. This eliminates a telephone system which is a nuisance.

With this arrangement, if the club is not too big one man can handle two jobs. Hiring a caddy-master and an assistant is expensive. Unless the club has a large membership and is wealthy this is not feasible. The available funds at many clubs don't allow paying enough for a good caddy-master and a good assistant too. To get the right man you have to pay an attractive salary. I like to have the caddies within earshot and also where they can be seen.

Indoor Net Desirable

A net for indoor instruction at clubs in the north is a good idea providing the club is near enough to town where a person would not mind driving out for a lesson. In isolated clubhouses, this is not a very good idea.

If a pro or a club must use caddy carts then a special space should be provided for them. Placing them in the shop or in a space near the shop or on porches is very unsightly. They must be handled just like the storing of clubs. Out of the way.