

TEE OFF PARTY HONORS BEN



Tee Off Party in the Garden Room of the fashionable Hotel Bel Air especially honored Ben Hogan the night before the Los Angeles Open Golf Tourney held at the Riviera Country Club. Host was genial Don B. Burger, vice-pres. of the Bel Air corporation. More than 200 newspapermen and fellow golfers gathered to fete the fabulous Ben. Left to right, Jimmy Demaret, Ojai Valley Inn and Country Club, and host Don B. Burger, join Ben at one of the many tables laden with food.

MERCHANDISING FOR PROS

(Continued from page 31)

conscious. They buy on price alone. Usually, however, most of these buyers will not sacrifice quality for price if a rational explanation is given to them on why they should buy quality rather than price. But keep merchandise for these customers in your shop. To convert these buyers, the salesman must know all about grips, shafts, heads, weights, balance, design and the other components of a golf club.

How about the golf bags? Do you and your assistants know their quality, manufacture, strong and weak points? And the golf balls? coverings, markings, winding, centers, etc.? You can be sure that the downtown stores do all they can to get this information into the hands of their salesmen. You, as an old hand at the golf business, should know ten times as much about your merchandise as the downtown store salesman. Give some of this knowledge to your assistants and your shop should hum with sales.

Further, do not forget to let your members know that you perform one hundred and one services for them that no downtown store does. You take their telephone messages, arrange matches, run their tournaments, get them caddies, introduce them about the club, listen to

their complaints, and do your best to arrange things the way they like them. Why, shucks, you even close their car windows when unexpected showers arrive and they are out playing, or sitting in the club house near a nice warm fire playing pinochle, or is it Canasta?

The Net Income Picture

While I am at it, I might as well add a word of caution. Many pros take jobs without a salary, retainer, from the club in the mistaken idea that they can live by playing golf. Even the smallest golf shop requires two persons: the pro to give lessons, make sales, etc., and an assistant to clean clubs, train caddies, and do the odd jobs about the shop. The shop probably is open seven days every week, usually at least twelve hours of each day. No man today wants to work 84 hours a week. Breaking this down for two men leaves an average work week of 42 hours. To pay a living wage to two men from sales alone, requires sales totaling at least \$18,000 a year. Not many shops do this amount of business.

Therefore, a pro must have a salary in direct relation to the amount of sales and to the value of his services to the club. Unless this policy is followed the pro becomes dissatisfied, the members become dissatisfied, and disharmony will prevail at the club. Sooner or later the pro resigns and the club is left with the feeling that pros as a whole are not very worthy. The dissatisfied pro meantime has broadcast his tribulations to the wholesale golf salesmen, the sporting goods houses, and to the other members of his profession. The sum of the whole thing is that the club is blighted with an unfair appraisal by the pro and the pro is blasted unfairly by the club.

Anyone can see from this that the club thought it was making a smart move when it hired a pro who was willing to accept a position without guarantee from the club.

The pro undoubtedly took this job on these terms because he was in dire straits and badly needed a job. To avoid this unpleasantness there must be genuine cooperation between the club and the pro.

The club paying a retainer to a pro is in a better position to demand more, and will get more, from its pro. The pro will be in a better position to enthusiastically serve the members with expert thoroughness no downtown store can offer. Here, then, are a few suggestions that should, and will, contribute to the happiness of the pro businessman, to the golfer who really wants to enjoy his golf, and to the club that wants a congenial atmosphere in and about its golf shop.