

# Corcoran Sells Committee on Right Plan for Shop

Lo, the poor pro when his dreams of a new shop run headon into the tastes, preferences and foibles of club building committees. The management hired him for his knowledge of the game and the business of golf; the membership pays his salary; but when the all-important matter of shop location and layout in a new building is considered these same good people often give a cold shoulder to the pro's ideas. Consciously, or unconsciously, the professional is abruptly made to be a football between the forces of those interested in club social events and those interested in golf. The only recourse left to the pro is to use his head, his personality and his prayers in the hope that a combination of these will win over his numerous bosses.

George Corcoran, pro at Greensboro CC of Greensboro, N.C., took these bumps in stride and his combination worked out. Today he is established in what he considers is one of the finest shop layouts in the country. Of the three elements in the combination George says it must have been prayer, lots of it. The evidence points, however, to extensive and successful use of the other two.

It can be told now. Now that everybody is happy and the new shop is an admired part of the new wing of the clubhouse. And there was the first rub! Some committee members wanted the shop to be separate from the clubhouse, just off the 1st tee. The idea was to divorce the golf headquarters from the club proper and in so doing place idle caddies at a distance.

## Shop in Clubhouse Helps Sales

The theory of remote caddie facilities had no opposition, but with quiet insistence Corcoran talked with the committee individually and collectively regarding the removal of the shop. In his opinion this action would cut down as much as 20% of his sales potential. Since his income is dependent in the main on his shop sales this was a fair and reasonable objection. As an alternative he suggested that a caddy house be built adjacent to the first tee, design to conform with clubhouse architecture, and that the shop be redesigned and kept in its original location. That location being on the ground floor just back of the first tee by some 40 feet. Maybe prayer did do it, but the button-

holing of members with a definite plan and a reasoning attitude played a big part. The shop was not moved. The caddy house was built detached. And George's fear of a 20% sales loss went out the window.

Along with removal of the shop came the idea of placing the women's locker room on the east side of the building and the men's locker room on the west; a cocktail lounge to be placed where the old shop had been. This would have meant that the only real contact between golfers and point-of-sale merchandising would have been the few moments spent in signing up for a round and in posting scores afterwards. The successful campaign of this working pro terminated with a set-up that seems now to suit the members just as much as it does him. The women's locker room is entered either from the shop (on the north side) or from outside coming in from the 18th green. The men's locker room is entered from the shop (east side) or from the 18th green pathway. Net result, traffic is continuous through the shop from lockers to first tee and from parking areas to lockers. The volume of traffic is a prime factor in the establishing of the urge to buy golf equipment and accessories. In the new shop George has certainly got the traffic.

Some members of the building committee kept pointing to the lack of space in the clubhouse shop for adequate club storage in a spacious rack system that was desired. As an alternative, the use of a section of the adjacent boiler room was proposed by the pro. It was found that the simple procedure of cutting through an existing wall for entryway would provide ample space for the system. That closed the deal in that direction. Racks for clean, orderly storage of 250 bags were set up with the only cost being that of painting the rackroom walls and cutting in a doorway; that door opening off the south side of the shop.

## Gets Himself An Office

Based on his years of shop operation experience Corcoran requested that he be allowed to set aside a portion of his shop for office space.

"What use has a pro for an office?," was the explosive query.

It was pointed out that the days of a golf professional spending his time almost

Two views of Corcoran's new shop showing primary counter, table and display cases. —>



entirely on the course with members was a thing of the past from an economic standpoint. Also, the assignment of duties and responsibilities other than teaching golf and supervising course maintenance had brought on the need for a filing system, other records, and a private place for the numerous conferences with various committees looking to the pro for getting things done. In this instance the pro in question was in charge of the shop, the caddies, instruction of golfers of all ages, course maintenance and improvement, swimming pool, tennis court and grounds maintenance. The committee saw the light. George got his small office.

In that office today are convened meetings of the tournament committees in charge of golf, tennis and swimming. Records of handicaps, tournaments, plant operations and requirements are in order for prompt reference. On the commercial side the many golf equipment salesmen who come by are able to sit down and have a businesslike, uninterrupted chat with the pro, whereas before they had to catch him standing up against the counter or on the run. It is needless to say that this innovation also has proven a popular one.

The office is on the north side of the shop and the primary counter is on the south. Midway between the two is a walnut table on which are displayed caps, gloves, sox and sweaters. Behind the counter is a ceiling-high walnut cabinet containing various brands of golf balls. On either side of the door opening onto the first tee are floor racks of "impulse



Corcoran utilizes this corner of pro shop for attractive open shoe display. Inviting, isn't it?

club" buys, such as different putter styles, sand wedges, approach irons, etc. Across the room on the right side of the men's locker room door is a ceiling high display case of some 16 sets of matched irons and woods in a double row. On the left is a graduated display rack for golf shoes. This section is used during tournaments to display the trophies to be awarded. The floor is rubber tile with heavy rubber runners in the traffic lanes to prevent spike damage.

This shop is one of the best we have ever seen. There may be some that cost more, but there are none that are better designed for the function intended nor has better taste in functional furnishings been observed.

It is an example of a pro's dream come true. Credit should go not only to George Corcoran for his selling job to the building committee, but also to the members of the committee for having the wisdom to follow the recommendations of a man who knew his business and whose success at that business was really their success too.

And about that prayer business; a lot of pros across the country are going to want George Corcoran to tell them which saint he addressed and what words he used!

## N.Y.-Conn. Turf Meet Answers Questions

Dr. John Cornman and Gene Nutter of Cornell and Dr. John Schread of Yale were headlined experts on program of the New York-Connecticut Turf Improvement Assn. meeting held at the fine Tamarack CC, Greenwich, Conn. Joseph Lockhart, M. Kent and Bob McGregor were hosts to the 69 attending. Tony Mascara showed colored films of a new mole drain and of a complete course renovating job, as another feature of the excellent program arranged by Pres. A. R. Twombly and Sec. A. Maslin. A lively discussion on annual bluegrass was led by M. Strazza of the Round Hill Club. Among those comparing notes on the problem were Doug Rankin, J. Butler, D. Artese, J. Vigliotte, H. LeFurgy and J. Flynn. None considered he had the right answer but considered they got constructive help from the annual bluegrass experiences.

Wm. Bengelfeld, Asst. County Agricultural Agent, as usual, helped greatly in publicizing the meeting.

The N.Y.-Conn. organization is actively supporting the Turf Conference planned for Oct. 30-31 at White Plains, N.Y.; the first meeting of its kind in the area.

Next meeting of the association will be an all-day picnic and meeting at James Baird State Park.