

# Give Salesman Time; He'll Pay Pro in Ideas

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I don't recall seeing anything in print about one of the most helpful elements in a pro's business success. That element is the golf manufacturer's salesman, commonly known as "the Peddler."

The peddler can help a pro more than many a pro realizes. Furthermore, the peddler can help the pro educate his assistant so the young fellow will be of increased value around the shop and be able to take a considerable load of detail off the pro's shoulders.

The golf peddler doesn't have an easy time of it. He may call someplace where the pro's lesson calendar is absolutely jammed and that means the salesman will have to wait, and the pro may be inclined to go through the routine of buying or "brushing off" the salesman instead of regarding the call as a potentially profitable use of time that may bring him more profit and wider member satisfaction than could be reaped from one lesson to one member.

You can expect the salesman to have a pleasant personality; otherwise he wouldn't hold his job as a salesman very long. You also can expect that he is going to sell you all, within reason, that he can. Those factors of winning personality and a natural desire to do business must be kept in balance by the pro. Young pros have made the mistake of buying from everybody with a sunny smile and a smooth line and have over-stocked their pro shops to the extent that they couldn't move the goods and wound up with bad credit or having to return the merchandise.

The protection against that is simply good judgment in being honest with the salesman. You have to tell the truth to the salesman just as you'd have to tell the truth to your lawyer. Sometimes, for the inexperienced pro, it's painful to tell the truth about the job not being as good as it may look. Almost everybody, pro or otherwise, wants to appear prosperous to others in his business.

When a pro takes time to talk to salesmen, and listen to the salesmen's stories, even if the pro doesn't want to buy, that time may bring back good returns in some valuable information on merchandise and merchandising methods. The pro has a tough selling job to do with the outward appearance of clubs and balls of widely

varying prices often looking about the same to the prospective buyer who comes into the pro shop. The pro and his shop assistant have to know the details that account for the difference in prices.

## Messengers With Ideas

These fellows who travel all over the country pick up great ideas on how to display, advertise and sell the products they are selling. All of these ideas are yours if you'll ask and listen.

Maybe you'll say: "Well, why don't the peddlers tell us." I'll give you the answer to that. A lot of them don't dare. They've heard pros say—and so have you—"I've been a pro for 20 years and this guy peddling golf gimmicks comes in here and tries to tell me how to run my shop." All the salesmen tried to do was to suggest to the pro how the pro could make more money. If that's an insult I, for one, don't mind being insulted into prosperity.

To get constructive ideas in a business that has as many unique angles as pro shop selling you have to keep looking and asking. Some businessmen who've been specialists in their businesses 50 years and who have been highly successful, have no hesitancy in bringing good men into their business to show them how to improve their methods. I believe our good friend George S. May will back me on that, and cite many cases to prove the point.

I always have made it a policy to ask the top men in the field "What's new?" "How do you like this shop arrangement?" "Have you seen any unusual and effective displays or merchandising set-ups that I might use?" "What types of playing equipment or sportswear are selling the best?" "What are the other pros doing?" And by the time I get through interviewing and listening to the answers I've had many excellent ideas told me that have helped me make money and make my members happy.

The pro who has the idea he knows all of the answers is kidding himself. This golf business, and the whole world, are moving too fast for any one fellow to be completely confident that he's up to date. What may have been great in his shop selling methods a couple of years ago, right after the war, may be hopelessly wrong now.

The pro must keep in closer touch with improvements in merchandise and style

trends and changes than any of his competitors do. If he doesn't, then he can only blame himself when store competition gives him a sad beating. The pro is in the best spot to know what's what in golf, but he won't have his knowledge up to the minute unless he makes use of the salesmen.

Service and information are our aces in selling to our members. When we know all the answers about our merchandise then we can do the job the club expects us to do; but only then.

So let's make full use of this valuable, practical free help salesmen are qualified to give us. At one time or another during the past 17 years I can recall getting lots of fine ideas and help that really paid out from such fellows as Earl Schlax of Kroydon, Bill Brown of Hotze, Bill Kaiser of Hillerich and Bradshy, Frank Sprogel of Scoggins, Earl Frieberg of Wilson's, Bob Rickey of MacGregor's, the dean, Matt Kiernan of Spaldings and many others to whom I'm indebted and whose names would make a lengthy list.

To all of them I say "thanks," and to my brother pros I say these salesmen are aids we all could use to decided profit and advancement.

### Women in Cross-Country Weathervane Open

This spring, led by the Big Four of women's professional golf—Patty Berg, Betty Jameson, Louise Suggs, and Babe Didrikson Zaharias, the girls will be shooting at a total of \$17,000 in prize money in the first cross-country tournament ever staged, the first annual Weathervane Open.

The Weathervane Open will consist of four separate 36-hole competitions played on consecutive week-ends in four different states, California, Illinois, Ohio, and New York. The first competition for the star women pros, as well as top amateurs in the country, will be at Pebble Beach on California's Monterey Peninsula on April 29-30. The following week-end, May 6-7, the girls will be playing on Chicago's Skycrest Course, Babe Zaharias' home club. The third competition is scheduled for May 13-14 at The Ridgewood Golf Club in Cleveland, with the wind-up set for Knollwood Country Club, White Plains, New York, on May 20-21.

In each of the four tournaments, the girls will be shooting at \$3,000 in prize money, and the golfer compiling the lowest total for the 144-hole marathon will receive an additional \$5,000 and the Weathervane Trophy, donated by Alvin Handmacher. All proceeds from the tournaments will go to local charities.

The quality of the golf the girls are now producing can best be gauged by Louise

Suggs' total of 291 in winning the 1949 National Women's Open and Babe Zaharias' phenomenal 70 in the wind during the 1949 Eastern Open.

### PGA Teachers Name Five Swing Essentials

At the PGA Educational and Teaching clinic conducted in conjunction with the 33rd annual meeting during Snead's and Palmer's demonstrations five cardinal points were observed and definitely approved as correct in their fundamental respects by the PGA Committees in charge.

1. A steady head position at the start and throughout the swing. This was recognized as a definite aid in acquiring good posture and maintaining correct body balance during the swing.

2. Firmness of the left hand grip and control with the left arm at the start and throughout the swing. This insures the formation of a circular arc with the clubhead and promotes coordination of the body during the swing. It was recommended that emphasis be placed upon left arm development to compensate for the natural "right-handedness" of most golfers.

3. The ball should be placed to the left of the center position as regards the feet. This gives a longer arc with which to generate clubhead speed, encourages "hitting thru the ball" and also aids in keeping the player "behind the ball" at impact. This ball placement was emphatically recommended for all except the unusual and special type of shots.

4. A preliminary waggle of the clubhead with the hands and a "forward press" with the legs. This promotes "feel of clubhead" and releases tension, thereby enabling the player to take off in coordination and a smooth start.

5. The weight of the lower part of the body moves with or ahead of the swing, particularly on the downward swing. In other words, the golfer must be balanced and his weight must be working with the swing. This proper use of the weight enables the player's mass to re-inforce the effort of the arm, hand and clubhead action during the swing.

While the PGA Teaching Committee positively agreed that the fundamentals of a good golf swing are almost standard, it wishes it known that the application of such fundamentals is quite individual. This latter point emphasizes the need for intelligent professional supervision in that it features the fact that knowledge is not sufficient—it's the application of such knowledge that is vital.