



## AT ILLINOIS PGA ANNUAL SPRING SESSION

Largest spring meeting Illinois PGA ever held, at Morrison hotel, Chicago, April 10, concluded instruction clinic and business education sessions with dinner at which above line-up gave voice to cheering words. L to R—Matt Niessen, Herb Graffis, Stanley Van Dyk (pres., Chicago Dist. GA.); John Ames, chmn., Tournament Comm., USGA; Errie Ball, William Gordon, pres., Illinois PGA; Geo. S. May, Jerome Bowes, pres., Western GA; Maynard G. (Scotty) Fessenden, and Fred Barks.

clubs right outside a pro shop before he makes up his mind to buy.

"If the pro is a good merchant, by his buying, his pricing and his advertising he can do anything a competing store can do in offering a deal to the consumer, although in plenty of instances the competing store's buying volume is so much larger than that of the individual pro the store should have a price edge on the pro.

"But the stores, which actually have a serious handicap of being located out of the way for the golfing shopper, can attribute about as much of their golf volume to pro errors of omission in merchandising as the stores can attribute to their own advertising, display and merchandising methods.

"As an example: Last Christmas we had an unusually large business in bright colored nylon golf bags. Our selling cost was fairly high because we worked advertising strong in pushing these bags as Christmas gifts. I've been playing golf for years and I know many pros around here. And I'd say that about 80% of our Christmas business in those bags was secured simply because pros who are pretty good merchants simply weren't on the job.

"What happened was that they went on winter vacations or jobs before they had really given their market a good going over for Christmas gift business. The pro sends out one ad or a letter, then is inclined to stop. He doesn't figure what the possible sales will justify in advertising expense. Unless we have some great price offering and a limited amount of the merchandise, we keep hitting the possible buyers from every angle.

"In the case of these bags they were something fairly new. The tournament pros had been using them so the market had been opened. The pros should have swept the market in a new style of bag. Good bags last so long the pro has to keep his eyes open for style changes in order to keep his volume up. When a golfer buys a new set of woods and/or irons and puts them in an old bag, the pro has missed a great chance to sell and he can't excuse himself by saying that the customer ran out of money while buying the clubs.

In this instance of our big volume of bags the pros missed pressing their advantage—the ease of buying at their shop."

This retailing expert's comment hit hard but it didn't strike all pros. I've noticed during the past year or so more and more pros are displaying new sets of clubs in new bags in their shops instead of having all the clubs and all the bags in separate displays. The tie-up showing has helped make more sales.

If you can recall pro shops of 30 years ago you may remember that many of them got about 100% of the members' business in anything the pro shop had for sale. And by today's standards a lot of those shops weren't much to look at. But they did have one great point. Everything they had to sell was right out where it was easy to buy. Now with a bigger variety of golf merchandise to sell it's a problem to have the goods displayed so the potential customers can see what you've got for them and how easy it is to buy.

How successfully that problem is solved determines the profit of the pro shop.