



## Brains Pay in Small Pro Shop Planning

Al Braak, professional at Elmwood CC, Marshalltown, Ia., like many others in pro golf, has seen some very attractive pro shops that he knew were important factors in serving club members and in increasing sales volume for professionals.

In Al's case — also as in many others — there just simply wasn't space in the clubhouse for one of those de luxe shops.

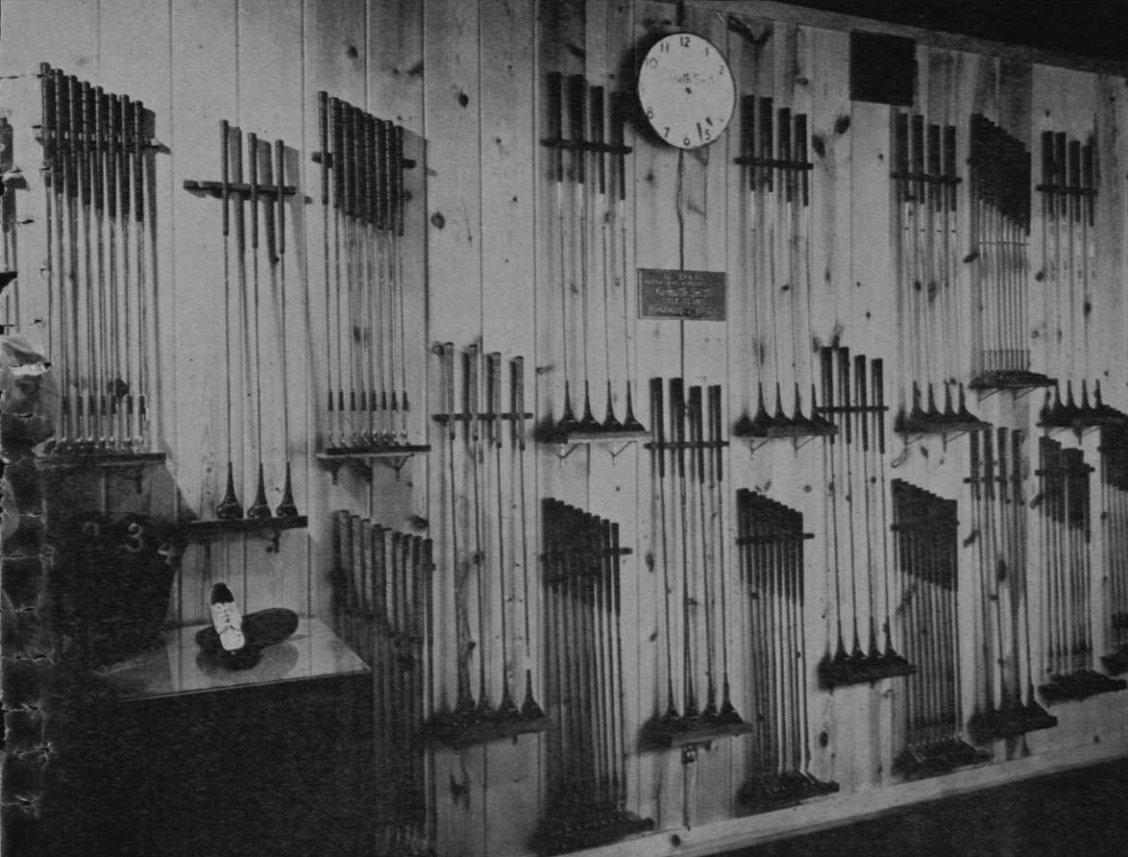
And while Al had been looking at the larger pro shops he also had been making a study of competing golf merchandise outlets. He couldn't see why department and hardware stores and other retail outlets could get business that pros could serve better with pro expert qualifications in fitting clubs to individuals and in correctly advising them on everything else they need for the game.

Al studied stores. He found that most of them that were selling a lot of golf had beautiful displays, attractive lighting

and handsome cabinetwork. You can't hit a ball with those features but they certainly help to sell golf merchandise.

Then Braak decided his little old shop was a challenge to his ingenuity. He was determined to do something to it to make it look like an asset to the club — something that would reflect the bright, friendly spirit of the club. He knew freshening his shop was bound to increase his sales, but he had a tough problem trying to make an attractive pro shop in space smaller than the shower rooms in a lot of clubs.

Al talked over the problem with the club president and got him interested. Anything that will make a club look better to its members always interests a president. The president was told that the remodeling job would cost about \$125 for materials. That amount was O.K. with the boss.



During the Christmas vacation Al's son Tom helped him put in knotty pine walls. The two of them put in about 500 hours altogether on the walls and in making display fixtures for the clubs, refinishing old showcases and building new cases and shelves.

The old shop had very little wall space. It had four large windows on two sides and four doors. Braak thought he had done everything possible in previous attempts to set shelves and cabinets and to get different shades of paint, but the results hadn't satisfied him. This time he got the National Golf Foundation's Pro Shop Planning book and began to work from that. He says there were plenty of good ideas in the book but the majority of them concerned larger shops. What he did see was essential was more wall space so he covered the windows on the inside wall and still had good selling light from the remaining windows and artificial lighting.

He remodeled some showcases and built other display and storage facilities that fitted in compactly and attractively.

The members were amazed at the transformation. The cost was about \$60 more than Al had figured for materials. The

work he and son Tom did wasn't charged up. The time will pay out for Al in increased sales.

Now when a player walks into Al's shop the merchandise is bound to be seen and register with sales appeal. The clubs are where the members and guests can hardly escape the temptation to handle them, and every pro knows when a prospective purchaser gets his hands on a new club a sale is being born.

Don't let small space or what you think are other hopeless factors about a shop layout or location discourage you, Braak advises pros. You can come up with the answer to every shop problem by using your head and some manual labor.

Al's new shop has been talked about so much that it was made the subject of an illustrated piece in a Marshalltown newspaper. The story said the shop marked the beginning of Al's 36th year in pro golf. He came to Marshalltown 14 years ago from Des Moines.

He started in golf April 1, 1917 under Jack Burke, Sr., as a shop boy, then as a clubmaker and teaching assistant. He later served two years as assistant on the staff of Chick Frazier before getting a pro job of his own.