



CLUB AND BALL MAKERS MEET

Members of the golf club and ball manufacturers' associations pause, Sept. 19, during their meeting at Blackstone hotel, Chicago, for lunch with PGA and National Golf Foundation officials as their guests.

more constant, excessive inventories have been reduced and are no longer a burden. Production is up again, and with continued government spending for defense there is little reason to fear unemployment.

It's true that the prolonged shutdown of the steel industry by strike created an artificial scarcity, so that total output of steel this year will be less than produced in 1951, but most civilian-goods manufacturers are receiving ample stock for normal operations. Today, therefore, it does not appear that steel, a major factor in the golf industry, will have much effect on the availability of golf equipment. An adequate supply for the 1953 season is in prospect.

One significant action that may be reflected in golf, as in all other business, is in the direction of government relaxation or suspension of price controls. The new wage pattern in the steel industry cannot be overlooked, and it is possible that this eventually will have an effect on price levels. By no means is this statement intended to provoke hectic or stampede buying on the part of our trade, however, nor is it implied that ceiling price controls of golf equipment will be suspended. Nevertheless, there is little if any reason to suppose that present prices will go lower.

As foresighted professionals begin planning now on their next season's equipment requirements and place their orders early with the manufacturers to insure satisfactory delivery, we are inclined to repeat a previous recommenda-

tion that merchandise should be stocked only in such quantities as can be efficiently carried consistent with proper turnover during the year.

Altogether the outlook for professional golf in 1953 is for a continuance of brisk business, with sales maintaining a high level where service, aggressive merchandising and promotion are combined with intelligent, vigorous effort.

Lengthening Playing Season Is Paying Pros and Clubs

By BILL KAISER
Hillerich and Bradsby Co.

The outlook for pro golf business in 1953 appears at this time to be very bright. Since the lifting of restrictions has made it possible for new courses to be built in every community, more and more people should be able to play the game.

It is my belief that participation in the game by ladies and junior golfers is definitely on the upswing. Golf pros have promoted this in a big way in 1952 and I know that they will have an even greater program in 1953.

Even with the droughts in many sections of the country in 1952, pros have reported that golf activity was far better than in previous years. Also, it appears that the pros in most sections of the country are trying to keep their members playing whereas in past years it was the opinion of many that right after Labor Day the golf season was over. I have found that even in sections of the country where the weather gets extremely

cold, many people continue to play, stopping only when snow and other conditions make it impossible.

Many manufacturers in the business supply the professionals with promotional material such as Christmas letters that they can send to their members early in December. The members also welcome this, as many would patronize the pros if they knew exactly what gifts were available.

I believe that if the golf professionals will handle their business operations properly, they can be very optimistic about business in 1953.

Bowman Sees Golf Interest and Sales Larger in '53

By FRED J. BOWMAN
Pres., Wilson Sporting Goods Co.

Continuing increase of play, especially among women and juniors, will make 1953 golf activity greater than that of this year. The problem that all golf faces is to get facilities adequate to the demand. The National Golf Foundation, supported by leading playing equipment makers to promote the growth of golf has quite a program planned for getting more courses built and in this general picture the professional plays a highly important role as the one who can campaign from a position of information, influence and fore-

sight for his own interests as well as the recreation of the public.

The matter of reducing the time required for golf is one in which the professionals can be exceedingly helpful to the public. Judicious arrangements for starting times at courses and all means that can be employed with ingenuity and good judgment to have play moving pleasantly fast on courses are matters of increasing importance to professionals.

From all advance indications, there should be more golf equipment sold in 1953 than in 1952 due to the interest shown in recent months. For professionals there should be a big market in the replacement of golf equipment. Inventories of most professionals are in much better shape than a year ago, especially in golf balls. Many professionals felt that for the protection of their members, they needed a large inventory in case a shortage should develop. Now, this inventory has been pretty well cleaned out, and in the past 90 days demand for golf balls has run quite high.

There is a special market for the professionals in replacement of clubs for players 50 years of age and over. In the case of those players, their swing and entire game has changed a little, but often they continue to use the same clubs that fit their game when they were younger and stronger. There is an ex-

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