



Dan McDonald (right) has big golf stock displayed where shoppers are encouraged to inspect the merchandise and get themselves steamed-up to buying.

Smart Range Operation Is Big Nursery for Golf

DAN McDONALD can furnish a lot of proof that the golf range business properly handled is not only a profitable venture for the first-class pro businessman, but is a tremendous developer of business for everyone in golf.

McDonald formerly had two ranges in Florida in winter and his 75 tee range in Melrose Park, west of Chicago, from April 1 to Oct. 1. Now he's concentrating on the Chicago district range in the summer and is operating the municipal course at Arcadia, Fla., in the winter.

He is a golf business promoter. He figures that about 40 per cent of the customers at his Melrose Park range are beginners. He sees that they get competent pro advice right from the start. Dan figures he has planted the "consult your pro" habit with thousands of golfers who are playing pay-as-you-play courses or who have joined private clubs. He says his emphasis on pro advice in club buying and pro service in instruction has not only been an important factor in his own

profitable operations and made customers for club pros but has given new golfers the best sort of a start.

His shop is laid out for business. The range customer has to come into the shop to get a pail of balls and when inside sees a large and attractive display of golf clubs, bags, carts and other equipment.

McDonald modernized and enlarged his shop not long ago, putting in knotty pine trimming and arranging a large stock of merchandise to attract inspection. Dan wants prospective customers to get their hands on what they'd like to have, then the rest of the selling is much easier.

A "bargain" section of odd clubs is a big business-getter in the shop.

Along with expert club fitting service the McDonald operation allows the prospective purchaser to try out the clubs with shots on a tee.

Active in Promotion

Dan has been constantly at work promoting more play and recruiting new players using every possible means of



The "Odd Clubs" rack in one wing of McDonald's shop does large volume in new clubs and gets many beginners started in buying their own clubs at low prices.

publicity that good management can afford. He's also strong for promotion stunts.

Every Monday night is a prize night. Then each customer, along with a pail of balls, has an opportunity to get a bag, two woods and five irons as a bonus. That idea has converted Monday night from an off night into one of the big nights of the week. He figures that it has increased Monday night business about 25 per cent and brings many out notwithstanding threatening weather. He also conducts a big hole-in-one contest with a Plymouth auto as first prize.

His Melrose Park range has 600 ft.

frontage and 900 ft. depth. It's very well located on a main highway and Dan makes sure everybody passing knows his range is there by having several large neon signs that catch attention.

The extent of his play may be judged by his use of 70,000 balls a season.

His automatic vending machines for soft drinks pay a profit of \$1000 yearly.

Spreads Traffic Load

Since the Melrose Park range opened in 1946 Dan and brother Tom and their staff have been constantly at work trying to spread the traffic throughout the day, instead of having by far the greater part



This partial view of the McDonald range was taken at 10 a.m., showing that a lot of morning business can be developed instead of crowding traffic into evening hours.

of the business at night. At 10 most mornings his range is fairly well crowded.

He has free golf clinics for women every Thursday at 2 p.m. and the parking of baby carriages while young mothers are learning golf gives a preview of business for courses that have facilities for caring for children while young parents are playing rounds.

McDonald also has free junior clinics and that's paying off in day-time pay business of youngsters. It's a good thing for community recreation, too, as parents of the kids are pleased to know their sons and daughters are around a range where conduct, supervision and safety are always in the operator's mind.

Funny thing about this kid play (and a good thing for golf promotion) is the way kids will act like grown-ups on courses and give free advice to some other kid who is hitting balls.

McDonald's range is lighted every 50 ft. with each of ten poles carrying 3 1,500 watt Westinghouse glass-covered floodlights. The parking space has a lighting installation of 7000 watts.

He uses special equipment for insect abatement and plenty of yellow light bulbs around the place to further discourage bug attendance.

A fairly high percentage of players bring their own clubs to the range. For them Dan plans a coin-operated club cleaning machine. He figures this gets the users more conscious of club care and more quickly aware of their need of new, late model clubs. The display of new clubs in the shop does the rest. Trade-in allowances spur business and the market among beginners always is good for the trade-ins.

Los Angeles County Has Plan to Save Courses

Maurie Luxford of the Los Angeles County Golf Advisory Board advises that the Board is progressing in achievement of its objectives, which are (1) to save courses in distress mainly because of tax situation, (2) to save golf clubs facing sale for subdividing, and (3) to purchase vacant tracts for future golf development.

Los Angeles County owns a large piece of land at Passaic, on which there is an honor prison farm. The county receives approximately \$900,000 annually in oil royalties from wells at the site. This money has been ear-marked for the golf purposes previously stated.

The Board's plan also involves interesting insurance companies and individuals to buy clubs that want to sell and operate the courses on a guaranteed income to county basis. Courses acquired under this plan are to carry 4½ per cent interest and amortize themselves.

On that basis A. T. Jergins, oil magnate and golf enthusiast, agreed to buy Inglewood CC for approximately \$900,000. The Golf Advisory Board is working on a deal to save Western Ave. GC from subdivision.

First of four courses to be built in Sepulveda basin of San Fernando valley has been graded and watering system is being installed. Course should be ready for play in summer, 1954. Second and other courses of the project will be constructed as profits from L. A. municipal courses become available.

PGA Names 15 as Ryder Team Candidates

Points gathered in tournament victories have determined 15 candidates for PGA of America Ryder Cup team which plays the British PGA team at Wentworth, Eng., Oct. 2-3.

Sam Snead, Jack Burke, Jr., Lloyd Mangrum, Ted Kroll, Cary Middlecoff, Ben Hogan, Dutch Harrison, Ed Oliver, Jim Turnesa, Dave Douglas, Fred Haas, Jr., Jerry Barber, Johnny Palmer, Lew Worsham and Marty Furgol are the 15 names. From them nine will be chosen for the team. As the PGA champion automatically becomes a team member, Walter Burkemo is in without having played any of the circuit events to qualify on the point system.

Fred Corcoran will manage the team abroad. Joe Novak is going across as PGA executive representative.

The team will play a warm-up match at Reading, Pa., Sept. 18-20 against a team of U. S. pros not eligible for the Ryder Cup team.

A team event against continental European pros is slated for Paris after the Ryder Cup matches.

Captain of the Ryder Cup team is to be selected by the players.

Ben Hogan has not definitely decided whether he'll go to Britain and compete. After his victory in the U. S. Open he said he wouldn't make the trip as two trips to Britain this year would be too much of a schedule for him.