

OCTOBER • 1953

## Best Pro Shop Selling Ideas of '53 Told by Salesmen

**S**ALESMEN who work with pro golfers say that 1953 has seen more progress than any other year in pro merchandising methods. They comment that this advance in advertising, display and selling operations accounted for a general increase in sales volume although pros expected that the price increase of clubs and balls forced by higher manufacturing costs would reduce business.

The salesmen also have observed that club members and fee course players now are inclined to demand that the pro shop be conducted as the most complete, up-to-the-minute and attractive retailing establishment for expertly selected golf goods.

In particular the salesmen have noted a decided development in pro study of their customers' requirements and ordering according to what the customer needs and might buy rather than according to the pro's own preferences for his own game or own wear. Salesmen also have remarked about the improvement in shop assistants' education and performance and about more women's business in pro shops accounting for neater shops.

The best pro shop selling ideas of the year as observed by well known practical authorities on pro selling follow.

### Display Improved — Vail

F. E. (Cy) Vail, MacGregor Golf, says:

"The best idea I have run across for pro shops is the installation of the new peg board which allows the wide awake pro to display his wares and change the display in short notice, such as the display windows in stores. Meridian Hills, Indianapolis; Orchard Ridge; Ft. Wayne, and country club at Ft. Wayne have made the in-

stallations which have worked to very great advantage."

### More Mail Ads — Holland

Jim Holland, Dallas, Tex., who is pro sales representative in the southwest for several leading lines, notes:

"Merchandising by mail is one of the best ideas that I have seen used this year. I know of one pro in my territory who has letters printed to go along with advertising material that he obtains from the manufacturers, in which he points out the outstanding features of the product to his customers and invites them to the shop to look at the article.

"A lot of the pros are doing this at Christmas but few that I know of take the time during the rest of the year.

"Hillerich & Bradsby Co. has a beautiful full color catalog insert showing their Power-Bilt line of clubs, that is available to the pros, for mailing to their customers, free for the asking. I think many of the other companies have similar material that can be used by the pro, to his own advantage, and at little or no cost to him."

### Tie Display to Ads — Gillette

Horace E. Gillette, manager of Wilson Sporting Goods Co. Los Angeles branch, remarks:

"One of the most important advances in pro shop merchandising I have seen in this area occurred recently when our company inserted some strong newspaper advertising. Our salesmen and the pros planned profitable point-of-purchase tie-ups with this advertising by cutting the ads out of the papers and posting them on bulletin boards in the pro shops and clubs and spot-



### PARADE FLOAT PROMOTES JUNIOR GOLF

A float carrying junior golf stars who hit soft practice balls into the crowds was a big feature of the Fourth of July parade at Watsonville, Calif., where Pat Markovich and Joey Rey own and operate the local golf course. On the front of the float was a sign reading "California Leads the World in Junior Golf—Five National Champions—in 1952 and 1953." Another sign read "Your Watsonville Golf Course Kids—Kids Taught Free: Tues. and Sat." Also in the parade was a Santa Cruz Recreation Dept. float of little boxers. On the float was a sign: "Our Answer to Juvenile Delinquency—Keep 'Em Active in American Sports."

lighting the ads by painting or drawing heavy borders around the ads.

"In addition to this, they rearranged the merchandise in their shops. While the ad was alive they put into prominent display Wilson merchandise that was featured. Then, a week or so later, they changed displays again and continued this frequent change. The changing displays produced a cleaner, brighter, newly interesting shop.

"During this process the pros also found that they needed better lighting and more modern and useful selling fixtures.

"The campaign of good timing and concentrating all possible sales and display effort on merchandise that should be big sellers worked out exceptionally well."

#### Two Ideas from Novotny

Gus Novotny, MacGregor Golf, advises: "Two pro selling ideas that I have seen work out very well in the southeast are:

"First, prominent pricing of all merchandise, especially clubs and bags. At public or fee courses this is highly important because a customer will only look at what his pocketbook will stand. He shies away from even looking if he fears the price might be too much for him. Often pro shop prices are surprisingly low and make sales but not unless the goods are plainly priced.

"At one club the pro had price tags 2 in. high on his bags and he told me that this had doubled his bag business this season.

"Perhaps the pricing idea isn't as important at the wealthier clubs but I suspect that most of the members at these clubs are rich because they, or some of their ancestors, paid a lot of attention to the prices of what they bought.

"The other idea that has paid off this season in pro shops is that of a separate department for women's merchandise so the women can see immediately what the pro has for them to buy. This arouses the women's shopping instinct.

"Women's and girls' apparel has been big selling in a number of pro shops this season. Many pros have been neglecting making a special play for women's business and they wonder why sales to women haven't increased in proportion to the increase in women's golf play.

"A most significant sign of improvement in pro merchandising is the fact that fewer shops are the same year after year. The most successful pro businessmen in my territory keep their shops immaculately clean, rearrange their stock every few weeks to give their shops a new look, and between seasons make major changes in location and type of display facilities, painting, lighting, flooring and other essentials to profitable selling."

#### Extend Golf Bag Stock—Deal

Ted Deal of the Wilson Sporting Goods Co. Cleveland division, tells of one idea that has been profitable to pros in his territory.

Deal says:

"We have been successful in getting pros to buy a line of golf bags from a retail price of \$10 all the way up to a \$60 retail bag. The quantity of bags will run approximately 15 and they have a bag at each price range. By having those displayed in their shops, they never miss a sale on a golf bag regardless of what their customer wants to pay.

"Just as soon as they sell one of those bags out of the group they immediately re-order it — so that they keep this particular line complete in their shops at all times. We know for a fact that this has increased bag sales in the Cleveland area tremendously.

"In the past, pros were very apt to buy about three numbers of golf bags which perhaps they liked best and as a result lost many sales for they did not have a large enough variety. We have found this extended bag stock to be very successful and I am sure that it would be a help to a lot of pros in other areas."

#### Rack for Ball Sales — O'Brien

Tim O'Brien of the Walter Hagen div., Wilson Sporting Goods Co., tells that among the top ideas he's seen in pro shops this year is the ball dispensing rack designed and constructed by Joseph Lodermeier, asst. of Gig Bramstedt, pro at Glenview (Ill.) Naval Base course.

The construction details of the rack are shown in the accompanying diagram drawn by Lodermeier.

O'Brien says:

"Joe got this idea while he was assistant

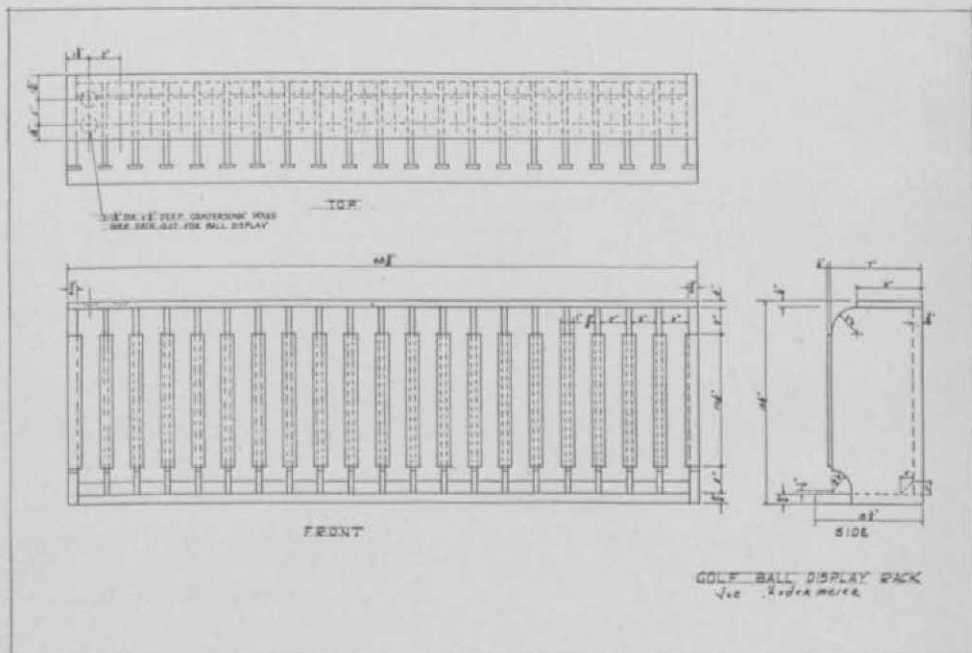


Lodermeier and his ball dispensing rack.

to Art DeMane at Barrington (Ill.) CC in 1948. He constructed a rack for Art which is still in use. When Joe became assistant to Gib Bramstedt in 1951 he made a rack for him.

"This rack is not only a great time saver in selling balls, but is a great help at the end of the day in checking daily sales at a glance, as the markers at end of the rack indicate one dozen, one dozen and a half level as well as two dozen level at top.

"Joe made a change in the name plate



Working drawing of ball dispensing rack designed for efficient handling and inventory control.

slat material. In the first rack it was made of wood and the ball manufacturer's name printed on same; now he is using a white formica with black lettering, which is easily washable and more practical. This last idea I suggested and Joe is making up some slats accordingly, as the rack he is now using is a one-piece formica front which runs across the whole front of the rack; therefore, it is not so practical for the inventory at-a-glance idea.

The ball are grouped by price ranges . . . while the one pictured has 17 chutes, the number is optional. Joe Lodermeier, asst. pro at Glenview Naval Training Station, who designed the dispenser, may go into production on the device as the pros who have seen it think it's a great idea. Two recesses are bored on top of frame which provide for the extra balls of a three-ball pack if the customer only asks for one ball. Pros interested in obtaining one of the ball dispensers can write to Lodermeier at 223 W. Wilson St., Palatine, Ill.

"When a single or two ball sale is made the loose balls can be set on top of rack in two countersunk holes over each slot. This rack is placed on a ball wall, with a showcase in front where golf balls may be displayed in dozen packages only."

Tim adds that among other very profitable ideas he's observed in pro shops this season is the member season-long ball sweepstakes operated by Curley Williamson, pro at Forest Hills CC, Rockford, Ill., details of which will appear in an early 1954 issue of GOLFDOM.

Something else that O'Brien notes has worked out very well is cutting down women's clubs for kids' use. The flexibility of the shafts make the clubs fitting for the youngsters. The job gets the women's used clubs out of the way and prepares the way for selling a new set to Mother.

#### Device That Fits Clubs — Marabon

Maurice Marabon, New York sales representative of Golfcraft clubs and other products to the pro trade, says that the biggest selling new idea he's seen this year is a gadget which determines the natural hitting position of the hands, for use when a customer is buying new clubs. The device is not complicated and gives instant reading of the proper lies for each individual.

Marabon relates: "Jerry Dwyer, pro at the Albany (N. Y.) Municipal course, invented this device which has been instrumental in selling a large number of clubs against severe competition from stores.

The device plainly shows that many players need clubs with decidedly different lies.

"Out of 500 tests Dwyer found that only about half the players were fitted with clubs having correct lies for their users."

#### Fitting Ball to Player — Henry

Pete Henry, Acushnet ball salesman in the Philadelphia trade territory, says he thinks the way pros took to the idea of fitting the ball to the individual's type of game has been a top sales-scoring idea of the year.

Henry explains:

"In just a few months through magazine advertising and point-of-sale display cards at pro shops, Acushnet managed to correct a situation that has been confusing to the golfing public.

"All of us in the golf business know how important it is to get the player playing a ball of the type of construction that suits his or her game. But until this year no particular progress had been made in getting the public to make use of this expert advice of the pros.

"This summer the professionals and their assistants took a great deal of interest in passing along to their customers sound advice on the type of ball best suited to



#### ROUND TRIP TICKET

John Schuebel, veteran Oak Terrace (Ambler, Pa.) pro, earned a free trip to Dunedin, Fla., next January to play in the PGA Senior championship by copping the Teacher's sectional championship for Philadelphia, Sept. 10, at York CC. Here he accepts the Teacher's sectional trophy from Bill McGill, Teacher's sales executive. Tournament was one of 31 sectional senior events being played under the new national senior golf program sponsored by Wm. Teacher & Sons Ltd.



### **\$1,000 Golf Day Check to USO**

Julius Boros gives National Golf Day check for \$1,000 to USO. (L to R) Betty Brooks, Life Magazine Promotion Dept.; Boros, 1952 USGA Open champ; Edwin Bond, Exec. Dir., USO; Bill Scherman, also of Life Promotion.

Julius Boros, 1952's National Open

Champion, presents check for \$1,000 received from Life magazine for his round as defending champion in this year's National Golf Day event to the USO's exec. secy., Edwin E. Bond.

In thanking Boros, Bond said his personal generosity gave the USO added cause to be grateful for its participation in National Golf Day and expressed his appreciation to Life and the PGA, co-sponsors of the event, for the vitally needed financial help provided the USO.

More than 120,000 golfers on 3,352 courses throughout the U. S., Canada, Mexico and other countries and territories participated in the second annual tournament paying \$1 entry fees to compete against the former Open Champion. More than 13,000 beat Boros to win a bronze medal.

Life magazine "picks up the tab" for the entire expense of conducting the tournament so all entry fees are divided between the USO and the National Golf Fund, Inc., an organization founded for the disbursal of National Golf Day funds to charitable and worthy projects related to golf.

the individual. The public, too, got keenly interested in seeking the professionals' advice on this matter, and the development was to the advantage of all concerned."

#### **Counter Sells Sox — Gibbs**

Paul W. Gibbs, Dunlop ball salesman in New York metropolitan territory, observed something that indicates how effectively pros are using special displays of merchandise in their shops.

Gibbs tells:

"The newest idea I have seen in pro shop business this year is the installation of a special counter for the exclusive sale of socks in Claude Harmon's Winged Foot shop.

"The counter (not glass enclosed) is located near the center of the shop and Tom Donahue, Claude's shop manager, was most enthusiastic — stating that they had sold 30 pair within a few days. The socks cover a wide variety of kind as well as of sizes."

#### **Making It Easier to Buy — Braid**

The veteran George Braid, representing several prominent manufacturers' selling interests in the Chicago district and adjacent territory, says:

"The best idea I have seen in pro shop business this year is the lighted show-cases and the counter or table display idea. I believe many of the pros have finally

found that having merchandise displayed where members and guests can handle has been a big factor in increased business. This has been particularly true in the sale of ladies' wear and men's caps and shirts, etc.

"Cheaper golf balls have been sold in large quantities out of bowls or trays placed in prominent spots on top of show-cases. Pros pick up many ball sales this way that otherwise have been bought through other sources."

#### **Wider Price Range — Pencovic**

M. (Pinky) Pencovic, who makes the Pacific slope beat for several manufacturers, says that business has been boosted by closer study of price ranges by pros in his territory. He has observed that paying close attention to matching the price range with the customers' pocketbooks has produced surprising increases in volume when the pros have been smart buyers of good quality at moderate prices, especially in apparel items.

Pinky also says that the electric golf buggy rental business is the big boom of the year on the west coast.

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**More of the BEST IDEAS OF 1953 to help you will appear in the January, 1954 issue of GOLFDOM. Don't miss it.**

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