

Back of Pro Shop Needs More Attention

By **BILL HARDY**

Co-Professional with Ward Burgess at Chevy Chase (Md.) Club

Most of us in professional golf, and our members, have seen remarkable improvement in pro shops as sales facilities but when we look behind the scenery we seldom find the needed improvement in the back of the shop.

In the first place, when we consider location of the shop with respect to service to members we often neglect shop location with respect to caddy service and supervision. We don't want the kids where they'll be noisy and apt to make a litter that doesn't look well from the first tee. But we do want them so they can get bags out of shop storage quickly and return them quickly.

Many times bags must be toted in and out through the shop display room and moved again from the club-cleaner to the rack room.

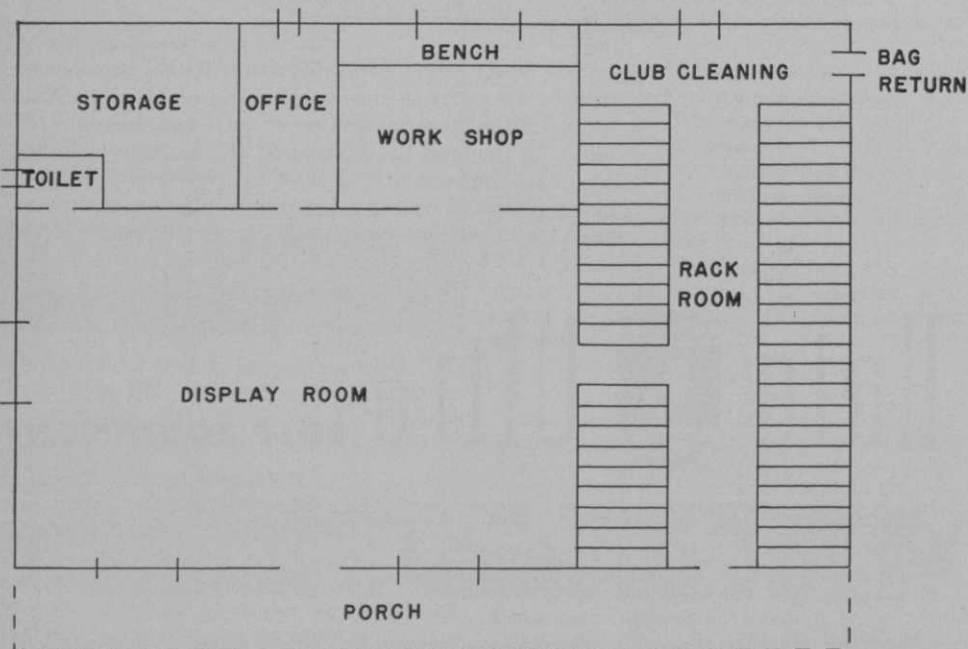
As is shown by the diagram of the Chevy Chase shop we take the bags from the rack and place them on the porch for the caddies. That gives the pro staff a chance to

make an inspection of the bag and clubs just to make absolutely sure everything's O.K. The ideal would be to issue the clubs directly from storage to the caddy with careful supervision in the shop.

Club cleaning should have plenty of space handy to the club return window so the cleaner can handle the bags without there being the usual rush-time pile-up and disorder.

Bag numbering should be on the order of the accompanying diagram to protect against hasty misfiling.

Not only the location, arrangement and size of bag handling, club cleaning and storage facilities needs more attention in most pro shops but the racks themselves are due for revision. The sharp edges—wood or metal—of many storage racks are no good for the bags. The racks should have rounded fronts and supports. Possibly when pipe again gets available improved bag racks can be constructed. There is plenty of room for improvement in this detail of pro shops.



Besides the cramped space of club cleaning and storage quarters there often is the additional handicap of dust. More attention must be paid to making it easy to keep this part of the shop clean. We're going to find that more necessary as the brightly colored nylon bags are in more extensive use.

Part of the pro department service members have a right to expect at a good club are immediate minor repairs. Not many shops have facilities for making such repairs correctly, conveniently and quickly.

A storage room for inventory not on display must be adequate, convenient and theft-proof. This should be arranged so a pro can make quick inventory, keep his books in good shape and have his buying order signals conspicuous. There also should be a pro office for the paper work that must be done in bookkeeping, club tournaments and handicaps and other activities for which the pro department must be responsible. This office also is useful for receiving salesmen and learning from them all a pro staff should know to be able to select the best merchandise and get information of interest and help to the member buyers.

A toilet is an essential to the pro shop that is in a building detached from the clubhouse.

The display room size, fixtures and floor plan depends on the size and character of the club and on individual judgment of the pro and officials. Opinions will vary on the placement of the stock but almost always experience will endorse the idea of having the ball case deep in the shop so members will see much displayed merchandise when entering and leaving for ball purchasing.

It's A Long Road the Supt. Has Traveled

By AL SCHARDT

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WE'VE COME a long way in golf course maintenance. I see some of the route as I look through my files of GOLFDOM which are complete from 1927 on. And a lot of the path of progress I can retrace with laughs from my own experience.

I recall my first years at Inverness in Toledo when each vehicle of course maintenance had as standard equipment a broom and shovel to clean up the solid exhaust from the motive power.

Then, the contents of the baskets, along with what came out of the backdoor of the barn were important sources of supply for the all-important compost pile.

The greens were cut by the sweat of our brows and along toward the end of that job the man mowing the greens would be grunt-

ing louder than any greens mower engine does now.

If the fairways were cut once a week that was something to brag about.

The rough was let grow tall enough to harvest and make good fuel for the horses. As Chick Evans said at one of our superintendents' conventions, to find a ball in that kind of rough you had to lie down and roll until you felt a bump; then you hoped it was the ball.

In those days most golfers took the full five minutes—or more—to find a lost ball. When the ball was found what a thrill it was to see some guy with a 50-in. waistline trying to whack the little pill back onto the fairway.

The main event then was put on by the redhot golfer who wrapped a hickory-shafted club around the nearest tree after something had gone wrong with a shot. At one short hole, to save a beautiful shade tree, we planted what became known as the "whipping post" so a player after missing a shot could break shafts to his heart's content without damage to our nice tree.

I once saw a golfer break three shafts around that post after dubbing his tee shot. That was beautiful business for the pro.

It seems that the golfers had to be more rugged in those days. They asked or gave no quarter. Shots were played from any kind of a lie and putts had to be made over mountains of worm casts. Bunkers, sand traps and old chocolate drops with grass 8 to 12 in. long, were places to keep away from.

I heard Ted Ray tell a golfer who questioned the location of a bunker that no trap is misplaced as long as the golfer knows it is there; keep away from it or take the penalty without complaining.

With the steel shafts, high compression balls, mechanized maintenance equipment and chemicals for solving maintenance problems came great advances in methods of course maintenance and much is yet to come. The manufacturers have done a good job for golf.

And I might also say, so have the superintendents. Their job of course maintenance gets more exacting each year apparently, but they seem to survive, keep cheerful and healthy and possess their faculties after many testing years in the business. Working on a golf course in the old days probably automatically selected the durable and optimistic ones. The rest were killed off or went into easier work—and there was and has been quite an amount of easier work around the country.