

# Newspaper Ads Pay Big for Bobick, Public Course Pro.

By RICKEY MAYHER

**J**OHN BOBICK, Jr., professional at Eberhart-Petrol municipal course at Mishawaka, Ind., bordering South Bend, is a steady user of newspaper advertising space. Bobick doesn't run little ads now and then. He runs 10 in. ads three columns wide weekly through the season.

The part of the nation around South Bend and Mishawaka is known as Michigan, being a sector that includes some of southern Michigan and northern Illinois. Bobick's pro shop ads carry a line "Michigan's Largest Seller of Golf Clubs."

For some time that line didn't make Bobick very popular — except among people who wanted to buy golf clubs. Some pros winced at Bobick's advertising of cut prices. Other pros took a pro-Bobick view and said "The guy is making people prominded about buying clubs and selling stuff at what we could sell it for. If he gets some business we should have sold, a store probably would have grabbed the sale anyway."

Still other pros in the area said Bobick's advertising was helping them; people would come in with Bobick's ad and ask what the pro shop had "like this."

And the downtown stores weren't any too happy about Bobick making a vigorous and persistent advertising bid for business, especially when he carried in his ads a box that read "Our prices are marked down from former selling prices — not from an inflated, fictitious or fantastic list price."

## Everybody Benefits

Some stores also complained about Bobick, a public course pro, being very tough competition. But they began noticing that golf business was pretty good with them and the suspicion dawned that Bobick's advertising was not only paying off very well for the canny Johnny but also was accounting to some extent for an over-all increase in golf equipment sales by getting the public interested in buying more clubs and balls and everything else for golf.

The advertising department of the South Bend Tribune took a great deal of interest in Bobick's campaign because the advertising made a fine exhibit of what a small retailer could do with smart, steady advertising of a specialty shop in a widely

circulated, well-read newspaper. When there was criticism of Bobick, particularly for his shown-down on "inflated" prices, the newspaper fellows asked the critics "How can you blame a man for being a success when he tells the truth in his ads?"

## No Objections Stood Up

Back of the Bobick advertising are a few simple policies and practices that are fairly general among energetic pro businessmen.

In the first place Bobick is an alert and industrious promoter of more golf play. The region is a lively industrial area and Bobick tied a city golf course to the workers' need for recreation by organizing, encouraging and conducting industrial golf leagues.

There's a big juvenile population in the area and Bobick and his assistant, Jim Shaw, got kids' lessons and play lively.

Raymond De Cook, Mishawaka city recreation director, is quoted in the Tribune; "Bobick's promotion of evening golf leagues and his direction of boy and girl group lessons have brought golf to the fore as a top participant sport in Mishawaka."

There's been a steady growth of \$3000 more per year since 1951 when Bobick began his "more golf play" program. The program was considerably aided, De Cook and Bobick say, by the excellent course maintenance work of Otto Hoff, veteran supt.

With the marketing possibilities increased, Bobick applies the good basic policy of successful merchants: "A good buy is a good sale."

## Bargain-Hunting with Cash

He goes shopping, with cash, in the fall among the leading manufacturers and gets a substantial stock of close-outs along with his ordering of the new stuff for spring delivery. That practice ties up a lot of cash. Although John has had offers from banks to finance him, his wise merchandising has provided him with the money he needs to finance his buying.

Incidentally, the newspaper advertising although it generally features the close-outs at reduced prices, brings in many customers who want the absolutely new mod-

els. John can take care of them from a big, very well displayed stock. Many times customers come in with their minds made up to buy a cut-price set, look around, and sell themselves something newer and more expensive.

He takes trade-ins, reconditions them and sells a lot through his own shop. His advertising has the inviting line "Convenient Credit Terms." He handles his own financing, investigates and knows his people, and his credit losses are very small. He says that keeping simple records and not letting either the records or the buyers get behind, takes care of the credit problem.

The trade-in deals call for astute handling for, as Bobick points out, "Some fellows delight in trying to bargain and trade and try to get a whole lot more of an allowance than their old clubs are worth. If you fall for them, you blast your whole price structure and might weaken the trade-in situation all over the district. I trade them fair because the kids and the office and shop people who want to try golf without spending much money need the reconditioned trade-ins but I can't give away profits and stay in business serving and enlarging the golfing public."

Bobick looks at public course pro shop advertising as something that shows a city operation is being conducted in a modern business manner for public service.

And as a reminder to men in pro golf he adds: "The operating costs add up to an overhead that people outside of pro golf never will realize. They are so steep they require that the pro increase his sales volume as the profit per item and the seasonal nature of golf business in most territories have you whipped on small volume.

#### Ads Bring Them In

"A great deal of a pro's time on his job must be spent at essential work which brings him no direct return. So he must figure out a way of getting customers to come into his shop.

"I've found the right answer in newspaper advertising and it has made customers and money for me and got more people taking advantage of a recreation asset of the city.

"I've been told I am the biggest user of newspaper advertising space in pro golf. If I am I'm sure that a lot of fellows on bigger jobs in other cities are going to beat me and make more money and serve the golfing public better by good coordination of buying, display, market promotion and newspaper advertising space.

"I hope they do. They may feel faint, like I did, when the campaign was new and money was going out because people hadn't got accustomed to looking at the ads. But when they keep at the advertising steadily and with the right copy, it will pay out in good shape."

### U. S. vs. Foreigners' Team for May International Cup

**G**EORGE S. MAY of Tam O'Shanter CC (Chicago dist.) is inaugurating on Tuesday and Wednesday, August 10th and 11th, the first George S. May International Cup Matches to be played at Tam O'Shanter. These dates fall between May's All-American tournament and the World Championship.

Eight leading men professional players in the All-American tournament representing the United States and the eight leading professional players in that same tournament representing countries outside of the United States will play a two day match.

Tuesday will be team play and Wednesday, single play. The winners of the match will receive the George S. May International Cup.

These international matches will be played annually hereafter at Tam O'Shanter in conjunction with other events.

### AN 88 FOR NOVAK'S 25



When Joe Novak, Bel-Air CC (LA dist.) pro and former PGA pres., returned to the club from his trip with the Ryder Cup team he really got a welcome. The club gave him a dinner and an 88 Oldsmobile in celebrating his 25th anniversary as Bel-Air's pro.

Left to right, as the keys are given to Novak: Gien A. Ransom, Bel-Air tourney chmn.; Joe Novak; Charles L. Nichols, Bel-Air pres.; and Jack Monte, Bel-Air mgr.