

Turf Meetings Biggest Bargain in Maintenance

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CARVED IN STONE above the entrance to the N.Y. Stock Exchange Institute are the words "Grow or Go."

It's the right motto for golf course superintendents. Grow grass or get out. Grow mentally or you go nowhere.

I am writing this after a day at the Midwest Turf Foundation conference at Purdue. What's this day meant to my club and me?

The work that all of us looked at today represents an investment of more than \$50,000 in turf research, yet it belongs to each one of us at a cost of less than \$100 a year.

Not one of us could do the full time work being carried out for clubs and supts. by the turf experimental stations thruout the country. But we have available what we couldn't do—or couldn't afford.

The plots have given us Merion, Pennlu, the zoysias, fine Bermudas as tremendous accomplishments in comparatively short time. Other great golf grasses are being developed, at a small pro rata cost to each of the courses that will be benefitted by them.

Few of us in course maintenance selected it as our careers when we were in school or college. Now the turf conferences do a great deal to meet our need of education in our business. From hundreds of miles we come to the conferences, study and discuss problems with practical men who are specialists and some who are practical men with the versatility a successful supt. must have.

We not only learn, but we learn how to learn about this complex and rapidly developing responsibility of ours.

Now, although some club officials may not realize it, the turf conferences are at the point where it may be a reflection on a club when its supt. has to ask if he can go to the Midwest Turf Foundation conference or the GCSA annual convention. The officials who know what is going on make sure that their supts. do go to these meetings. There's too much involved in course condition and the budget to miss the gain and the protection of working knowledge acquired at the conferences.

Pros Sales Are In Ratio to "Calls" He Makes

BY TED LONGWORTH

WE HAVE A lot of good pro shop operations in the Pacific Northwest and each year the pros are getting to be better businessmen. But regardless of the type of shop any pro in our territory—or anywhere else—may have, the shop display, or stock, the fellows who are doing the business are the ones who are making the calls.



Ted Longworth

When I say "making the calls"

I want to cite my own experience. One of the first things I'm told is that I have fine lines to sell (and I sure have) but they do not sell unless I make calls and show my merchandise and talk about

it; its qualities and just what it will do to help the golfer get more enjoyment and the pro to get more sales.

The golf pros and golf course operators who are doing the most business are the ones who are "making the calls" on the golfers as the golfers walk into the clubhouse or pro shop. You "make a call" when you are genuinely interested in the player's game and really want to improve it by selling equipment the player can use to good advantage. The more often you talk to golfers and show your interest in them—even without pushing for any quick sale—the greater your percentage of having the golfers buy.

I suggest to each pro that he makes a list of his members, then see to it that the pro himself and his assistants make at least 5 "calls" a day and check these members for their needs of clubs and other golf equipment and apparel. This can be done without offensively putting on sales heat, and in such a manner that the prospective customer appreciates the interest being shown in him.

The pro who gives the most lessons is the one who asks for the next appointment when he is finished with the pupil's lesson. I firmly believe every pro could give as many lessons as he desires by following this practice which is simply that of "making a call."

When I was making a call on Ed Hogan, pro at Riverside G&CC, Portland, Ore.,

recently I saw and heard something that made history, perhaps, in pro golf business. One of Ed's members, Sarge Gething, a champion senior, had just bought a new set of irons. Gething said "Maybe I don't need a new set of clubs but I get so much out of golf and put so little into it I thought I was due to spend something."

Pros Business Progress Earns High Respect

BY CLIFF CASTLE

WE IN THE WHOLESALE end of the golf business were at one time quite annoyed at our professional customers because they would not apply to their shops the same merchandising methods used by the average store.

Today only on rare occasions do we see an experienced professional making any serious mistakes in the operation of his business. That the professionals are giving a lot of study to the running of their shops is borne out by the fact that our collections are generally very satisfactory. We do have some slow-paying accounts, but when we investigate we find that there are usually contributing circumstances—family difficulties, illness, etc. Today that customer will acknowledge his indebtedness and either make a small payment or at least advise the wholesale house as to when they may expect settlement.

Today the golf professional, like most men engaged in other lines of business, recognizes that good credit is necessary if he is to be successful. Thus, the standard of the professional has been raised with the result that club members and officials hold him in much greater respect.

The professionals have modernized their shops. However, we do feel that a great many are hesitant to take enough markdown on slow-moving merchandise. Where merchandising is concerned, there is no difference between our wholesale operation and the professionals' retail trade. We often have to get rid of some merchandise at less than our cost—but it gives us money to put into new goods.

The capable heads of the PGA, supported by the experienced sectional of-

ficers, have succeeded in protecting their members by having the manufacturers build certain models which are confined to the professional trade.

Now one may gather from the tone of this article that everything is peaches down in Georgia, but to this old timer there exists a condition which may be detrimental to the majority of professionals and beneficial to but a few. Here it is:

Is the annual late summer and fall deluge of closeout golf clubs and bags good for the golf business? Is it good for the business as a whole, or is it good only for those professionals who have the finances or the backing to buy large quantities? Perhaps at a nearby club a brother professional is struggling to take care of his current bills and can not avail himself of the bargains. How must this man feel when some of his members go over to the other shop and effect big savings on matched sets of clubs? Also, is it good to get the public too bargain or closeout conscious?

No manufacturer can plan his production so perfectly as to have nothing left over at the end of the selling season. But . . . when these closeouts are available in quantities year after year it raises many questions.



Cliff Castle

Tee Improvement Idea Got Players' Loud Okay

By HERB KLONTZ

Supt., Ellis Park Golf Course, Cedar Rapids, Ia.

OF ALL the ideas I've received at meetings with my brother superintendents the one that most obviously has benefited our course is that of aerifying and topdressing tees monthly during the season.

I haven't been able to apply that monthly schedule yet but aerifying three times this season and using the same 1-1-1 topdressing I use on my greens has produced a marked improvement that has brought a lot of favorable comment.

All over the country there are more bad tees than good ones, I believe, and this program of maintenance would correct that situation. Many tees are too small and are poorly located and built for maintenance. The aerifying-topdressing treatment will help greatly to bring them up to the condition the players and superintendent desire.

On a heavily played public course the idea is the answer to a problem that has troubled many superintendents.