

Million Dollar Increase in Pros' 1954 Gift Sales

PRO shop Christmas gift business was at least 20 per cent larger in 1954 than in any previous year.

The percentage of increase is estimated on spoken and written reports from professionals in all parts of the country.

What mightily pleased the professionals were expressions from their customers appreciative of having Christmas shopping problems answered so easily and satisfactorily. Making a big added profit by doing what the customers want done is a good deal all around.

"Christmas Shopping At Your Pro Shop," the pro-only Christmas golf gift shoppers' guide published by GOLFDOM at the suggestion of the professionals, is credited by the pros as having given tremendous nation-wide push to the practice of doing Christmas gift buying at the pro shops. The shoppers' guide had powerful effect in bringing business into public course pro shops as well as into private club shops.

Joseph H. Lally, veteran in public golf in the Louisville area, commented: "The pro shop Christmas gift guide got a lot of business from people — especially women — who'd never been in pro shops before, as well as getting a big bonus of sales from customers who ordinarily quit buying golf goods in late summer."

From the professionals doing largest volume of pro shop business to pros on 9-hole jobs, the power of "Christmas Shopping At Your Pro Shop" proved profitable. It had the size, service aspects and class to make a strong, favorable impression on Christmas gift shoppers. It was supplemented by the pros' own excellent Christmas gift advertising and the attractive gift advertising supplied by manufacturers.

Out-powered Competition

The campaign simply out-powered and out-drew competitive gift advertising campaigns previously taking vast sums away from pro shop volume.

The first year of "Christmas Shopping At Your Pro Shop" was the result of pro

requests to GOLFDOM. As a trail-blazing job it succeeded far beyond expectations for pros, their customers, and golf goods manufacturers.

There were 106,300 copies of the pro shop shopping guide bearing the names and business addresses of 357 professionals used in the Christmas golf gift merchandising campaign. Requests for more than 7000 additional copies were received too late to be handled.

Some difficulty was experienced in shipping copies to professionals as mail service has seriously deteriorated from the previous high standard.

Planning 1955 Edition

Plans for the 1955 edition of "Christmas Shopping At Your Pro Shop" already are being formulated and effectiveness of the advertising is certain to be even much greater than that of the initial year. Close study of experiences by the professionals, the publishers and manufacturers has recommended new features in the book itself and in its distribution.

This year the book will be prepared in June and shipments will be made to the professionals in September, allowing them a month and more to arrange for their own distribution and coordinate all their Christmas gift merchandising work.

Professionals have suggested aligning manufacturer representation closely to pro shop stocks, which the manufacturers are planning to do.

The initial pro shop Christmas book was based on an expected circulation of 40,000, after preliminary questioning of representative pro businessmen.

Joe Graffis, publisher of GOLFDOM, says "We made an error on the conservative side that cost us money, but in view of the substantial profit made by the participating professionals and manufacturers we will take this loss cheerfully. It is less than we have spent annually for many years in trying to build up Christmas business in pro shops.

"Estimates from professionals using the book give us reason for cautiously believ-

ing that pros using the book had a Christmas sales increase averaging about \$10 per book used, and that million dollar increase over 1953 pro shop Christmas gift business is a fine demonstration of what pro businessmen can do with the right sort of advertising aids in customer service."

Joe also comments:

"Letters and interviews show beneficial results of the 'Christmas Shopping At Your Pro Shop' book considerably beyond the highly satisfactory increased income from golf gift sales.

"Pros have told us the campaign so completely liquidated their late season inventories they will start 1955 in far better cash and inventory position than in any previous year."

The stimulation of the "Christmas Shopping At Your Pro Shop" publicity produced many productive sales tie-ups by the pros. Jim Fogertey, pro at Sunset Hills CC (St. Louis dist.) had exhibits of pro shop merchandise set up in the clubhouse Saturdays and Sundays prior to Christmas. Jim and his assistants sold a substantial volume to members and their guests for personal use and as gifts.

The liveliness and canny advertising of many pros this past Christmas was closely coupled with displays at shops, pro visits to homes and offices of members, telephone calls and all other elements of effective merchandising. It paid off!

Club Pro of Year to Get Harlow Memorial Award

A NEW AWARD to be given to the "Golf Professional of the Year" was approved by the PGA at St. Paul. This award, to a club pro, differs from the "Professional Golfer of the Year" established award which is annually presented to a playing pro.

Action responsible for the new award is the outcome of discussions by Richard Tufts, pres., Pinehurst, Inc., and Dugan Aycock, pres., Carolinas PGA. National recognition of a club pro has been mentioned as a possibility several times in GOLFDOM but was believed beyond practical attainment due to difficulty of selection of winners.

This difficulty has been solved by a plan which Dugan worked out and the PGA adopted. It calls for selection committees of men and women's amateur association officials and sports writers in each of the PGA's 30 sections. These committees will

make awards on the basis of

- Promotion of junior golf;
- Encouraging women's play;
- Service to his home club;
- Devotion of his life to the game of golf;
- Promotion of public relations;
- Tournament play locally;
- Interest in caddies;

All around service to the community of which he is a member;

Charitable endeavors for those who are handicapped or have suffered misfortunes;

Constant effort in improving his ability as a teacher.

From the 30 sectional choices a committee of 5 amateurs appointed by the PGA Executive committee will select the "Golf Professional of the Year."

The national choice will receive the Robert E. Harlow Memorial trophy. Money for the Harlow trophy, a tribute to a beloved and great builder of golf, is rapidly being raised. Checks should be sent to Dugan Aycock, Lexington (N. C.) CC.

Rehling Writes Book for P. E. Golf Teachers

GOLF FOR THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER AND COACH. By Conrad H. Rehling. Published by Wm. C. Brown Co., Dubuque, Ia. 127 pages. Price \$3.

Rehling, golf instructor and assistant professor at the University of Florida, has drawn on his own successful experience and that of a number of professionals teaching golf at universities, in producing a good common sense manual.

He takes a middle road between the physical education specialist and the practical teaching pro in his building of a foundation for mass golf instruction.

Rehling, who started in golf as a caddy, is strongly influenced by the pros' experience in teaching. He goes at the technicalities of instruction in a sound way which few teaching pros can criticize in detail. He also applies P. E. teachers' methods which university golf coaches have found useful.

Tournament golf lost a notable new sponsor when Fred Miller, pres., Miller Brewing Co., died in a plane accident. Miller, brilliant football player and scholar at Notre Dame, sponsored the \$35,000 Miller High Life Open to be played at Milwaukee, July 14-17, beginning two days after the All-Star baseball game in Milwaukee County Stadium.