

Golf bags are shown on overhead racks with clubs below in the Oakmont pro shop. Sportswear is displayed at right. Floor is carpeted. In foreground, note "open barrel" display of putters and wedges.



By CHUCK CURTIS

Puts Emphasis on Traffic Flow

LOCATION of doorways and the flow of traffic through the shop represent the most important factors in the success of a golf professional's merchandising program, according to the thinking of Jim Swagerty of the Oakmont CC, Glendale, Calif.

Then, when he gets people in his shop, the pro must have something to keep them there, Swagerty adds.

His shop is ideally located to get the flow of traffic, and he has made several changes since taking over as pro at



Jim Swagerty

Oakmont in Nov., 1955, to make the pro shop a center of golfing interest.

Members' handicap boards, previously located outside, have been moved into the shop.

Scoresheets of weekly tournaments are posted inside.

Announcements of weekly tournaments and sign-up sheets also are posted in the shop. The starting is all handled there. In addition, Swagerty provides members with a check cashing service and has plenty of change available so the players won't have to wait until they reach the bar before settling wagers.

The principal entrance to the shop from the clubhouse area was moved in a rebuilding program directed by Swagerty. Now, the pro, or whichever of his two fulltime shop assistants is on duty, gets a clear line of vision from any point behind the cash register showcase counters of any golfer leaving the clubhouse and heading for the course.

Everything Is Waiting

Thus, by the time the player has reached the shop, which is in a separate building, his clubs can be called out of the storage room and a caddy assigned.



Bulletin and scoreboard partition which divides sales room from storage area is a big lure for bringing golfers into the shop. Swagerty has an excellent shoe display and fitting section (left).



(Left): Wall displays behind main counter are changed regularly to show off latest styles. (Below): Club storage area is not as large as Swagerty would like but it's compact, easy to move around in and doesn't become congested during rush hours.

Oakmont underwent a major change two years ago when members obtained a long-term lease on the property and took over full control of the club operation. Previously it had been run by W. W. Grenshaw, the owner, and upon his death, by his family. One of the changes was to give the pro full control of the golf shop and the concession for the sale of equipment.

The club paid for rebuilding the shop while Swagerty financed new storage racks for clubs and carts, an office for himself and some of the showcases.

"The showcases are mostly for display," Swagerty says. "We'll sell far more merchandise off the top of the case than from behind the glass." The cases are mostly for clothing while racks of socks are on a counter behind the cases.

A new partition was built to house a shoe storage area, the front of the new wall being used for posting tournament notices.

Swagerty is particularly proud of an open basket-type framework built around a central post in the shop. Special clubs, such as putters, wedges, chippers and a few wooden clubs, are held in this funnel-shaped arrangement with the club heads up.

Easier To Inspect

"When clubs are stacked against a wall, head down, a player has to pick up the club, turn it over to check the number or make and then sole it to test the feel," said Swagerty. But his idea, similar to the old barrel idea but a more attractive arrangement, gives an immediate look at the clubhead and also a view of the shaft.



The golf shop rebuilding included new fluorescent lighting and several overhead "spot" groups to illuminate certain areas. The main traffic area from clubhouse to first tee has rubber tile floor covering but the remainder of the pro shop, in the area featuring clubs and shoes, is carpeted.

Swagerty is an Oklahoman who had worked at two Southern Calif. public courses, Montebello and Pasadena, before going to the private Oakmont club. His most rigid rule for his assistants concerns service.

"Someone must always be available for a member in the pro shop," Jim says. "I don't want an assistant reading a magazine or spending his time in the back of the shop where he can't see a member come in. I'm convinced that the only difference between running a successful shop and one that doesn't pay for itself, comes down to the alertness of the pro or his assistants in being ready at all times to give good service."