



U-shaped shirt rack, hangers full of sweaters, shirts and slacks form backdrop for shoe display counter. Hunter shop at Riviera stocks over 300 assorted pairs of shoes for men and women.

Hunter & Hunter Their Merchandising Knack Excels Their Fame as Players

By BILL SHERMAN

WILLIE and Mac Hunter are names well known in golf. The luster of their playing prowess has been out-glossed, however, by the smart shop techniques they have put into practice at their home Riviera CC, Pacific Palisades, Calif.

The pair has been at Riviera since 1937. Willie started the shop operations at that time while son, Macgregor, was swinging his first stick, long before he was to win acclaim as National Junior Open champion in 1946 and take subsequent titles in the California and Mexican National Open in 1949.

Riviera was host to the LA Open for many years, but its dingy, cramped shop had little to offer in the way of shop appeal. Certainly it wasn't adequate to

house the \$25,000 minimum stock kept on hand in the Hunter shop today.

The big renovation and remodeling took place in April of 1955. The eye-catching design was conceived between the Hunters, Los Angeles athletic club director, Frank Hathaway, and Architect

Jack Donnell. The result was an interior refurbished with Philippine mahogany, each cabinet of which is custom tailored. The ceiling was lowered; walls were knocked out and replaced; indirect lighting was installed.

To keep the shop free from dust and better ventilated, louvered windows were added as was a ceiling sprinkling system. The new store had snap and zest, but just like an automobile, a golf shop needs an

Unique feature of shop is control counter. It gives unrestricted view of room.





Club and bag section is well-lit, easily accessible for handling and inspection. Club covers are on table supporting bag display.

engine that can produce power — merchandising power.

Merchandising is an old story to Willie Hunter. The plain-speaking Scotsman, whose playing laurels include winning of the British Amateur, Southern Cal Open (6 times), California Open (3 times) and Southern Cal PGA (4 times) was the first pro, for example, to stock alpaca sweaters. Norbert Frueder, a salesman for an alpaca importer firm, persuaded Willie to take the sweaters on a look-trial basis. When Frueder returned to the shop on a routine call, he was pleasantly startled to learn the whole supply was gone and a double order was on tap.

Carrying all kinds of merchandise and keeping it available to the public is a Hunter axiom. Mac Hunter sums it up this way: "The key to merchandising is good buying. The professional must learn to interpret correctly his club members' desires and then stock the shop with items that move. Sure, our shop takes a few flyers on novelty items because we want our customers to feel we have everything they may want right here. But our money goes mainly into proved sellers because Riviera's members want quality merchandise. It's just as easy to sell a \$15.00 article as one for \$5.00, but the article must be good.

"We have low-priced items for sale, too, but you can be sure each item we sell has good quality."

The shop decor, furnishings, merchan-



The Hunter team includes Jo and Willie (left) and Dorris and Mac.

dise and the Hunters themselves all reflect the highest quality.

Salesmanship is an integral part of merchandising. The Hunter shop employs eight persons; five of whom actively sell. The sales staff includes Jo Hunter (Mrs. Willie), Dorris Hunter (Mrs. Mac) and one other girl in addition to the men.

Three gals in a pro shop? Why not?

"The women keep the shop looking neater than men do," says Mac. "They are pleasant and even-tempered. They demand less salary. They actually do a better job of selling to men than Dad and I do. In addition, they don't play golf. Their thoughts are on the customers, not the first tee."

The Hunters look for 1958 to return their largest gross yet. The impact of the new shop plus the advanced merchandising techniques they employ indicate that sales will be rolling upward for many years to come.