

Observe the Commandments of Pro Shop Retailing

By **HERB GRAFFIS**

THE liveliest talk on salesmanship I ever heard at a pro meeting was made by a used car dealer at the PGA business conference of the annual meeting held at Long Beach, Calif.

That talk probably greatly helped pros at some public and daily fee courses but the high-powered selling recommendations if applied by a pro at a first class private club would have got the pro fired soon. Too much pressure in pro shop selling has cost pros their jobs at some very good clubs. The policy at such clubs is to get the members to buy instead of selling to them.

The most practical sales talks I have heard at any pro meetings are one on display that a big store window trimming and store display specialist put on at an Indiana PGA spring meeting, and the talks that Ernie Sabayrac and Kip Bowen have made at several pro meetings. They tell about what can be done on anyone's pro job — from the top type of a job to a little 9-hole job where the pro sells, teaches, runs the course and clubhouse and takes a turn at tending bar.

Pros, club officials, pro salesmen and manufacturers often are puzzled about what selling methods and policies will score at the various types of clubs. And there seem to be almost as many types of clubs as there are clubs; even the public course shops of the same park system differ a lot in the attitude and response of the players.

What Sells At Pro Shops?

After a pro meeting not long ago I sat around with a few pros and salesmen talking about what draws buyers to pro shops and makes money for pros. We agreed that some shops that look great don't do exceptionally good business but that other shops that seem to have simply a neat and adequate display of properly chosen merchandise and where the pro and assistants have a cheerful spirit, do a large volume.

As usual at those informal business sessions where room service is slow the dis-

cussions weren't organized but they did bring out a lot of practices that the top business pros have in common. I made many notes and in checking them over I found that what the most successful pros had found by trial and error of experience the National Cash Register had put in a booklet titled "The Ten Commandments of Mass Retailing." John M. Wilson, vp, Sales, NCR wrote the book. If there are any copies left you might be able to get one by writing Leigh Metcalfe of National Cash Register's ad dept., Dayton, O.

You ought to read that little book.

Commandments of Retailing

The First Commandment is to use the power of pre-sold merchandise — merchandise that is wanted due to advertising and display.

A pro often can make or break a line in his shop but he's a chump if he doesn't go along with consumer preference established by well-aimed advertising instead of trying to force his own choice on the customer.

Goldom's publishers have been through that matter with hundreds of successful professionals. That's why we started *Golfing* in 1933 as a player magazine that would have sharp focus on pro shop potential customers and distribution. We have turned down many thousands of dollars in advertising that conflicts with the pro merchandising set-up.

Better than Average

The pro is expected to have something known as better than the average. The factor of "pro only" isn't enough. The merchandise has to be identified as that superior and in favor with the pro and his most important customers. Then the other customers will follow the leader.

The Second Commandment is to "Speed up the Flow of Goods to Your Selling Shelves." If all pros could hear what salesmen and the top businessmen pros have to say about the deficiencies in the ordering, inventorying and reordering of pro shop stocks they'd learn how a great many pro shops lose from \$500 to \$1200 a year.



The Cameron Eddy trophy, named for the hard working Western Golf Association official who has officiated at scores of WGA tournaments in the last 22 years, was unveiled recently at a dinner in his honor. Eddy is shown second from right. Others in the photo, from left, are: Charles N. Eckstein, Chicago Dist. GA pres., Harold A. Moore, WGA pres., and Charles (Chick) Evans, founder of the Evans Scholar Foundation. Eddy trophy will be annually awarded to medalist in 72-hole Western Amateur qualifying play.

The Third Commandment is to "Use the Drawing Power of Reduced Prices." That's a delicate one for the pro, especially the pro with the smaller private club market, to handle. If his members get into the habit of thinking that prices will be cut if they wait long enough he won't make the early season sales he's got to make, or else. But if a pro finds that he has overbought — or bought something that he likes but which doesn't sell — he'd better get his money out by moving the goods at cut price without destroying any part of his market. Any buyer, pro or other retailer, is bound to get stuck with some of his purchases. If he finally can convert his bum guess into cash that can be used in his business and, perhaps, to attract additional buyers to his shop, he is a wise businessman.

Make It Easy to Get In

The Fourth Commandment in the NCR book is to "Make it Easy for Your Customer to Get to Your Store." The pro often is out of luck on this one. The club building committee and the architect may not have the correct idea of the pro shop as a valuable convenience and service for members.

The easiest place for the customers to get into the pro shop usually is when the

pro shop is in the club building, convenient to men and women's lockerrooms and to the first tee. We've seen quite a few new pro shops in separate buildings that don't do the volume done by the old shop in the clubhouse.

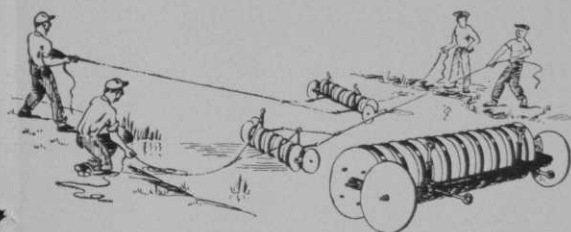
Commandment Five is to "Make It Easy for Your Customer to Get Through Your Store."

This is a point that came up for considerable talk during the evening when those pros and salesmen were exchanging observations.

The NCR book says "Once he has the customer in the store, the mass retailer will do everything possible, through fixture arrangement, lighting, color schemes, and even floor designs, to lead that customer throughout every area of his store. *** The mass retail store uses a minimum of showcases and service counters, turning over the largest possible floor area to customer flow and customer self-selection."

According to salesmen who are pretty good judges of pro retailing methods the NCR man's recommendations for "mass retailing" also apply to the pro shop with its comparatively small and select retailing.

One salesman told how a change in the
(Continued on page 73)



DEHOLGO BALLRET

The new deep hole golf ball retriever guaranteed to bring back those lost golf balls from your water hazards.

DEHOLGO BALLRET is precision made with discs of aircraft grade aluminum, steel handles. Durable, efficient, easy to handle. Sketch shows simplicity of operation by two men on opposite side of water hazard. Operates from row boat for larger water areas. No pond too deep. Weights added for muddy bottoms. Satisfied users at courses throughout the U.S.

36 in. wide — 18 retrieving slots — special rubber tire molded to alternate discs for firm ball grasp — Ship. wgt. 33-35 lbs.
Delivery 1 - 2 weeks.

Write for literature and price.

John Oleswski — DEHOLGO BALLRET
420 Nott St. Wethersfield, Conn.

pushed back in the corner, but the 6 x 9 ft. room in which I work never has seriously cramped me. It is large enough for my desk and filing cabinets and any other equipment that I find necessary for keeping records and handling office detail.

• • •

Al Hoffman, OSU course supt., studied agronomy at Iowa State College, getting his degree in 1957. While attending school he managed to get a great deal of turf management experience as supt. at a small course in Nevada, Ia. He went to work for Lawrence Huber at Ohio State in 1957 and a little more than a year later was named supt. when Mr. Huber died. Hoffman is secy. of the Central Ohio GCSA and a member of the Midwest Turf Foundation board. He is 24 years old, married and has two daughters.

Turf Field Day Dates

- July 22 — Texas Turf Assn., Texas A & M College, College Station.
- Sept. 14-15 — Midwest Regional Turf Fdn., Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind.
- 29 — St. Louis Dist. (Sponsored by St. Louis Dist. GA and Mississippi Valley GCSA.)

Commandments of Retailing Can be of Help to Pro

(Continued from page 30)

location of the ball case (which was made a counter rather than a case) and of the charge book at a pro shop boosted ball sales 20 per cent and was believed by the pro who made the change to have accounted for an almost 30 per cent increase in shop business.

The general criticism of pro shop layouts, according to the pros and salesmen in that session, is that golfers rush in and rush out without being exposed to the sight and selling appeal of much merchandise.

Try This Location

Several fellows said that the idea of putting a revolving rack for slacks and shorts almost in the path of traffic entering the shop had accounted for the big business that pro shops do in slacks and shorts for men and women.

You might check your own operations on the above mentioned five of the Ten Commandments of Mass Retailing.

In July Golfdom we're going through the other five retailing Commandments as they apply in making pro shop business larger and more profitable.

Insist on PAR TUBES

The original golf club protector

LOOK FOR THE NAME ON THE TUBE

- Moisture-proof fibre (regular)Ret. 30¢ ea.
- Plastic—Kralastic — non brittle for longer useRet. 55¢ ea.
- Plastic—High Impact StyreneRet. 35¢ ea.

Packed in display cartons of 42 and 144

Contact Your Distributor or

PAR TUBE

139 S. Albany Ave.
CHICAGO 12, ILLINOIS

