



Service Extras

A Little Help Brings Big Returns

By EMMETT MAUM

THOSE "extras" in service may seem small and insignificant, but they loom large and profitable when golf shop books are analyzed, says G. L. Leonard, golf professional at the Fox Meadows CC in Memphis, Tenn.

For instance, all of the top players are anxious to play the course with the professional, says Leonard, and he enjoys playing with them. He also likes to play with persons who shoot in the 90s and 100s, and often helps better their games by offering suggestions.

"Naturally, many occasions arise to help golfers who shoot in high figures," says Leonard. "I notice little things about their games that may be corrected, and frequently we stop right there and show them. Of course, I wouldn't think of charging a club member for such a service.

"Here is an example of how a little help on the course paid off," Leonard recalls. "A day or so after we played together, a member I helped came to the golf shop and started looking at clubs. Pretty soon he said, 'Do you think this club is heavy enough for me?' and the next thing, we were closing a deal for a set of clubs."

A pro cannot keep merchandise in a box and sell it — he must display it, Leonard observes. At Fox Meadows, golf clubs are displayed in a handsome two-tier rack. About 300 clubs are shown. In the rack there are also about 15 bags available for inspection. Clubs and bags are readily seen the moment a member enters the golf shop from either the outside or from the adjacent dining room. Besides these clubs, hundreds of others are kept in the storeroom, ready to be brought out quickly.

Records Ball Preferences

Since every sale of clubs lends itself to subsequent sales of golf balls, the Fox Meadows shop has a wide variety displayed under a glass-covered counter. The golf professional needs to know what type ball each man and woman hits and have balls to meet all of these requirements. Leonard

A telephone can be the best friend a pro has if properly used to promote business, says G. L. Leonard.



When selling a club or a set of clubs, Leonard says, I emphasize two things — the quality of pro line merchandise and how properly fitted clubs can improve a golfer's game.

does exactly this through records he keeps. This results in heavy sales of golf balls.

This glass-covered counter has three tiers. Displayed there besides balls are head covers, caps, hats, shirts, and miscellaneous items. Nearby are displays of shoes, ladies' jackets, umbrellas, gloves, sweaters, socks, and slacks.

Fox Meadows, of course, has only quality merchandise. Leonard and club officials believe in a liberal policy on returns.

"Any time a club member says merchandise is faulty, we take it back," Leonard says. "This occurs very infrequently because we stick strictly to pro-only brands."

A great deal of merchandise can be sold by using a few of the ideas adopted by Leonard. One of them requires only a little time, yet it can pay off big and make friendship ties closer with members. This is his policy of keeping a record of birthdays and wedding anniversaries of wives and husbands who belong to the club.

"Everybody appreciates being remembered in this way," says Leonard. "All it requires is to get the list of dates and spend a few minutes on the telephone as these dates draw near."

Well Rounded Stock

Another thing that pays off is to send letters with small folders showing pictures of gift items for golfers. This is especially good during the pre-Christmas selling season, but is applicable to birthdays, Mother's Day, Father's Day, etc.

While developing a desire in members to buy, it is well to make sure that the shop has everything, the Fox Meadows

Country Club pro says. "Members have the right to expect anything and everything in the golf line to be obtainable at the shop," Leonard maintains. "At most clubs, members should be educated to the fact that if golf merchandise can be bought anywhere, it can be bought from the pro."

Another thing about successful selling in the golf shop pointed out by Leonard is fundamental, yet often forgotten by the club pro. It is very simple: A golf professional should not go out and play golf every day.

"While there's a time to play golf, there's a time also to stay in the shop," he says. "Many times people come in to buy something and, although someone else is taking care of the shop, they will pass up the purchase and say, 'I'll see him later', referring to the pro. They may go elsewhere to buy the merchandise if the professional isn't around."

Another reason for being on hand at the Fox Meadows shop is that it has three tables, each with four chairs, where members can eat, lounge, and carry on conversations. Leonard can talk to a lot of people and find opportunities to make friendships a little more binding, thus getting business as a direct result.

The golf shop has storage space for all members in the storeroom. Small repair work is handled in the Fox Meadows shop. Fortunately for Fox Meadows, Bert Dargie, one of the best golf club men in the business, is located in Memphis. He handles major repair work and makes special type clubs needed.

Golf Writers' Officers

Bob Drum of the Pittsburgh Press is the new pres. of the Golf Writers' Association. He succeeds John Walter of the Detroit News.

In their annual meeting at Augusta, the writers elected Merrell Whittlesey, Washington Star, 1st vp, and Larry Robinson, New York World Telegram and Sun, 2nd vp. Charles Bartlett of the Chicago Tribune was reelected secy-treas. Lincoln Werden, New York Times, is chmn of the board which is composed of Irwin Smallwood, Greensboro (N. C.) News, Howard Gill, Golf Digest and Ken Murphy, St. Paul Pioneer-Press.

Pocono Meetings

Pocono (Pa.) Turfgrass Assn. has scheduled seven meetings for the balance of 1959, according to George Smith, program chmn.