

# Trade-In Selling

**Illinois Pro-of-Year Al Huske  
Uses Old "Look Out the Window"  
Method and It's Good for Business**

**T**HE SOLUTION to the eternal and perplexing problem of what to do with those trade-in clubs may be found in what Al Huske, professional at Glen Oak CC in Glen Ellyn, Ill., calls the "looking out the window" trick.

The window, in Al's case, faces the Glen Oak caddie yard and in the last several years it has been the agency through which as many as 25 or 30 sets of clubs have been sold annually.

Huske, named 1959 Illinois section PGA pro-of-the-year because of his championing



Treasure of his trophy room is Illinois pro-of-year plaque that Al Huske got in 1959.

of the caddie cause in the 25 or more years he has been in golf plus his other fine professional qualities, has a unique plan of distributing trade-ins among the kids who carry the clubs.

It works like this:

When clubs for re-sale are available, the information is passed along to the caddies before anyone else is advised of it. In practically all instances, selling prices of the clubs are pegged at figures which Huske has had to allow for the trade-ins. Re-con-



Caddie-conscious Glen Oak CC has immortalized the club carrier in bronze.

ditioning and cleaning expenses are borne by the pro shop.

When a caddie and Al get together on a deal, the former is encouraged to pay off the cost of the clubs in installments from the fees he earns. No contract is drawn up because the Glen Oak pro doesn't feel that his dealings with the kids should be attended by any cold formality. However, Al does notify the caddie's parents that the boy has purchased the clubs. This, he says, is done for two reasons. It gives him as much bond or security as he needs and, at the same time, it lets the parents know that the boy is not wantonly throwing his money away but is spending it on something he wants.

In more than half the cases where Huske has sold clubs to caddies, the parents of the boys have offered to pay cash for the purchases. Usually they have told Al that they either will make a gift of the clubs to their sons, or prefer to assume the financing and have their sons pay them back.

### **Teaches Responsibility**

The Glen Oak master always has turned down such an arrangement because he feels that the trade-in deals have been made between him and the caddies and shouldn't involve the parents other than to let them know of what is going on. Furthermore, he thinks the kids learn more about responsibility by paying off their debts to someone outside their family.

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The entire cost of the trade-in clubs has to be paid before they are turned over to the purchaser, but he is free to use the clubs on Mondays when caddies are permitted to play the Glen Oak course.

How does this system of handling trade-ins work from a financial standpoint? "It ties up my profits from the sales of new clubs for perhaps a month or two," says Huske. "It may cost me a very small amount in interest charges or because I can't always take advantage of cash discounts. But these things are more than offset by the good market I have."

### No Bad Debt Writeoffs

With a satisfied twinkle, Al adds: "I've sold hundreds of sets of clubs to kids at Glen Oak. I've never had to write off a nickel in bad debts in deals with them."

Whenever and wherever possible, Huske offers a kind of premium with his sales of trade-ins to the kids. All golf bags that are taken in on trades are given free of charge to caddies who have bought clubs.

Glen Oak, largely because of Huske and Jack Smith, the caddiemaster, is known as a club where a caddie is appreciated as an individual and not merely as a kid with a

back strong enough for bag carrying purposes. Between 150 and 200 boys carry more than 30 rounds a year and most of these earn appearance bonuses averaging \$40 or \$50 a summer. Early in the season the club stages a "caddie family night" at which the young bag toters and their parents enjoy refreshments and see golf movies. This has been going on for four years.

At the end of the season, the caddie banquet is regularly attended by 200 or more boys who eat the finest food the club has to offer and get the awards they have earned in addition to a prize, usually some kind of wearing apparel, that is given to every boy who is present. The festivities, which have been a fixture at Glen Oak for years, always are topped off with speeches by noted golf figures and professional football or baseball players.

At the present time, five former Glen Oak caddies are attending Midwestern universities on Evans scholarships.

Glen Oak, in fact, thinks so much of its caddie program that it keeps Jack Smith, the caddiemaster, employed on a year-around basis. During the off-season Jack works in the clubhouse, dividing his time between clerical and maintenance work. In the spring, before the season starts,

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Smith spends at least a month scouting the area high school circuit recruiting a caddie force.

"Our 600 golfers here," says Al Huske, "consider Jack indispensable. He's a former coach and referee and working with kids has been his life's work. In the 12 years he's been with Glen Oak, Jack has developed our caddie program to the extent that I think it will compare with any in the country."

#### Mid-Atlantic Conference

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in the Mid-Atlantic's session on newly opened courses.

Supts. of five new courses told of construction and early development and maintenance of their courses. Fred Grau was moderator of the session.

It was evident from the panelists' discussion that architects, builders and supts. certainly aren't always working on land favorable to the construction and maintenance of courses. It also was made plain that cutting corners too close on construction simply means that higher costs of maintenance have to be paid later. In some

#### Value of Conferences

Much more space than is normally allotted to a regional meeting of supts. is given to the annual conference of the Mid-Atlantic GCSA. The reason is that this two-day meeting is typical of the tremendous value of a regional conference to courses in a golf district. Club officials rarely are aware of how their clubs benefit in cash savings and improved course management as a result of these get togethers.

Any club, private, semi-private or public, that doesn't encourage its supt. to attend association meetings and pay his expenses, should take a second look at its policy in this respect. It certainly isn't farsighted.

respects major alterations are required before it is possible to maintain courses in uniformly good condition.

Interesting discussions on green design for good surface drainage and traffic distribution stressed the belief that good architecture for maintenance can and should be good architecture by playing standards.

Leading off the presentation of the new