

## Establish Solid Foundation for Sales to Women Golfers

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**I**F golf professionals kept score as accurately and as studiously on their sales as they do on the rounds they play many of them would get profitable surprises.

Precise statistics on pro shop sales are unavailable. But figures that Golfdom has compiled in its years of market research certainly must be accepted as the most reliable collected. The errors, if any, are on the conservative side.

These reports show that gross revenue from the sale of golf clubs, balls, bags and other strictly playing equipment at pro shops varies between 42 and 46 per cent of total annual sales. The remainder of the sales revenue is from golf apparel and accessories.

### Should Analyze Apparel Sales

This higher percentage of the clothing, shoe, headwear and accessory revenue doesn't necessarily mean that it is business to be accented at the expense of the playing items in the pro merchandising picture any more than the professional could be careless about his driving just because he putts more than he drives. But it does mean that he should analyze his apparel business and learn the lessons that it probably would reveal upon examination.

In the first place, every professional who has had a substantial increase in apparel business will find, upon study, that the increase is primarily due to women's influence.

### Women's Influence

The volume of women's golf apparel business in itself is growing rapidly. Beyond that is the revenue from men golfers' apparel purchase that has been influenced by women. On the other hand, women, who are shrewd shoppers, may be critical when their husbands bring home off-brand items from the pro shop that aren't worth what their husbands thought were bargains.

But, whenever professionals sold quality



Shirley Englehorn, youngest player on the Ladies PGA circuit, probably won't stray far from a golf course after this. Following a recent tournament she sought to relax with some horseback riding. But the horse didn't cooperate and Shirley was thrown. The result: a broken nose and back injuries. Shirley is wearing a brace at present but hopes to be back playing golf within a few weeks.

apparel that couldn't be bought at lower prices, or at any of the cheap stores in town, the purchases got the endorsement of women and established a quality reputation for the pro shop.

Women aren't experienced judges of club and ball quality but they are, instinctively, good judges of apparel values.

The pro's wife, in a great majority of cases, is a better judge of apparel value — material, style, workmanship and that indefinable and priceless element called "class" — than the pro is. The pro's wife and the wives of his members are quick to sense that the pro shop won't rate high as a source of supply if the shop carries the same sort of low-priced stuff that can be had, perhaps at an even lower price, at any second-rate store downtown.

### False Start

Quite a few professionals got poor starts in selling women's golf attire because they started on a competitive price basis rather than on a basis of distinctive, high quality merchandise that was attractive in value and worth. You can't blame those pros for that unlucky start. The Wright brothers didn't get off the ground on the first try.



Among the 700 Junior and high school players who receive free instruction every year from Mort Dutra, Bonita (Calif.) CC pro, is this group of Chula Vista high school girls. The community is growing very rapidly and it is very golf minded, according to Dutra, who adds in true Chamber of Commerce fashion that Bonita has the best golfing weather in the country.

At a number of pro shops, women already account for a greater part of apparel purchases than do men because they buy for their husbands and children as well as for themselves.

Considering the rapid and solid growth of women's golf, the increase in number of women playing and in their total rounds played (the number of lessons given to women (more than to men, at many clubs), and the great number of Junior girl golfers, the foresighted pro sees that he must establish a solid foundation in women's business now.

It may not be long before women's buying is by quite a margin the largest part of the pro's revenue. You can be sure that the pro, to get and retain women's business, must feature high quality as he always has done in selling golf clubs and other equipment.

#### Want This Market

The market for the smart women members of the finer country clubs is a market of fashion influence that experienced and successful makers and distributors of women's sportswear should dominate. They know that professionals at the quality clubs represent a group of retailers in strategic positions.

We have found that quality line manufacturers of women's sports apparel such as David Crystal and Haymaker have been keenly aware of the professional's prob-

lems and his opportunities. They have been smart enough to be most cooperative in helping the first class professional get his share of women's specialty shop business in quality apparel.

#### Cooperate in Merchandising

One example of this cooperation in fitting the merchandise to the pro market is Haymaker's new line of Bermuda shorts, skirts and blouses which can be matched and mix-matched. On display at the pro shop they help create an atmosphere of class that makes a quick, confident and highly pleased buyer of the woman golfer.

The pro shop that tries to make a good profit and please and attract customers with cheap products is doomed to failure. Regardless of how "cheap" a pro may think many of his members are, he never should let them know this suspicion by showing them cheap merchandise. The members won't like the stuff and they won't buy. The pro loses not only the sale but his chance to establish a reputation as a first class merchant.

#### How Times Change

Paul Runyan was the leading money winner on the PGA Tour in 1934 with \$6,767.00. By contrast, Ted Kroll set the all-time record for cash collecting in 1956 when he earned \$72,825. 83.