

## One Dark Cloud on Otherwise Cheerful Horizon

Manufacturers who responded to Golfdom's queries concerning playing equipment and accessory sales, pointed to another record year as the golf market continued to boom. But one executive of a large distributing firm painted some gloom over the encouraging picture, at least so far as the pro is concerned, by suggesting that sporting goods and other outside merchants are making serious inroads into his business. Here is what the manufacturers had to say:

### Golf's Growth Continues with Tougher Competition for Pros

*By W. D. Schaffner*

Pres., National PGA Distributors

Every post war year has brought an acceleration of golfing interest and player purchases of equipment. This gives assurance that the years to follow will, in turn, bring new highs. Credit for this upsurge goes largely to the home professional whose "grass roots" encouragement to millions of beginners has attracted their regular participation.

This effort has been helped immeasurably by The National Golf Foundation, financed by many suppliers, which has encouraged and aided the establishment of hundreds of new courses. Something new and gigantic has come into being. Perhaps the most significant development of 1960 is the proved popularity of televised golf. Still in its infancy, this type of programming will expand rapidly to influence and popularize golf even more.

It appears that 1961 will top all past years. It is difficult to focus attention on any matters of unusual significance insofar as the industry itself is concerned. Every individual golf professional should diligently analyze his particular situation. He may be less secure than careless thought could lead him to believe. Growth carries no automatic guarantee the professional will equitably share the harvest. The gain in golf has gathered an army of commercial followers.

Over 10,000 sporting goods stores now compete. This figure does not include additional thousands of department, hardware, drug, grocery, gasoline, variety, auto, sundry and other establishments which have entered the golf field. Many of these are using a tool not readily available to the professional — advertising. Much of it is phony, exaggerated or even false. Some of these come-ons appear illegal, and the government has promised to investigate. But relief will be slow to come. Meanwhile, the professionals will continue to lose sales. Although the exact information is not published, available data indicates to many observers that there are now more clubs sold outside pro shops than within. This trend seems to have started at least three or four years ago.

The home professional who genuinely desires his personal economic growth to keep pace with that of the industry must make full use of his natural advantage and talent. One method is to use his prestige constructively and combine it with the equipment he sells and the methods he employs to sell. This includes offering merchandise which is available only to pro shops and providing careful instructions concerning each article's proper use. Coupled with an ability to make sensible trades, this is his greatest competitive advantage, and should be fully exploited.

It is certainly true that the game cannot grow without the services only a professional can provide. More job opportunities are offered as a result of the increased number of courses. But the quality of these opportunities cannot improve unless the full merchandise potential of each can be captured and held.

### Scored Better on Courses and in Pro Shop Sales in 1960

*By Edward G. Dowling*

Vp, Marketing, A. G. Spalding & Bros., Inc.

The contribution that fine equipment makes to the game and business never was more obvious than in 1960. In performances and sales of Spalding woods, irons and balls our pro staff consultants and pro customers have recorded better figures than ever before.

Every year we have built our equipment to more precise standards. Our investments in research and development personnel and facilities have resulted in startling innovations and improvements. The Spalding Distance Dot, a new concept

of golf ball, brought many thousands of customers into pro shops and kept them as repeat buyers. Spalding's new Executive woods already are showing that they are going to be a big factor in pro shop sales increases in 1961.

In spite of some of the very conservative business forecasts we have seen in the financial papers, we are extremely enthusiastic about the prospects for the coming year. Spalding confidently looks to 1961 as the greatest year yet for fine golf equipment.

## Top Quality Market — Pros' Part — Growing Fastest

By Robert D. Rickey

Vp, The MacGregor Company

Interest in golf literally exploded in 1960, creating the greatest market for top quality equipment that our industry has known. In the case of MacGregor, we were overwhelmed by the demand in spite of greatly increased manufacturing facilities.

In addition to this tremendous growth, golfers of the '60s are very selective and intelligent buyers who demand not only quality, but equipment that will satisfy their individual needs as recommended by the professional. Consequently, we are offering a more diversified line of clubs which feature four distinctly different shaft feels, a choice of two grips, etc.

"Eye appeal" has become an extremely important factor. Today a golf club must not only play good . . . it must also look good.

The prestige of owning fine equipment has become a factor that manufacturers can't overlook. For example, we sold a record number of Kangaroo bags which retailed at \$125 and up.

It is our belief that the prospects have never been greater for the sale of top line merchandise. With the many advancements in club, bag and accessory design, the outlook for '61 is brighter than ever before. Professionals have the opportunity to convince people that they owe it to themselves to use only the finest.

The outstanding features that we've introduced in our 1961 professional golf line makes obsolete every piece of equipment in rack rooms throughout the country. We are prepared for this tremendously increased market and feel that the professional, in turn, will be quick to capitalize on the demand for quality merchandise, which is exclusively his.

## Recognition of Pro Service Helps Boost Sales

By H. W. Colburn

Vp, Wilson Sporting Goods Co.

Increased participation in golf in 1960 has been most encouraging. Despite inclement weather in most of the country in April and May, sale of equipment by pros was comparatively good. The greatest increase in golfers and play has been at the public and semi-public courses so, naturally, the professionals at pay-as-you-play locations have had a large increase in club and ball sales. This follows the trend established at the private clubs.

Well operated clubs and courses have increased recognition and appreciation of the value of competent professional service. This has resulted in the construction of many fine pro shops at private and public courses where the golfer can get expert buying aid and has the convenience of large stocks. This has been particularly true of apparel and has identified the professional as a merchant who can compete in price and quality.

The professional's progress in the growing golf business also has been marked by his effective activity in Christmas golf gift sales promotion and other special events. The successful professional obviously has learned that the volume of sales and profit is in direct ratio to well timed, accurately directed advertising and sales efforts.

Our observations point to further sound growth of golf in 1961 and we have set up our production schedule accordingly.

## Dunlop Sales Set Record, New Plant for 1961

By Paul W. Gibbs

Sales Mgr., Sports Div., Dunlop Tire & Rubber Corp.

More Dunlop golf equipment has been sold in pro shops in 1960 than in any previous year. Our studies with the professional point to continuance of the upward sales curve.

The new pro-only, Dunlop Super Maxfli has received a better reception from players and professionals who supply them than any other ball we have made. Now that we have the new Dunlop Maxfli clubs we are certain to have, in 1961, a substantial increase over Dunlop's highly satisfactory sales figures for this year.

On October 18 we will dedicate the  
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