



Pinehurst's beautifully designed pro shop is shown above. Marion Pfluger, shown below, is pro.

Everything's New

Great Profit Prospects at Pinehurst Shop

Since the luster hasn't even begun to rub off the new clubhouse and pro shop at Pinehurst CC in Denver, Marion Pfluger's appraisal of what business is going to be like at the \$3.6 million club is still in the projection stage. But if early returns are reliable indicators, Pfluger and his three assistants, Jim Bailey, Don Murphy and Ken Runberg, may burn up a few tabulating machines during the year in totaling the sales.

Pinehurst's clubhouse was officially opened in March, but as early as last November its dining rooms and grills were catering to members. The 27-hole course was put in play last June.



Here are two more views of the Pinehurst shop. Wall displays are featured.



A onetime University of Texas golf captain and a graduate of the Accounting school there, Pfluger started serving his pro shop apprenticeship at Metropolis CC, White Plains, N. Y. in 1950 as an assistant. After a year at this club he took a flier at selling golf equipment for one of the major club manufacturers. In 1953 he got back into the pro end of the business as headmaster at River Hills, a Dallas municipal course, and in 1958 he was selected to run the pro shop when Brookhaven, also in Dallas, with its 2,750 members and 54 holes, was opened. Pfluger transferred to Pinehurst last summer.

Large Potential Market

The fact that the new Denver club has 1,150 playing members — 900 men and 250 women — should produce some very favorable sales statistics for the Pinehurst pro department. But Pfluger isn't living on the mere promise of a potentially huge volume from an army of golfers of this size. He is doing what he can to court business, but in a subtle sort of way that features good salesmanship, sparkling displays and plenty of merchandise from which to choose.

Pfluger's inventory, which averages about \$25,000, and which he expects to

turn over four times between March and December, runs heavily to quality apparel with highly styled lines, such as in beachwear, being included to give his merchandise more versatility. Outside of men's clubs, bags and balls, there is practically no departmentalizing of stock. It is, in fact, constantly re-located to give the shop an ever changing look and to promote impulse buying. Women's apparel is displayed in one section of the shop, but clubs, bags and shoes, for sale to women, are scattered throughout the entire display area in order to encourage the distaff members to cross over and buy in the men's department. Sales to women players have been so promising, incidentally that Pfluger is planning to add a saleslady to his staff.

As can be gathered from looking at the

photos on these pages, and because the Pinehurst pro shop is completely new, the display theme here is ultra modern. Most of the merchandise is shown against alternate wall panels of natural oak and pegboard. Island, rack and counter displays are kept to a minimum because traffic jams could occur if a large percentage of the 1,150 golfing members decided to get their rounds in on the same day. Three huge floor to ceiling plate glass windows supply interesting lighting effects and these are supplemented by 10 recessed and 10 movable spots. Mantel-like counters and off-floor ledges (see photos) break up the monotony that would come with uninterrupted wall displays.

Outside Expert

Marion Pfluger, though, isn't completely convinced that a new shop with the finest in fixtures, excellent lighting and top line merchandise assures 100 per cent success of a pro operation. He's constantly looking for better display ideas. Each of his assistants is encouraged to suggest any changes that he feels will improve the way the stock is shown. In addition, Pfluger retains an expert from a downtown Denver department store who regularly visits Pinehurst and makes recommendations for adding sparkle to the merchandise displays.

One of the first things Pfluger did after coming to Pinehurst was to hire Jim Baily as his No. 1 assistant. Baily is one of those conscientious fellows who takes proprietary pride in the smooth operation of a business. He is a very capable salesman, does a fine job of teaching and handles most of the buying for the shop. Don Murphy spends most of his time on the inside, waiting on golfers, and Ken Runberg is primarily a teacher.

Promising Instruction Business

Instruction business at Pinehurst probably hasn't reached its potential, although by August of last year as many as 100 persons were taking lessons every week. Runberg does most of the teaching, but both Pfluger and Bailey handle a fair share of the lesson business because both feel it is good for promoting sales along with member relations. Clinics for women golfers proved to be very profitable, by the way, since they led to the sale of several sets of new and used clubs.

Thus far, the trade-in problem hasn't hurt the Pinehurst operators to any great extent because there are enough beginning golfers at the club to provide a ready



Clubhouse is low, rambling.

Some Facts about Pinehurst

- Total Investment — \$3.6 million.
- Clubhouse cost — \$1.6 million
- Clubhouse architect — James Sudler Assoc.
- Cost of course — \$1.5 million
- Course architect — J. Press Maxwell
- No. of employees — 100
- Clubhouse area under roof — 1.25 acres
- Clubhouse carpeting — 13,250 sq. ft.
- Kitchen area — 6,700 sq. ft.
- Dining capacity — 1,000 persons at one time
- Parking — 750 cars can be handled
- Present membership — 1,600
- Potential membership — 2,000
- Manager — Laurice T (Bud) Hall



View of the main lounge.

market for the older clubs. Trade-in clubs are displayed in a special section of Pfluger's shop and, as far as he can see, this doesn't affect the sale of new ones.

Fast moving and lower price items in the Pinehurst shop are inventoried every two weeks while clothing, shoes, clubs, etc. are checked every three months. Close attention is paid to merchandise that isn't moving and if it is relocated two or three times and still doesn't sell, it is eliminated once and for all. But Pfluger has come to the conclusion that frequent rotation of stock can keep practically any item from ending up in the "slow moving" category. That may be the whole story behind his early success.