



Your Built-In Market Survey

*Check the bags of the women players
and you'll find out whether they're
buying from you or a competitor*

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IF YOU want to be jolted by seeing where pro shops are losing a big and profitable sales volume every year, look into women's golf bags.

If you are one of the wise pro businessmen who watches for opportunities to bring in new business and profits, look into women's golf bags.

If you want a sudden awakening to the fact that pro shop policy and operation may have to be drastically changed, look into women's golf bags.

If you are one of the many professionals who have reported what I have seen printed in **GOLFDOM** about women's pro shop patronage not increasing nearly as fast as the increase in women's play, look into women's golf bags.

What is in women's bags will tell you a story of the future of pro shop business.

It is one that should shock every thoughtful professional. It is a story not only of many dollars of clubs sales lost, but of a chance lost to establish the pro shop as the source of everything the woman player wants and needs.

When you have established the habit of buying in the pro shop among your players you have protected your present and future in pro business.

It is sad but certain that women are not being educated to buy in pro shops even though the pro is, or should be, acutely aware that they are buying a large volume of equipment, and even apparel, from department stores.

This dangerous blind spot in the pro merchandising view isn't the fault of women. So, it must be the pro's fault!

Many years ago pro shop merchandising began and ended with selling bench-made clubs along with balls and bags. The habit of buying from the pro shop was established among men and women because there were not many other places to buy golf equipment. There never has been another golf goods store as conveniently located as the pro shop. That was a big factor in merchandising in the old days. Pros should con-

tinue reminding prospective customers of the exclusive and attractive element of pro shop convenience!

Aggressive Selling

The great growth of women's golf in the past few years has changed the picture of shop merchandising. Stores are going after women's golf business with aggressive advertising, low pricing, smaller sets and displays that get women's attention when they are in a buying mood.



The pro sees the result when he looks into women's golf bags! Stores have sold clubs to women whose husbands are good friends and customers of the pro. Or, it could be that the stores, instead of doing an especially good job of selling, have simply notified women, by advertising, that they want their business and have made it easy for women to buy.

But in many pro shops a woman, unless she is an experienced golfer, has yet to be strongly impressed that the pro is eager to sell her clubs or a bag. It isn't difficult to pinpoint who is at fault in a situation such as this.

No Price Tags

Why should she be aware of this? She doesn't even know that some of the clubs displayed are manufactured especially for women. She could tell you within a half-dollar the price of any piece of apparel in the shop because she is educated in this respect. But if she happened to discover that some clubs in a shop were made particularly for her, she wouldn't have the vaguest notion of their cost because in too many shops there are no price tags on the merchandise.

If the woman does see a price tag on woods or irons she compares it with the price she has seen in a store ad, but she probably doesn't have the faintest suspicion that the higher priced clubs might very well be the best buy for her.

She hasn't had the training to be educated as a golf buyer. For that reason the pro often loses the selling advantage he gains at the lesson tee.

I get interesting opportunities to compare women's shopping for clubs and apparel in pro shops because our organization specializes in marketwide selling of golf apparel, shoes and clubs to professionals. Women come into a pro shop and see our nationally known shoes and apparel brands and discover that pro shop prices are no higher than prices in high class stores.

Shuns Pro's Guidance

But as for our clubs — also of the very finest quality — the woman buyer is without confidence in her judgment and, unfortunately, sometimes she isn't sold on the pro's guidance.

A man, almost by instinct, will go for top quality clubs and feel that they are worth the money. But when it comes to apparel, unless it is of brand names that he knows are of foremost quality, style and value, he trusts to luck more than to wisdom.

Club Sales Approach 5,000,000 Mark

Golf club sales for the fiscal year ended Oct. 31, 1960, totalled 4,983,606 units, an increase of 12.9 per cent over the comparable 1959 period. Making up the total were 3,425,015 iron clubs and 1,558,591 wood clubs.

In releasing this report, Carl J. Benkert, Pres. of the National Assn. of Golf Club Manufacturers said: "Manufacturers are highly pleased with the annual increase in the sale of clubs over the last several years."

"From all indications increased sales will continue because of growing interest in the game. Also, new facilities are being constantly added in all sections of the country."

Benkert noted "that there is an extremely large growth of interest in golf in small communities throughout the U. S."

You and I have heard professionals censure women golfers for being niggardly in buying even though they expect a lot of free service from the pro department. Yet, rarely do we ever hear a professional concede that failure of women to buy more equipment at the shop may be the fault of the pro.

What signs or departmentalized display, what association of women's clubs, bags, apparel and shoes are there in the pro shop arrangement? What is done in the shop to let women know they can get playing equipment "buys" that are as much genuine bargains as the apparel that is sold in the same shop?

Easy Market Survey

The equipment in a woman's golf bag, and the bag itself, give the pro an opportunity to make a market survey easier than any other merchant can make in studying how to improve his business. Every time you see a woman's golf bag that isn't bought at your shop, or in that bag clubs that have been bought elsewhere, try to figure why you didn't get the business.

Then you will come up with some answers and ideas that can mean a substantial increase in your shop income. If you don't come up with them, the outside stores probably will.