

Rounds Played, Sales Up 10 Per Cent in 1962, Survey Shows

By **HERB GRAFFIS**

With Christmas golf gift business certain to be at a new record high this year, pro shop sales for 1962 probably will equal the 10.5 per cent increase that is indicated for rounds played this year in GOLFDOM's annual survey.

As of mid-September, the estimate of pros at public, private and semi-public courses was that increase in play was slightly ahead of the increase in pro shop business. Christmas business at the pro shops should just about balance the two sets of figures. GOLFDOM's "Christmas Shopping at your Pro Shop," a reliable barometer of pro shop gift business, already is ahead of previous years' circulation.

What store and other golf goods outlet sales will be, we won't try to estimate. Catalog houses, trading stamp stores, "discount" and employees' cut-price outlets, mail order price cutters and others selling cheaper brands of clubs and balls seem to have hit the sports goods and department store business harder than they have hurt the pros. The pros report some losses because of assorted competitors this year, but there has been continued pro domination of the quality market. This influences all other golfers and produces the top gross and net revenue in manufacturing and selling.

Club pros, however, report that price cutting by pros at driving ranges on pro-only clubs and balls is getting to be quite serious.

The "average" figure of the volume of the pros in the Golfing magazine merchandising campaign was 18 per cent over the national "average" of increase in pro business in 1962 over 1961, but not one of the hundreds of pros educating their members to pro shop buying with the aid of Golfing's campaign, had an exact 18 per cent increase over 1961. The range of increase was from 5 per cent to 110 per cent.

Lesson increase in 1962 ranged from 5 to 50 per cent. The "average" was 9 per cent.

There was an increase in the ratio of women to men members at private clubs and a lesser ratio of increase at public and semi-private courses. At typical metropolitan district private clubs, about 35 per cent of the number of rounds are played by women. Apparently, women do not get the same good break at pay-play courses that they do at private clubs. The over-all increase in women's golf play in 1962 will average 27.5 per cent.

Pros at private clubs reported an average of 25 more women playing in 1962 than in 1961.

This year's sales to women at pro shops of private and public courses is about 25 per cent ahead of last year.

Junior Figures

Junior classes this year averaged 64 youngsters. Private and fee course pros reported an average of 48 Juniors playing regularly. Several professionals said it is difficult for them to get adult members to give the kids playing time on courses so Junior play is mainly when the kids play with their parents.

In the matter of new club sales involving "trade-ins" there certainly is no "average" club or pay-play course, although 70 per cent of new club sales at pro shops have old clubs figuring as a price allowance. The range of trade-ins is from none to 95 per cent at shops reporting.

Trade-In Selling Tough

Selling the trade-ins is a headache for the pros, especially when employment is off in areas where there are many public and semi-private courses. The pro can't trade on a phony inflated price such as the mark-ups some catalog houses put on golf clubs.

Some professionals, finding that unsold trade-in clubs were piling up and freezing too much money, began pushing the idea of cutting down the clubs for kids. Results generally were very satisfactory. The pros learned there are a great many kids without golf clubs.

20 Per Cent Bought Elsewhere

About 20 per cent of the golf equipment needs of private club members is filled by purchases made away from the pro shops, according to the reporting pros. The range of the percentage of this stray business was from 2 to 50 per

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tem in which there is low voltage distribution. By using the series of transformers there is no voltage drop, and with them, it is possible to operate lamps at slightly higher than rated voltage to increase lumens output and foot candle readings on greens, tees and fairways.

Use 60 Poles

About 60 poles are used in lighting the Boca Ree-al center. On the Par 3 course they are 30 feet high at the greens and about 35 feet high above the tees. The quartz-iodine lighting fixtures consist of 1500 watt, 240 v wide beam and medium floods.

On holes that don't exceed 100 yards in length, excellent horizontal lighting effects are achieved on tees and greens through the use of single poles in each location. However, if the holes are to be extended much beyond this length, Par Light engineers say that fairway fixtures should be installed. In many cases, the fairway poles can be installed so that adjacent fairways can be lighted through additional fixtures installed on them.

Valley Club, Scottsdale, Ariz., will hold a golf rodeo early in January for Western Senior players. Leo Gaulacher, pro, is chairman.

Play, Sales Up 10 Per Cent

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cent. Apparently the Golfing program of acquainting members with the private club member's obligation to do business with the pro shop caught on. Pros co-operating in this campaign did not report higher than 5 per cent of member business away from the pro shop. Pros at many clubs criticized cut-price and mail order advertising in some golf magazines as being designed to reduce the pro shop market.

64 Per Cent Equipment Sales

The over-all average of division between playing equipment and apparel and shoe business at pro shops was 64 per cent of sales revenue in balls, clubs and bags and 30 per cent in apparel and shoes. The remaining 6 per cent of pro shop sales this year will be in accessories. The range of percentage of playing equipment sales in dollar volume at pro shops was from 30 to 80. About 28 per cent of the metropolitan district private club pro shops were approximately 50-50 in playing equipment and apparel and shoe sales.



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