

On the Professional Side

A Chicago advertising executive recently pointed out that the trend to selling the sizzle and not the steak possibly is being overdone. He didn't say in so many words that the deficiencies in some products are glossed over by overdramatizing what these products will do for the buyers, but he hinted this often is the case. The same reasoning may apply to golf clubs. If you try to sell a player on the idea that a new set of clubs will knock four or five strokes off his score — does he really believe you? If you cause him to become skeptical by making such a statement, does that kill the chance of making the sale? Wouldn't you proceed on safer ground by first selling the prospect on the merits of the clubs, putting practically all emphasis on these, than by giving him a rather fantastic pitch about how they are going to help him?

When E. E. (Dode) Forrester, pro at Hobbs (N. M.) CC sells a set of clubs he always affixes a band bearing the name of the purchaser to the shaft of each club. It costs only a few cents to do so. "It seems," says Dode, "that more clubs are being lost or misplaced because golf cars are being so widely used. There is no good reason for this, but it is a

fact. Anyway, if a lost club that is banded is returned to the pro shop, there is no problem in returning it to its rightful owner."

"This is the time of the year to begin listing the things your members probably would welcome as Christmas golf gifts," notes Harry Montevideo, professional at Whipoorwill Club, Armonk, N. Y. "The pro and his assistants should check what is in the bags of members, the age and condition of the bags, and golf shoes in the members' lockers," says Harry. "There usually is enough time to do this in July or August. Many golfers do not actually realize what they need in the way of equipment . . . Probably 30 per cent of all club members think their clubs are from three to six years newer than they really are . . . Golf bags often aren't in the racks after October or November, and unless the professional has a record of what the players need, he misses a chance to make holiday sales."

John Boda, Jr., pro at Andover (Mass.), CC, was one of many home club practitioners who studied Julius Boros' style at the Country Club of Brookline and concluded that the Open winner is the foremost master of the wedges. We'll find that

sand. "Golfers who can't expect to get much more distance can improve their scores by being taught the pitching and sandtrap methods Boros uses in putting the ball close to the hole," says John. "This opens up a great opportunity for us. During the mid-summer lull, we should check the members' bags to see if they own sand and pitching wedges. We'll find that many don't. We can start talking Boros immediately, pointing out how if he can save strokes by learning to play the soft shots, the member can too. This should lead to increased sales of wedges, more lesson business."

A California professional makes this observation: "There is room for improvement in the construction of golf bags, or in golf cars — I can't decide which. Frequent damage to the lower part of the bags shows something should be changed. Our storage racks aren't responsible for this damage even though bags that are placed in them, or removed, sometimes are handled carelessly. The rack manufacturers have pretty well taken care of this. I get numerous kicks about expensive bags being scratched, scraped or cut. I don't blame a member for protesting when a \$150 bag begins showing signs of hard wear after he has had it for perhaps only a month or two. There is steady improvement in the balance of bags so caddies can carry them with a minimum of strain. From what I can see, the bags mainly get beat up from being transported in golf cars. This is something that should be corrected."