



*Not the Complete Answer,  
But It's A Start...*

## **Kratzert Steps Up Catalog Orders and Sales Ride Along**

**H**oliday sales in the last three years in the pro shop of Bill Kratzert, Jr., at the Ft. Wayne (Ind.) CC have increased in almost direct proportion to the number of "Christmas Shopping at Your Pro Shop" catalogs he has annually ordered from Golfdom.

Kratzert's sales totals aren't available, but the number of catalogs he has ordered is. In 1961 he used 300 catalogs. The following year he increased his order to 500 and in 1963, to 800.

At first glance this might imply that to step up his Christmas business from year to year it is only necessary for a professional to increase his catalog order.

It isn't quite that simple. The trick is to find more and more potential customers for Christmas merchandise to justify increasing the catalog order. The important thing is that most of them can be found within a club, as Kratzert has found out. Three years ago he distributed only 300 catalogs because he felt that no more than that number of players at Ft. Wayne CC were interested in buying gift merchandise through the pro shop.

Then, the following year he gambled by increasing his order to 500 and sending a catalog to every player on the club's

roster. The additional 200 were well received, judging by the way in which his holiday business increased. So, last year, Bill reasoned there had to be a good deal of potential volume among the social members. He upped his order to 800 and made sure that every person who had some kind of a membership in the club got a catalog. Sales went up in proportion.

"The colorful Golfdom catalog doesn't do the whole job at Christmas time," says the Ft. Wayne shopmaster, "but it certainly lets every member know that possibly the best gift shop in the city is located right on the club grounds. Numerous social members, for example, told me they decided they had made a 'discovery' when they found out that we handle the high grade merchandise we do. Several of them had never been in the pro shop before."

### **After They're Mailed**

Bill Kratzert has some pretty definite ideas as to what to do and what not to do after the catalogs are mailed out at Thanksgiving...

The most important thing, in his estimation, is to let everyone know that the

shop is open on a full time basis after Dec. 1, after having been on a five or six-hour a day schedule throughout November. Secondly, the shop is kept open on Wednesday and Friday nights to accommodate the large number of members who come to the club for dinner on these days.

There can't be a suggestion of a pro exerting any kind of selling pressure if he hopes to go on year after year enjoying profitable Christmas sales. This brings up the matter of the telephone followup after the catalogs are distributed.

mental and making a physical check of every bag in the back end of the shop.

Kratzert has been at Ft. Wayne for seven years and, of course, knows to the last member who can't be solicited via telephone. But it didn't take him seven years to compile his list of "untouchables." As he says: "You should find out who resents familiarity the first year you are at a club, and then act accordingly. And, you should honestly try not to hold it against these people because many of them turn out to be your best customers. It's just that they want to keep



Bill Kratzert (R) sells out of this shop at Ft. Wayne CC

"I don't call everyone, by any means," says Kratzert. "There are perhaps ten per cent of the people at the club who I would never think of calling. I know they would resent it and so I wait until they come to me.

#### Women Want Pro's Help

"At the same time," Bill continues, "possibly one out of five people at the club would be offended if I didn't call them and make some suggestions. Women, in particular, want to be called and they want you to be able to offer some concrete ideas as to what their husbands need or would be genuinely thrilled to receive."

How does a pro go about deciding who can be called and who can't, and what gifts a golfer would appreciate getting? It calls for two kinds of cataloging —

the initiative when it comes to buying, and don't want to be pushed. There is nothing wrong with that."

#### Leads from Inventory

Every pro, of course, is familiar with the golf bag inventory that should be taken at the end of the season for those leads that can mean more sales for him, especially at Christmas time. At clubs where there are 300 players, it has been reliably estimated that a check of the bags normally reveals that there are at least 10,000 items in need of replacement. That doesn't mean, of course, that 10,000 items are going to be sold, but for the fellow who is willing to play percentage, 1,000 perhaps isn't bad. The question is, as Bill Kratzert and others

(Continued on page 54)



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## More Catalogs—More Sales

(Continued from page 34)

before him have pointed out, how many pros actually make a thorough, business-like inventory of the members' bags and then use it as the jumping off point for their holiday sales campaigns? Probably fewer than you think.

The Ft. Wayne CC pro never has tried to lure customers with a cocktail hour or with the promise of a coffee klatch. It's not that he isn't willing to dispense a few bottles of liquor and several pounds of coffee during the holiday season, but that he tries to avoid having his shop overrun with golfers during any part of the day. He and two of his assistants are always in the shop during December and as far as Kratzert is concerned, he doesn't want more than three shoppers in the place at one time. The idea is that it enables the staff to give each customer completely personalized service, something that he probably can't obtain in any department store or gift shop in the city.

### Some Christmas Hints

Here are other things that Kratzert feels pros should keep in mind in handling Christmas business:

- Pushing sales is poor business in a pro shop at any time, but since people are in a "poppin'" mood during the holiday season, you can be a little more aggressive than usual in making suggestions;
- Make it easy for people to exchange gifts. The shop could be kept open full time for at least five days after Christmas so that exchanges can be conveniently made. In fact, the exchange offer should be extended, within reason, to the following spring. All golf clubs, of course, should be sold on a "guaranteed to fit" basis;
- Resist the temptation to over-display—even at Christmas time. You can never let people lose the impression that your's is a high class shop, featuring only quality merchandise;
- Avoid bringing in gimmicks and off-beat merchandise at Christmas time. Stick to the merchandise you have been selling all year. If you go after everything you end up by making fewer sales than

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you normally would;

• When the markup is large enough and Christmas is only a few days away, order by telephone rather than by mail. If you can help a person save face by giving quick service when he simply has to have a "last minute" gift, you have won a long term customer.

## **Wright Re-elected President of Golf Car Association**

Aubrey Wright, Columbia Car Corp., president of the American Golf Car Manufacturers Association since its formation last year, was re-elected at the annual meeting of the organization which was held in July at the Drake Oakbrook, Oakbrook, Ill. David Metcalf, Versal, Inc., former secretary, was elected vice president with William A. Dolan of E-Z Go Div. of Textron, continuing as treasurer with the added duties of secretary.

Re-elected directors, who with the officers compose the executive committee, are: Vaughn E. Border of Cushman Motors, John Bozarth of Jato, Inc., Edward Mardigian of Mardi-Car and Robert E. Schuler of Huffman Mfg. Company.

Committee chairmen are: Safety/John Bozarth, who conducts the association's program in the field of car user safety; Statistical Reporting/Vaughn Border, who handles quarterly sales reports; Technical Advisory/Each member heads a sub-committee of manufacturers from each area of major component suppliers. Revision of the by-laws, as reported by Schuler, was approved by the members.

At the meeting AGCMA launched a program that will bring the manufacturers and suppliers into closer cooperation. Harold Howe, executive secretary, was given a vote of appreciation for excellent performance in his position. Joe Graffis, Sr., GOLFDOM co-publisher, was given a plaque as an award for his assistance in the formation of the association.

## **New Contract for Wirtz**

Leonard F. Wirtz has signed a new contract as tournament director for the Ladies PGA. It runs through December, 1967. In the three years that Wirtz has