

'Pro-Juniorized' Clubs

Golfdom starts a campaign to put more clubs in the hands of the kids and take the curse off the Trade-In dilemma

By **HERB GRAFFIS**

"Pro-Juniorized" golf clubs are a profitable and timely answer to a trade-in problem that cuts deeply into pro revenue and threaten the professionals' position as the developer of the top grade club market.

A "Pro-Juniorized" club is a used club that's cut down to the size of the lucky boy or girl who gets it. The club is re-conditioned to some extent by a professional or an assistant and fitted to the youngster for whom it is intended.

"Pro-Juniorized" is a new merchandising idea to convert a continually growing club trade-in dilemma into something very good for the professional as well as his members and their golfing children.

The foregoing summary of the "Pro-Juniorized" program, to be introduced by foremost pro golf merchandisers this year, presents high points of conclusions reached during 1963 tests of an idea that was introduced at a conference of the faculty of the PGA Business School in Clearwater, Fla.

Selling expertly fitted golf clubs, and more of them, are topics frequently brought up and discussed by Business School students. The assistants realize that trade-in allowances are the key to increasing new club sales. They also know that trade-in allowances are getting out of hand at many clubs because pros aren't in a favorable position to bargain

with members who are hard traders.

Veteran professional teachers at the 1963 Business School admitted that they didn't have all the answers to the trade-in problem which is involved in nearly 70 per cent of top quality club sales.

The trade-in situation thus is at a point where a good part of new club sales call for two sales: Those of new clubs traded as well as those traded in. The situation is made even more difficult because the acceptance of trade-ins is sharply reduced by competition of low-priced new clubs. This is especially true in the case of women's club purchases.

In looking for the answers to trade-in deal questions, the Business School teachers agreed that because of the great volume of used club sales, figures reported to and by the

Athletic Goods Manufacturers' Association do not accurately reflect the situation in the golf club market.

At the school, professionals also expressed the belief that manufacturers and professionals, through concerted planning and effort on a nationwide basis, might make an asset out of a growing evil, as the automobile industry did with used cars in increasing the overall market instead of allowing them to pile up in the country's junk yards.

The population explosion has brought about a situation in which many hundreds of thousands of youngsters should be tak-



Bill Hardy, well known club maker (see p. 52) sizes up a petite swinger.

ing golf lessons in schools and playing a good deal of golf during school vacations. The main reason these kids aren't playing is that they haven't got the clubs. Give them clubs and they'll find some way to use them. That's where the re-conversion of clubs comes in.

The "Pro Juniorized" campaign would be well implemented if enough used clubs passed into the kids' possession early enough in the season to reduce the headaches later on when close-outs clutter the market.

Discussing the trade-in problem in Clearwater were Emil Beck, director of the PGA Business School program; Bill Hardy, a noted clubmaker who is co-pro at Chevy Chase in Washington, D.C. and lectures on club design, repairs and fitting at the PGA Florida schools; the late Horton Smith; George Aulbach; Eddie Duino; John Budd and Herb Graffis, GOLFDOM's editor. The "Pro-Juniorized" campaign is a development of their appraisal of the trade-in problem.

Not All Agree

Of course, there are some arguments against the campaign. One is that private club courses already may be too crowded. But the fact is that during the summer vacation there is plenty of open time at the clubs for youngsters who have been trained to play golf properly. In a number of clubs, women's committees have taken over supervision of Junior programs which have been primarily planned by the professionals.

At many clubs the average age of members is so high that the future depends on developing more and more use of the course by younger people.

Another argument against "Pro-Juniorized" club campaign is that it reduces sales of new clubs to juvenile players. The reverse, however, has been the case, according to many pros.

Golfdom Aids Program

Advertising material in the form of letters, shop display signs, copy for club magazines, will be available to professionals from Golfdom. This material will feature the theme of making the best possible use of old clubs by getting them "Pro-Juniorized".

Further details of the "Pro-Juniorized" campaign will be presented in March GOLFDOM.

Pittsburgh to Hold Golf Show in Civic Arena Exhibit Hall

The first golf show ever held in Pittsburgh, Pa. is planned for Feb. 28 through Mar. 1. Sponsored by the Tri-State section of the PGA, the show will feature exhibits by manufacturers of golf equipment and apparel plus seminars on golf instruction, rules, regulations and etiquette.

Attending the show will be golfers from 90 Pittsburgh area clubs such as Laurel Valley, Oakmont, Fox Chapel, Allegheny County, Sewickley Heights and White Sulphur Springs. These clubs are served by 150 members of the Tri-State PGA, headed by Paul E. Erath, president.

Jim Potts, executive director of the Western Pennsylvania GA, is the show's publicity director. His assistants are Dick Groat and Jerry Lynch. Other committee heads include Joe Tucker, Fred Brand, Jr. of the USGA, Charles Kunkle and Betty Hamilton. Harry Grunnagle is business manager.

The show will be held in Pittsburgh's Civic Arena, which is convenient to downtown hotels and the famous Golden Triangle business district. Proceeds from the show will be split between the PGA benevolent fund and the Western Pennsylvania GA caddy scholarship fund.

Pittsburgh becomes the third large city to stage a big spring golf show. The others are Philadelphia and Chicago.

USGA and NCAA Ask Manufacturers Not to Favor Amateur Players

The USGA and National Collegiate Athletic Association are urging manufacturers and distributors of golf equipment and clothing to guard against making their wares available to amateur golfers without payment of current market prices.

The two associations, in a letter signed by Joseph C. Dey of the USGA and Walter Byers of the NCAA, have issued a reminder that players involved in buying below market prices forfeit their amateur status under the rules of both groups if there are confirmed violations. Both Dey and Byers are executive directors of their associations.

In their letter, Dey and Byers cite continuing reports of acceptance by amateurs of equipment and clothing for less than current market prices.

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