

Miscellaneous Merchandise



Only one pro in five makes much of an effort to sell non-golf items . . . But Willie Hunter, a veteran professional, says they can bring substantial returns

A survey recently completed by Golfdom indicates that pros aren't breaking any records selling what comes under the heading of Miscellaneous Items. These include such things as ties, bracelets, wallets, ash trays, figurines, golf books and shaving kits.

Yet, the offbeat articles shouldn't be written off as having hardly anything more than nuisance value. About twenty per cent of the pros queried say that these items constitute from five to 20 per cent of their total sales volume. Another 25 per cent say that non-golf goods accounts for from one to five per cent of sales. The balance, however, shrug off the miscellaneous merchandise as having practically no impact on the cash register.

Willie Hunter, who with his son, Mac, operates the Riviera CC shop in Pacific

Palisades, Calif., is one pro who says that a good portion of the profit margin would fall out of his business if he were to stop dealing in what some shopmasters loftily refer to as bric-a-brac or knickknacks when they discuss non-golf merchandise.

Members Want It

The Hunters sell everything from vitamins through golf instruction records, drinking glasses and women's purses. "We stock more than 50 different gift items," says the elder Hunter, "We've been doing it for years. Our members have come to depend on us to be able to supply gifts for every occasion you can think of."

Hunter goes on to point out that there are four or five days a year besides Christmas when his members are in the market for gift items. If he isn't able to interest them in buying playing equipment or apparel to give to their hus-

bands or wives, he falls back on some miscellaneous piece.

In Golfdom's survey, 23 articles were listed in the Miscellaneous category as being potential sales items. The Hunters ticked off 22 of these as being carried in their stock. They disdained only "Insect Repellent," explaining that the need for it isn't recognized in Pacific Palisades.

Games and Drinking Glasses

Three other pros who returned survey questionnaires, Ed Livingston of Minnehaha in Sioux Falls, S.D., Ed Hogan of Riverside in Portland, Ore., and Morgan M. Fottrell of the Royal Lahaina Club on Maui in Hawaii, estimate that their sales of offbeat articles amount to between 10 and 15 per cent of their gross. Hogan calls attention to the fact that in the last two years he has done a surprisingly good business in golf games. Fottrell suggests that drinking glasses, if embossed with the club crest, eventually make their way into the homes of most members.

Bud Williamson of the CC of Lincoln, Neb., estimates that his miscellaneous sales run to about five per cent of his volume, with neckties accounting for the greater part of the windfall. Severn White, Jr., James River CC, Newport News, Va., another in the five per cent group, points out that customer preference brings a change in the strong selling miscellaneous items from year to year. In 1962, for instance, he sold quite a few golf games; last year the demand was for "Puttnik," an electric putting cup.

Don't Work at It

Most of the shop operators in the sub-five per cent class say that their sales of miscellaneous items lag because they don't push them. Lack of display space, customer indifference, and not wanting to litter the shop with merchandise that may detract from playing equipment and apparel, are cited as reasons why pros don't make more of an effort to market non-golf goods.

One shopmaster tells how he set up a fairly elaborate display of sun tan lotion, deodorants, hair lotion and shaving cream on a counter above a golf ball display and, after two months, found that the sale of balls fell off. He moved the toiletries to another part of the shop and thereafter both these and the golf balls sold better. Another pro mentions that he has never stocked lotions or shaving creams because he doesn't want to cut



Gene Sarazen, who is the commentator for Shell's "Wonderful World of Golf", takes time out during the Tony Lema — Chen Ching-Po match at Kawana Fuji course in Japan to show a Japanese woman how to hold a broomstick in case she decides to use it as a golf club. Lema-Chen match will be seen Feb. 23 on NBC-TV

into the lockerroom attendant's territory.

Read But Don't Buy

When golf instruction books were flooding the market three or four years ago, one pro put in what he describes as a bookseller's quota of them. "The trouble was," this fellow recalls, "I sold about three copies altogether. Everybody came in and picked up the books and read them, but nobody bought them. In time, I made sure that they slowly disappeared from the shelf."

Another pro, in remarks appended to the Golfdom questionnaire, tells how he thought he had a bonanza in golf ball retrievers a few years ago. "I got rid of a large number of them in a short time," he says. "Then, it occurred to me that they were knocking the bottom out of my golf ball sales. So, I quietly stored them away in the back room."

Going back to Willie Hunter, he has this to add about the handling of non-golf merchandise: "I have heard all the arguments against stocking miscellaneous articles. Sure, many of them are nothing more than convenience or nuisance items, depending on how you regard them. But all carry a markup and people will buy

(Continued on page 114)

The PAUL HAHN SHOW



(ONE HOUR EXHIBITION)

TRICK SHOTS COMEDY GOLF CLINIC

For informative brochure write:

PAUL HAHN

Cape Coral, Florida

Miscellaneous Merchandise

(Continued from page 60)

them from you if you take the trouble to sell them. If they'll eventually increase your profit by five, ten or twenty per cent, they are something you can't laugh off."

Below, in parentheses, is the percentage of shops that handle the Miscellaneous Items listed in the survey:

Neckties (25)	Sandals (10)
Tie pins/clasps (20)	Slippers (10)
Cuff Links (20)	
Belts (65)	Ash trays (10)
	Figurines (15)
Bracelets (10)	Sunglasses (20)
Necklaces (5)	Lighters (20)
Pins (25)	Cigaret cases (10)

Wallets (15)	Repellents (60)
Luggage (35)	Lotions (85)
Shaving Kits (10)	

Loafers (35)	Instruction books (40)
Tennis shoes (15)	Other books (20)

Items not mentioned in the survey but which pros say they stock are: Shoe bags, golf games, chapstick, ball retrievers, hand warmers, vitamins, records, drinking glasses, electric razors, purses, foot spray, waterproof spray, playing cards and hunting coats.

Pro-Grip
NON-SLIP



First choice of better golfers everywhere. (Same product only the jar is new.)

MANUFACTURER'S SPECIALTY CO. INC.

2736 Sidney St.

St. Louis 4, Mo.

Sugar In That Turf

(Continued from page 38)

be beneficial otherwise when the levels of available calcium are low. A dolomite should be applied when a soil test indicates a low level of available magnesium. Besides neutralizing acidity, dolomite furnishes magnesium and eliminates any possibility of a soil deficiency.

Spread It Out

It is not necessary to apply enough lime at one time to change a strongly acid soil to neutrality or very slight acidity. It may upset soil equilibrium. The better way is to use 1½ to 2 tons per acre annually until pH 6.0 is attained. Then an application every two to three years at a rate which will maintain this reaction range will suffice.

Type of soil plays a part in fertilizer procedure. It governs kind of fertilizer, rate and frequency of application. Sands are very low in all nutrients and are un-