



Len Kennett

... sales in excess of \$20,000

### *The Opening Wedge . . .*

## Sales Start When Christmas Catalogs Are Distributed

**"S**ound merchandising practices are the key to Christmas pro shop sales," comments Len Kennett, pro at Los Verdes Golf Course in Palos Verdes Estates, Calif. "Keep your promotions in tune with your merchandise and established year-round sales program. The golf pro who emphasizes high-quality and good taste in a low-keyed manner will stand out among the run-of-the-mill merchants scrambling for Christmas profits," Kennett adds.

Kennett's advice is backed by success. Last year at San Gabriel CC, where he was pro for seven years, Len's Christmas gift sales were in excess of \$20,000. His success was only a small part of the total picture — golf professionals who used "Christmas Shopping at Your Pro Shop" as part of their sales program in 1963 earned nearly \$3 million in gift sales.

"Christmas Shopping is the first step towards building Christmas sales," Kennett remarks. Having used the catalog since 1957, he describes it as essential. His reasons for the strong endorsement are: "... the catalog is always in good taste; yet it's a forceful reminder that Christmas service is available in the pro shop."

### **Must for Success**

"Another must for Christmas success is a well stocked shop," observes Al Houghton, pro at Prince Georges CC in Landover, Md. "With a wide selection of styles and colors in equipment, apparel and accessories, golfers are able to concentrate their shopping in a pleasant, relaxed pro shop atmosphere." As one Indianapolis public course pro has pointed out, well-stocked shelves at Christmas-time convince the customer that he is selecting popular merchandise rather than year-end close-outs.

"Christmas Shopping" and a well-stocked pro shop are powerful teammates. Values rather than bargains are the product. Together, these two elements go a long way in helping the pro share in lucrative pro shop gift sales. Plenty of extras, though, are necessary to push potential Christmas earnings to their peak.

Christmas gift wrapping is becoming a standard feature in pro shops anxious to serve Christmas shoppers. GOLFDOM's survey shows that about three-fourths of

## \$3 Million in Extra Pro Sales Income

Almost \$3-million in gift sales were added to the incomes of professionals who last year used "Christmas Shopping at Your Pro Shop." This estimated total plus the following figures and merchandising tips are the result of Golfdom's annual survey of "Christmas Shopping" pro-users. The survey was sent to 600 pros and 228 — almost two-fifths — replied. The analysis of information gives an overall picture of successful Christmas sales operations and provides many suggestions for those pros anxious to add Christmas sales to year-end profits.

### 1. When will you start your 1964 Christmas gift selling campaign?

Prior to October — 15; During October — 60; First half of November — 114; Last half of November — 21; During December — 10.

### 2. In 1963, what percentage of gifts were bought by men? By women?

The 210 pros answering this question reported 47.5 per cent were bought by men while 51.8 per cent of the gifts bought were sold to women.

### 3. Did you decorate your shop for Christmas in 1963?

Of the 218 answering this, 170 decorated, 48 did not.

### 4. Did you furnish gift wrapping service in 1963?

One-hundred seventy-nine did wrap gifts, 44 did not and 192 plan to offer gift-wrapping this year.

### 5. Do you plan this year to use the special, imprinted "self-mailer" order forms available to "Christmas Shopping" professionals?

Of the 171 pros answering, 92 plan to use order blanks.

### 6. Pros were asked to report their estimated Christmas sales for 1963.

Total sales reports average out to \$4,800 per professional. Seventy per cent reported sales from under \$1000 to \$5,000 with an average of \$3,000. Thirty percent reported sales from \$5,000 to over \$25,000 with an average of \$8,300. The estimated gift sales for all "Christmas Shopping" pro-users in 1963 was \$2,917,500.

the pros offered this service in 1963 and that an even greater number intend to gift wrap this season.

Gift wrapping can cause a lot of headaches while accomplishing little if it is done in a haphazard manner. Over the years, Len Kennett has developed a system that permits a good deal of individuality for each package with a minimum of cost and effort. Beginning with a basic, all red box, Kennett adds ribbons in gold, red-and-white candy stripe or all-white. Two different holiday wrapping papers are also available. Distinctive bows are made with a device called the "Bow Tyer", manufactured by Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Co. Since it costs less than \$50, Kennett considers the "Bow Tyer" an excellent investment. Most of the packages wrapped in Kennett's pro shop cost little more than 15 cents.

### Add Girls to Staff

Two girls are added to Kennett's staff for the holiday season and, generally, one of these will show a knack for gift wrapping. This girl is assigned to do most of the gift wrapping. In addition, Kennett has his full-time woman assistant show the entire staff how to wrap packages so that everyone can lend a hand if necessary.

With this system, Kennett finds that he can sell several items to a customer, yet offer a variety of wrappings.

Most shops do some decorating to promote the Yuletide spirit. Some limit themselves to a wreath on the door and a Christmas tree in the corner. One shop goes so far as to hire a professional window trimming firm to add festive accessories.

Decorations add holiday gaiety to the  
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and storage facilities to patronize the service. A simple explanation of the disadvantages of dragging clubs from course to car, examples of carefully cleaned and repaired clubs should convince a prospective customer of the value of pro shop storage, they say. Another pro, at the beginning of each season, mentions that there are only a few spots left in the rack room — *this always brings in several new customers.*

## Christmas Sales Start

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customer's shopping and a neat, orderly shop adds to overall convenience. Kennett observes that a small shop has it hands down over the large department store, assuming that merchandise is attractively displayed and arranged in a manner that's convenient for both browsers and the pro staff.

The question of refreshments in the pro shop depends on your customers. Many enjoy the casual conviviality that coffee and rolls add to Christmas shopping. Some pros feel, however, that the practice hampers service to customers.

Additional promotion may aid your Christmas sales. Many pros follow their mailings of "Christmas Shopping" with a brief personal phone call. These are especially valuable when you know a golfer's Christmas wants and you may be of real service to someone wondering just what to give. The club bulletin board and newsletter are naturals for reaching potential customers. Important in any promotions that you may use are your efforts to reflect the high quality of your merchandise — many have found that poor promotion techniques cheapen the value of merchandise, hurt sales and reduce profits.

*Len Kennett was pro at the San Gabriel (Calif.) CC for seven years before moving to Los Verdes GC several months ago.*

The Encyclopedia of Golf, originally published in 1954 by Nevin H. Gibson, has been revised and contains records through 1962. Records of leading U.S., British and international tournaments are included. A. S. Barnes & Co., 8 E. 36th st., New York 10016, is the publisher.