

manufacturers in preserving the market for quality golf goods. The pros' concern is shared by some manufacturers who don't want the golf ball business to follow the cheap baseball glove business to Japanese factories.

Cheap golf balls are being poured into the market as advertising gifts and are adding to the conglomeration of items in stores specializing in the cheapest sort of merchandise. These retailing outlets aren't directly competing with pros as the pro standard of golf goods values attracts a better class of customers. But where cheap stuff is harming the pro cause, say club professionals, is in featuring low grade balls bearing the names of prominent professionals who don't play the balls bearing their names. This misleading advertising cheapens the entire pro business picture.

Hard to Figure This One

PGA members were shocked recently when a telecast of a tournament authorized by the PGA carried advertising of a \$3.98 putter, a \$1.98 golf umbrella and three golf balls for \$1.33 as the bait for a chain of tire stores. The implied endorsement of low grade merchandise by the PGA, and the use of PGA co-sponsored tournament publicity to get golfers away from pro shop buying and into tire stores for golf goods, has professionals burning.

The case has been embarrassing all around. The network that hooked the PGA into apparently plugging the cheap grade of golf goods needs to do a lot of explaining. The tire company that associated itself with the low quality goods has lost friends and boosters among pros and golfers who feel it is wise to buy good quality tires as well as good quality golf goods.

Pro Quality Makes Market

The 1964 ball figures show that the pro shop type of balls (of average value of \$8.96 a doz., per Census report) accounted for 3,361,503 dozen of the 6,145,199 dozen total sold. The pro quality balls sold for \$30,113,034 of the total ball sales of \$43,473,126.

What these figures prove is that pro quality sales amount to only about 54 per cent of the American golf ball volume, but account for near 72 per cent of the

USGA Says Some Balls Don't Conform to Rules

USGA has indicated that substantial numbers of five brands of golf balls fail to conform with the velocity regulation in Rule 2-3 of the Rules of Golf. Use of all balls of these brands is thus prohibited because balls may be tested for velocity only on the USGA apparatus.

Rule 2-3 provides in part that the velocity of the ball shall not exceed 250 feet per second when measured on the USGA apparatus, with a maximum tolerance of 2 per cent. The balls in question exceed the tolerance as well as the basic limit.

Maximum Weight Involved

In addition, substantial numbers of three brands do not conform with the provision in Rule 2-3 limiting the maximum weight of the ball to 1.620 ounces avoirdupois. Two of these brands also fail the velocity requirement and may not be used under any circumstances. Any individual ball of the brands which have failed only to meet the weight regulation may be used if it can be proved that its weight does not exceed 1.620 ounces.

Notification of the findings were made to officials in charge of the local qualifying rounds for the U.S. Open and the PGA.

Amateur golf associations also are being notified of the breaches of the golf ball rules.

manufacturers' ball sales revenue. There are 18 pro-only golf balls on the market.

It doesn't take any marketing genius to see why the health of the pro golf ball market is essential to golf goods manufacturers.

Club Market Up Slightly

For 1964, there were 10,731,574 clubs reported at a total factory selling cost, including federal excise tax, of \$70,439,099. The average value was \$6.56.

Very few clubs were imported into the United States so the 1963 sales of 10,000,279 and the 1964 sales probably give a nearly accurate comparative picture. With

(Continued on page 70)