

# PGA



## Show Notes

The spectacular, immense, bewildering success of the Professional Golfers' Assn. Merchandise Show at the PGA National GC, Palm Beach Gardens, Fla, was far ahead of anything else that's happened in the trade division affairs of professionals, superintendents and club managers.

A veteran in golf business said to me at Palm Beach Gardens: "This is the revolution. We came in wondering how to sell. Now we wonder what to buy."

How right he was. Because of the wealth of golf fashion merchandise displayed at the show, there was confusion and danger for many professionals.

"What should I buy out of all this clothing to sell to women at our place?" was the query of hundreds. The answer isn't easy, and if the pro doesn't get it, he'll get stuck with plenty of merchandise he will have to sell at less than

overall cost before his season closes.

Pat Williams, PGA educational director, heard much about the buying problem, and his listening and hunting for solutions will be reflected in the professional association's business school program. Despite the progress professionals have made in clothing, shoe and headwear merchandising at private and fee clubs, their success mainly has been the result of having wives with fashion foresight or women shop assistants who knew what to buy.

The men's sportswear pro shop pioneers, such as DiFini and Izod did a grand job of opening the pro shop market for women's apparel and have cashed in nicely. Ernie Sabayrac was saying at the show that his company last year sold 100,000 of the new Lacoste golf outfits for women through pro shops. At \$32.50 a dress, this compares nicely with any

one line of woods or irons.

One thing that has baffled pros is that what sells to women at one club won't at another club, two miles down the road. And when the specialists who buy women's wear for stores can't come up with the right answers, it's no wonder the pro worries about what to buy at a large show.

Henry Lindner, pro at Lost Tree Club, North Palm Beach, and one of golf's smartest businessmen, came along while I was listening to some pros telling of their indecision about buying at the show.

"Three-quarters of my dollar volume down here is men's and women's apparel. It wears out soon and without complaint, and fashions change. I wish we could say the same of clubs and balls, but they are such long-lasting big bargains that the customers seem to wear out first," he said.

—Herb Graffis

