

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Mill River plan: thought-provoking

This month's Letters to the Editor column is devoted to responses we have had to the article "Everyday, A Sale Day" (October/November, 1970, p. 52) and to the editorial "The Mill River Formula" (October/November, 1970, p. 8).

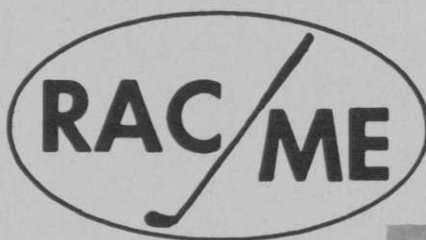
We at Acushnet have a unique viewpoint on marketing and many times we feel completely alone and not really understood by the vast majority of the trade. All our analyses and studies back up your fundamental position that the pro shop has been losing business, and if the trend continues, the vitality and strength of the pro shop market is in jeopardy. It is implicit in your article and editorial that the pro shop is by far the best outlet for golf products and complements the healthy growth of golf because it blends quality products with professional advice.

The realities of the marketplace have made competition severe. Many golf course businessmen have been slow to detect these economic trends. I consider this formula one outstanding strategy that can realistically strengthen the pro shop market. It is difficult to tell how extensive it can become, but more important it shows imaginative thinking and concern by one professional and a response that is positive. It is true that the pro shop does have the best quality, but now the professional must blend this in with value. The Mill River formula is one solution. Undoubtedly, it is not the only answer, but it is a creative way of analyzing a situation and coming up with a program that has meaning to that particular club and area.

L. Dean Cassell  
Vice President Sales  
Acushnet Sales Company  
New Bedford, Mass.

(Continued on page 17)

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## Letters

continued from page 13

We certainly think the article in *GOLFDOM*, entitled "Everyday, A Sale Day," is totally thought provoking and should be applicable to certain clubs throughout the country.

*P.R. MacDonald*  
Vice President

*Dunlop Tire and Rubber Corp.*  
Buffalo, New York

I have had grave concerns about the future of the golf professional and have felt for some time that everyone in golf should be seeking new ways for the golf professional to generate income. The consequences of not acting are that the professional will end up within the next few years a salaried employee of the club, and not a very high paid one at that. Consequently I found Montgomery's unique approach very interesting. Based on the number of professionals who have discussed the article with me, you have exposed a problem with which a majority of them are concerned.

Although I am convinced that the professional's role must change if he is to survive, I am not yet convinced that Montgomery's approach would be successful at all types of clubs.

Although there is no question that the professional is faced with more competition today than at any time in golf's history, I don't think that anyone knows enough, because of the lack of marketing research, to determine how much business the pro is really losing to retail competition. I suspect the problem is very severe, because the average member is spending fewer dollars on golf equipment and golfwear than he did a few years ago. In fact, the professional who isn't earning less than he did 10 years ago is an exception. It is apparent, therefore, that new ways to attract the consumer to spend his dollars on golf equipment rather than on some other activity must be made.

I think the jury is still out on the question of whether or not Montgomery's plan will sustain itself, but I compliment him on his ingenuity and courage.

*R.D. Rickey*  
Vice President  
*MacGregor*  
Cincinnati, Ohio



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