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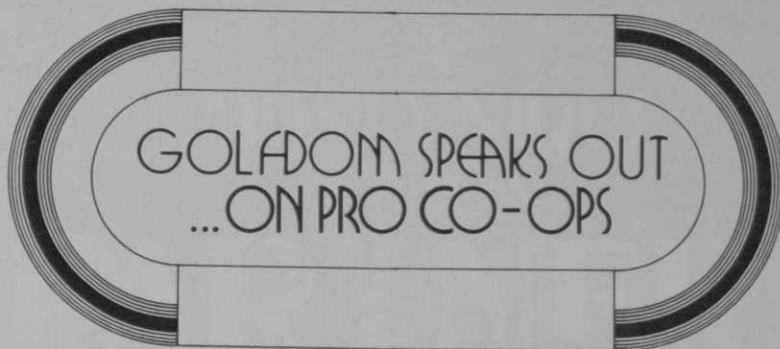
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When GOLFDOM approached Charles Byrket with the idea of doing an article based on his experiences with the Indiana golf cooperative, it was apparent from the outset that he represented one point of view and we another. After reading the article ("Golf Co-ops: A Case Study," May, p. 28), no one can deny that Byrket merits praise for his efforts, perseverance and personal sacrifice in attempting to turn theory into successful reality. It also should be clearly noted, that despite the obstacles and frustrations he experienced, Byrket still believes, given a certain set of circumstances, that the golf shop co-op can work.

Among the requirements he stresses are: proper financial backing, continual legal advice, qualified full-time person or persons to operate the co-op offices and warehouse, and full cooperation of the participants.

GOLFDOM believes that, even with all of these requirements, the concept cannot succeed in the golf market because of one seemingly simple, but vital reason—the differences in clientele from pro shop to pro shop. What is great for one pro shop is anathema for another. The golf professional, too, has long been an individualist. Would he be willing to become just a stockholder and let someone else,

even though that person may be more knowledgeable, order for his shop? The merchandising concepts and theories that must be applied by a golf professional at a public course differ from those at a private course. Can a co-op have the genius to discover the common denominator that will unite all golf professionals and give them the ability to make purchases to suit their varied clienteles?

Look at the increasing numbers of golf equipment and accessory manufacturers and the growing numbers of golf apparel lines. Manufacturers are getting into this limited and highly competitive market because they know that one company cannot supply the demands of the many types of their customers.

Companies are aiming their thrusts to particular economic levels, age groups, life styles and tastes. Many professionals favor one manufacturer's line over another, and any savings in costs are not going to budge them. For a cooperative to supply the golf professional with in-depth inventories in all categories would require a staggering capital investment, which professionals to date have not indicated a willingness, or an economic capacity, to make.

—ROBERT J. ABRAMSON
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER



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