

# Managers Review Experiences in Meeting Wartime Problems

★ Previous issues of GOLFDOM have referred to the versatility and resourcefulness with which golf and country club managers have met the often sudden and radical changes resulting from war influences. True, in many cases they have had no more trouble with transportation, supplies and equipment shortages than Atlantic City concessionaires of wheel chairs after the recent storm. By and large the managers have proved expert greeters when it came to meeting emergencies.

After almost three seasons of war their major changes in policy and operating practices have been fitted into a smooth running routine. How this was accomplished is tersely told in letters received from those who played stellar roles in helping their clubs weather the storm.

Marcel Pontillon, manager, Longmeadow CC, Longmeadow, Mass., briefs their experiences by saying: "We have curtailed menus and service and for the past two years we were forced to discontinue teas, weddings and large private parties due to a large increase in our membership, rationing and transportation. On the other hand these were replaced by informal and get-together parties restricted exclusively to members.

"We varied our program by staging golf jamborees, swimming meets, bingo parties and movies. The movies, shown outdoors, gave the members opportunities of seeing themselves in action in every line of club sports and were greatly appreciated. All of our parties either began, or finished with a buffet supper. Although private parties were discontinued we did accept Army, Navy and war industry affairs. Dances were curtailed from two a month or twelve for the summer season to two formals and two informals. War bonds and stamps were given to all tournament winners.

"Our membership is composed of 467 members and is closed for the duration. In our main room we have a handsome Honor Roll which embraces the names of 160 of our members in the armed services.

Our season has been a very busy one. It is of six months' duration from the last week end of April to the end of October. During the winter we keep our back part of the clubhouse open and a concessionaire caters to our members on a small

scale, with small parties and dances held occasionally. The winter sports are ice skating and skiing; bingo and bridge parties are also staged.

"That our activities have been well attended is confirmed by the fact that with but two-thirds of the season gone our dining and bar sales already exceed the 1943 volume in these departments. Our board of governors is busy preparing plans for a general postwar reconditioning of Longmeadow."

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In addition to wrestling with the bugaboos of wartime operations, Benjamin Geller of Fresh Meadow CC, Flushing, N. Y., tells of a golf program for service men.

"Because of the proximity of the Entertainment Centers in and around Times Square, we devoted our efforts towards extending the courtesy of our golf course to as many of the service men and officers as we were able to take advantage of our facilities. Our arrangement provided for courtesy of play which included supplying the golf clubs, golf balls, caddy fee and meals without charge.

"Hundreds of service men from all parts of the world took advantage of our offer to enjoy a pleasant day of golf at Fresh Meadow. We are quite proud of the many letters on file thanking us for the courtesies extended to them."

\* \* \*

Entertainment was curtailed at Baltusrol GC, Short Hills, N. J., as transportation proved a real problem to the membership which is spread over a 50 mile radius from the club. Despite this, Maj. R. A. Jones, manager, reports that: "This season our club business was more than double that of last year, the best July and August since 1936. Our best entertainments are motion picture shows outdoors—we can seat 400 on the porch. Our courses are in the best condition in many years in spite of the lack of adequate staff.

"All last season we operated four horse drawn vehicles to and from the railroad station and ran a farm. We fattened 30 steers, 120 sheep and lambs and raised 10 heifers. We made and sold 30 tons of hay."

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From Golden Valley GC, Minneapolis, manager A. C. Statt writes of a develop-

ment which has resulted in stimulating lively enthusiasm of the members wives in this essentially men's club. A Sunday event was scheduled in which their members invited their wives to participate in a nine-hole, two-ball foursome starting at four o'clock. Some of the wives had never played before and have become very much enthused. So well did the event click with the wives that they have taken the lead in promoting frequent repetition of the event. The event was followed by a cocktail hour, dinner and juke box dancing. Statt reports a gain of 30 members over 1943 and business almost double that of last year.

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"Glen Oaks CC, Glen Ellyn, Ill., had its two best years in 1942 and 1943," according to manager, W. F. Coyne, "yet, 1944 is proving a still greater year due to increased membership and business in general.

"Our social membership has been closed at fifty families, and very few golfing memberships now are available. The total membership is approximately 300 families.

"The pool at Glen Oak was open for 80 days—from June 'till Labor Day. 8,000 swimmers used it during that time; an average of 100 per day.

"This club is truly a country club for the family, as its social functions are many. Saturday night dance parties, on an outside terrace twice a month at no charge to members or guests are very popular with juniors as well as the older set. We have had three floor shows this season when the families come for dinner and stay to see the entertainment. After dinner on Labor Day night a Keno party proved very popular.

"The ladies auxiliary has card parties each Saturday afternoon . . . beginning in May with a luncheon of 150 members and guests and closing with a dinner in September.

"The Ladies golf committee is an active organization which plays each Wednesday during the season and winds up its events by having a two-day tournament the latter part of August.

"The Round-Up, the 29th annual stag affair, was held on August 18th and 19th. This event was one of the few two-day tournaments held in the district this year. 250 members and guests teed-off each day. Every contestant received a souvenir and many won War Bonds as prizes. It was the biggest field ever to enter the Round-Up.

"There were no outside parties or tournaments held at Glen Oak this season. Our dining rooms were filled to capacity so

often that the members were requested to limit their guests for the season because of food rationing and labor problems. However, the restaurants are still having their biggest year.

"The golf course is always kept in good shape as we have many golfers who appreciate their course and play it often. The officers and directors of Glen Oak are very active and often have a 100% attendance at their meetings.

"We are fortunate in having had a good staff of help all through this busy season. The club is closed on Mondays—employees day off. However, the pool and grounds are open for play, but there is no service in the locker-rooms, bar, or restaurants. When Monday is a holiday, the club is closed the following day."

## British Post War Golf Plans

Commenting that to discuss golf when victory has been achieved is yet a little premature, nevertheless THE GOLFING WORLD, Edinburgh, in its August issue suggests that those responsible for the game at St. Andrews should now consider how golf is going to get away to its quickest start after the war.

In the immediate post-war professional tournaments, the editor points out, tournaments on a larger scale than ever before will be entered upon, with the promoters of the following tournaments signifying their intention of continuing in post-war years under PGA auspices:

News of the World Tournament

PGA £1,500 Tournament

Assistant Pros Tournament

Daily Mail Tournament

News Chronicle Tournament

Dunlop, Southport or similar tournament

Silver King Tournament

Daily Sketch Tournament

A tournament to celebrate the victory will no doubt be held at the earliest possible date, states this authoritative publication, and the Leeds £1,000 tournament, run by the Yorkshire Evening News, no doubt will be restored.

In the same issue the editors suggest the possibility of breaking away from the traditional number of holes in postwar layouts: "Exigencies of the war have made us realize that, for the enjoyment of members, clubs can do with smaller courses and fewer holes. It is not incumbent to have 18 holes if a better layout can be made on fourteen or sixteen holes. Greenkeeping costs can be reduced and above all safety to the player can be insured."

# TURF MAINTENANCE — NOW AND LATER

By O. J. NOER

Agronomist, The Sewerage Commission of Milwaukee

★ Turf on golf courses has been better this year than players had a right to expect. With unavoidable wartime shortages in labor, fertilizer and supplies, some deterioration was inevitable. Of necessity greenkeepers focused attention on greens. That was logical and as it should be. At a few clubs putting surfaces were as good as ever before. But generally greens were not up to pre-war standards. Tees, fairways, traps and bunkers received little or no care. As a consequence they will need extra attention when labor becomes more plentiful.

The labor situation was considered bad in 1943. It has been even worse this year; the principal bottleneck of maintenance everywhere. Clubs in metropolitan areas and war production centers depended mainly upon school age boys. Some were good, but very few could be trusted with exacting tasks. The mowing of greens seemed to be their most creditable job. Now that school has started, labor will be even more scarce. The shortage is apt to continue acute for the balance of this year. Effective relief is not likely before hostilities cease in Europe.

Except for a brief trying spell of hot weather in August, climatic factors have been generally favorable for growth. The late fall and winter was unseasonably dry almost everywhere. Consequently, the subsoil was deficient in moisture when growth started. Dry spots began to develop in greens and around the edges on elevated ones. Had hot humid weather, accompanied by drenching rains prevailed, considerable turf would have succumbed to scald. Matted turf aggravated dry spot development on many of the afflicted greens. The entrance and deep penetration of water is impeded by a heavy blanket of grass.

From reports, New England had one of the driest years on record. The drought started in the fall of 1943 and persisted in 1944. Apparently fairway turf has deteriorated and weeds increased. Drought conditions prevailed during spring and summer in the Cincinnati and Louisville regions. On the other hand, Iowa was visited with very heavy rains in spring and early summer. Water soaked soil slowed early growth and floods taxed greenkeeper ingenuity to repair the damage.

Grubs of the May and June beetle were

prevalent in most parts of the Midwest. In some sections they did more damage to fairways and lawns than in any season for a decade or more. Before the war the green section staff suggested that arsenic acid and sodium arsenite treatments for weed eradication seemingly controlled grubs when the accumulated concentration approached or exceeded 2 pounds per 1,000 square feet (80-90 pounds per acre). Evidence in Milwaukee and Chicago tends to support this view. The only injury at Brynwood in Milwaukee occurred in the roughs. There was no sign of damage to fairway turf. Fairways have been treated twice each fall for the past three years. Chicago courses that have sprayed roughs and treated fairways systematically during the past three to four years, are singularly free from damage. Arsenic acid and sodium arsenite will never be used primarily for grub control. Benefits in that respect are secondary because several years elapse before a lethal concentration is attained. However, the regular use of arsenicals for weed and clover control will eventually solve the grub problem and also eliminate worm casts.

The results obtained in Chicago and Milwaukee with arsenicals for weed control have been outstanding. In both places their use is no longer on an experimental basis. On many watered courses knotweed, chickweed, clover and poa annua have increased tremendously. There are more plantain, buckhorn and dandelion in unwatered fairways because of the short supply of fertilizer. To transform unwatered fairways into good turf by higher cutting and fertilization is possible. It takes more time than impatient golfers will tolerate. The job can be done quicker and better by using an arsenical along with fertilization and reseeding if necessary. Labor and material shortages will prevent clubs from attacking the fairway problem until after the war. In the meantime chairmen and greenkeepers should become familiar with the pros and cons of this comparatively new development.

Before attempting to formulate a post-war fairway program it would be well to collect representative soil samples and have them tested for acidity and content of available phosphorus, potash, calcium and magnesium. The tests should be made this fall. Then a program spanning several years can be formulated during win-



Grub damage in rough at Brynwood in Milwaukee, but none in adjoining fairway treated twice each fall for weed control. Milarsenite was used at 300-350 lbs. per acre each time.

ter, put in outline form, and placed before the directors or governors for approval with the understanding that it will start when wartime restrictions on labor and material are lifted.

For the balance of this year greens should continue to receive first call on labor and fertilizer. Then, if at all possible, tees should have sorely needed attention. Any time left should be devoted to fairways, traps and bunkers.

All greens should be fertilized this fall, preferably during September. Besides nitrogen, phosphate and potash are needed on greens that have received little or no top-dressing. During a single growing season greens should receive the equivalent of 20 to 30 pounds super-phosphate (20 per cent grade) and 10 to 15 pounds muriate of potash (60 per cent grade) per 1,000 square feet. These quantities can be applied as equal monthly doses or they can be halved and applied twice a year, once in early fall and again in spring. By using larger amounts at any one time, deeper penetration is likely before fixation occurs. The cooler weather in spring and fall minimizes the chance of scorching the grass. Interim feeding becomes a matter of furnishing nitrogen as needed. Clubs possessing reserve supplies of phosphate and potash are fortunate. Others should procure specialty fertilizer having as high content of potash as is obtainable.

Before growth stops this fall, representative soil samples should be drawn from some or all greens and tested for acidity and content of essential plant food elements. Then a sensible fertilizer program can be formulated for 1945.

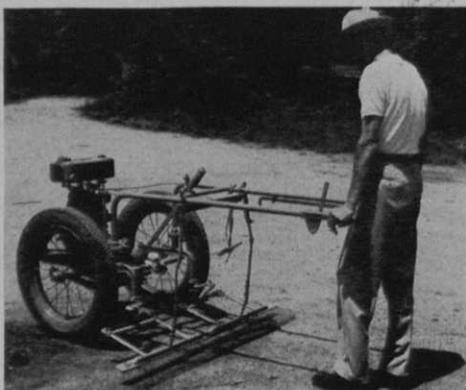
The brown patch season is about over. From now on dollar spot is the disease to guard against. Effective fungicides are

available and should be used regularly to prevent disease rather than wait for attacks and then treat to stop them. The relation between dollar spot and nitrogen has been pointed out before. Nitrogen hunger promotes dollar spot. By keeping grass healthy and in active growth, disease will be less frequent and individual attacks milder. Fungicide will be more effective; the rate can be slightly less, and the interval between treatments somewhat longer.

Clubs in the more northerly regions should not overlook the snow mold menace. Now that calomel and corrosive sublimate are available, this disease can be controlled. The 2/3 calomel, 1/3 corrosive mixture should be used at 3 to 4 ounces per 1,000 square feet in November or early December before the first fall of snow. Dry sand can be used to provide the bulk needed to insure even distribution. Besides the putting green, proper adjoining banks and slopes draining onto it should be treated. Greens of seaside or other especially susceptible strains, should be treated again in spring right after snow disappears. The rate then should be 1 to 2 ounces per 1,000 square feet.

Fall is a good time to start removing surplus grass from heavily matted greens. Brushing or light raking before mowing is good practice and will not interfere with play. Drastic treatment is best performed in early spring when grass starts to grow. At that time one can't be too rough. Raking and close cutting should continue until the mat is removed. Then the green should be fertilized and top-dressed. Severe raking in the fall should be done sufficiently early so grass can recover completely before cold weather stops growth.

Immediately after labor becomes more



Don Strand, examines homemade power rake for removing surplus grass from matted greens. Bill Stuppel, greenkeeper, Skokie CC, Chicago district, designed and built it utilizing two Delmonte rakes and an Overgreen.

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plentiful, greens should be mowed daily. This is especially true for greens of dense growing, creeping bent. It is impossible to prevent mat formation on them by mowing three or four times a week, especially during the seasons when grass is growing rapidly.

Most turf nurseries have been sorely neglected. A few are in deplorable condition, beyond redemption. Some have a fair stand of good grass but are infested with clover and weeds. These can be revived by using arsenicals to kill weeds, and fertilizer to promote turf growth. The bad ones should be replaced, and planted or seeded with good strains of grass.

Tees should be fertilized generously this fall if there is any permanent grass on them. A rate of 40 to 50 pounds per 1,000 square feet is not too much provided the nitrogen is organic and mostly insoluble; otherwise the suggested rate should be halved. Some tees are in need of a good top-dressing and seeding.

Resodding with turf from a weed-free nursery is one way to restore grass on tees after the war. Another is to kill weeds and clover with arsenic acid or sodium arsenite and re-seed. This is a simpler method which is feasible on tees where play can be confined to one-half the area while the work is in progress. That is from August until play stops that fall.

Labor is going to be high priced even after the war. Courses can't be kept with present skeleton crews. By the same token a force of 20 to 30 men is equally absurd. Plans should be formulated now to make changes needed to permit the maximum use of mechanical equipment. Among other things there should be a critical survey of traps and bunkers. There are some on every course that can be eliminated without affecting play. The ones to be retained can then be put in shape for use. Tees and greens should be eyed critically. The aim should be to mow tees and the aprons around greens with fairway units. A special committee should be chosen to undertake the task. The greens chairman, the greenkeeper, the professional and several members should spend enough time to explore the problem thoroughly and make a formal report. They should enlist the services of a competent architect if many changes are needed. The plan finally approved by the membership should be started at the earliest moment labor can be obtained to do the work.

#### TURF DISEASE BULLETIN

The Greens Section of the USGA, Beltsville, Maryland, has a supply of a section's bulletin on turf diseases now available at \$.85 a copy. Orders for this bulletin should be addressed direct to the Greens Section, and accompanied by payment in full.

## Midland Hills Meets Maintenance Emergencies

While wartime shortages and restrictions are producing varying individual problems in maintenance for each greenkeeper, generally speaking the over-all problem is being solved by the uncanny knack the upkeep experts have developed in making far less do far more. Yet, in many cases acknowledgment of the greenkeepers' loyalty, resourcefulness and substantial savings to his club has been down-right unappreciatively slow in taking the form of financial reward. However, from the way the wind is blowing, this situation is subject to sudden change without notice.

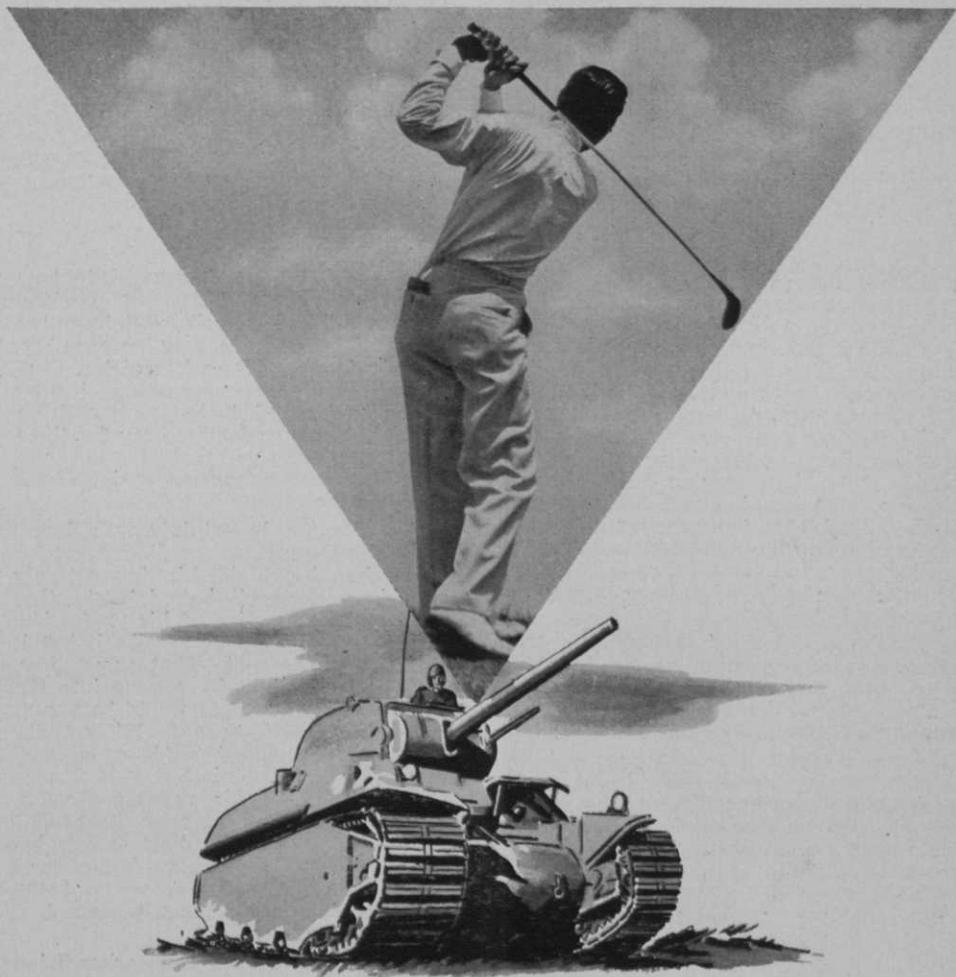
Writing of his experiences at Midland Hills (St. Paul district) CC, Emil Picha, greenkeeper, first points out that the club's grounds department has been operating the past two years on about half the money budgeted in prewar years. Considering the increase in wartime prices for material and labor, it boils down to operating on nearer one-third their prewar annual budget. And, according to Picha, they have made a fairly good go of it.

"We reduced the size of our greens to an average of 4,800 sq. ft., mowing them three or four times a week. We did no top dressing but applied chemicals as needed, keeping our watering and fertilizing at a minimum. Result: Somewhat excessive mat and more 'grain'. Our fairways were greatly enlarged, adding more area to be covered by our biggest production machine, a seven-unit fairway mower. Fairways received no watering or fertilizer. Rainfall was above normal for three years with some drought periods of short duration. Result: Loss of all poa annua which weeds replaced, but bluegrass also increased.

"Players are permitted to improve poor lies through the fairway. Traps weeded once but not raked by crew. Regardless, playing conditions and scoring have been good. While many things have been neglected it will not be difficult to bring the course back to first class condition when labor and money again are more plentiful."

### GI Pro in Iceland

Robert O. Waara, Mich. PGA member, formerly at Meadowbrook and Western clubs, Detroit, is a staff sergeant with the Base Command at Reykjavik, Iceland. He reports that golf is comparatively new up there being introduced only ten years ago, but he finds an avid interest in it by the Icelanders. The army boys have built a 9-hole "golf course," cow-pasture style, on the outskirts of the city and it is enjoyed by civilians as well as GIs. Bob is keeping his game in tune, having shot four "30's" and has even made a hole-in-one.



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# Sound Merchandising Key to Pros' Postwar Position

By DON YOUNG

★ During the past decade and a half a general awakening has taken place throughout the golf industry generally to the fact that the average club pro is something other than a fellow who spends his summer club hours midst pleasant, profitable surroundings. As a matter of fact the awakening has gone even further by discovering that the guy is useful for activities other than playing buck nassaus with the club champion each Saturday and Sunday, decorating the warmest and most comfortable leather-upholstered chair at a bowling alley five months during the winter or basking under a southern palm from November 'till April.

By a stroke of good fortune this economic bolt of lightning seems to have struck both pros and club officials alike. Needless to say its searing effects have proved beneficial to everyone concerned.

As for the club pro of today and tomorrow, if he is successful today and continues to be so in the future, he is in a business sense a figurative "swoose". He was recently most aptly described to the writer by a well-known club official who said:

"I really don't know of a job that requires more downright versatility and ability than that of being a successful golf club professional. I have a son interested in entering the profession and I hesitate to encourage him, fearing his inability to fill the requirements necessary for success in the field. In my opinion a successful club professional must be a combination professional man, business-man, magician. He first of all must be a decent player, a competent instructor, and thoroughly versed in everything pertaining to the game. In addition he must be the type of business man qualified to successfully merchandise in a highly competitive field with a limited available clientele. And lastly he must be a master of personality and diplomacy. Aside from the arts, I know of no profession that demands so much—and rewards so little if all of the requirements are not met."

It is entirely possible that the gentleman hit the nail squarely on the head. Please note, however, his use of the adjective "successful".

Of all the aforementioned requirements,

the one probably most disregarded by both pros and club officials is that of merchandising. In the past the private club pro has been far too prone to rely on member-friendship to ring his cash register. Club officials, in hiring their pros, seldom inquire into the matter of their merchandising ability. It has been far too easy for them to mentally observe that if the pro doesn't have it they can get it down at a cut price store.

Such a situation is certainly not a favorable one for the pro. Every dime spent for golf merchandise outside his shop not only hurts his pocketbook but detracts that much from the prestige of his profession. The club official may not realize it but it hurts his club as well. That same dime, even though it might have gone into the pro's pocket, nevertheless would have contributed that much toward club activity and financial soundness. It hurts as well the manufacturer, who is forced to finance the distribution of his product through both the pro and the cut price store. The member who spends the dime suffers his rap by paying the freight. With three casualties already suffered, we find the fourth victim to be the most important of all—the game of golf.

This dissertation on golf merchandising by no means suggests that the problem for everyone concerned, aside from cut-rate stores, could be easily solved by turning over completely the retail distribution of golf equipment to the pro. Far from it. First, it would create a monopoly, a word having no place anywhere in golf—at least since the grand slam days of Bobby Jones. Second, pros as a class, at present, would not be competent to handle it even if the monopoly were desirable. Third, the democratic principle of competition, the heart and soul of golf, would in itself be defeated by such an arrangement.

There is another word, however, that is most desirable. The word is "domination". It is as Yankee and democratic as roast beef and indeed just as palatable to a business-hungry pro golf market.

It is a remarkable fact that after 50 years of golf in America no one "class" has emerged as dominant in the retail distribution of golf merchandise and playing equipment. The pro, it is true, has made



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rather remarkable strides in that direction in the past ten years, but he still has a long road to travel to reach his desired destination. Whether he eventually reaches his goal is strictly up to him, his ambition, his ability, and his good business sense.

However, there are signs here and there of dominance in the field. One finds it in the pro shops of certain metropolitan locations. These shops are amply stocked, beautifully displayed, and the merchandise is backed up with sensible advertising. The man behind the counter knows what he has, has it at the price you can afford to pay, is capable of giving you custom attention, and can show you how it should be used. Regardless of what one may find at the cut rate stores, such a pro shop combination is unbeatable. It is, incidentally, the personification of the word "domination".

It is regrettable, however, that this dominance in the retail golf equipment market exists in such a small minority, even in metropolitan locations. In far too large a percentage, even shops in metropolitan clubs are not only understocked but no concrete sales program is in effect. These shops seem to operate on the principle that should the member desire something not in stock (which he inevitably does), the merchandise is available by the next day from a downtown distributor. Probably about 75% of these cases eventually buy downtown. Further, this same type of shop helps cut the entire profession's merchandising throat by requesting from the distributor or manufacturer a credit memo covering what merchandise is left in the shop at the end of the season.

Therein, whether we like it or not, lies most of the reasons for the cut rate store having a successful golf department. The manufacturer or distributor must clear his shelves of this returned merchandise and must take a loss in doing so. The pros get very little of it—for the simple reason that the pros themselves returned it. So their members buy it the following season at the cut rate marts at a figure considerably below what the pros sold it the previous season.

There's no percentage for the manufacturer in taking back merchandise and disposing of it at a loss. Neither, by the way, do your members like it. It's human to resent paying one price for an article at a pro shop and later see it downtown at a lesser figure, a circumstance that has led many golfers to believe they pay more for what they buy from the pro.

Neat way of the pro fighting himself, isn't it?

Admittedly pro merchandising is a highly specialized field and obviously some

unusual business practices are necessary because of that fact. When such practices, however, are so basically unsound as to effect the very structure on which sound business is built, someone or something is bound to suffer. In this case everyone suffers. Boiled down to raw fundamentals, the golfer himself suffers most because he eventually, in one way or another, pays through the nose for these commercial shenanigans. Viewing the entire setup as a whole, and with a weather eye to the future, the pro, the club official, and the manufacturer should all give this some serious consideration.

It might be suggested therefore that a great deal of good would result from pros and club officials conferring as a unit in planning and conducting local pro merchandising programs, with manufacturers lending a helping and guiding hand to the over-all picture. The idea should prove a cashable one to the pro as it should tend not only to promote greater member interest in a financially important phase of his job, but tend as well to improve the standards and financial soundness of pro merchandising generally, an activity that should in the future become an increasingly important department of the golf pro's profession, his club's activity, and the manufacturers' methods of distribution.

Even though pro shop merchandising may be regarded as a specialized undertaking, the basic principles of operation are almost the same as in any other type of retail distribution. We find three types of golf clubs in America: large, medium and small. There are exactly that many sizes in any other line of retail business. One can easily find outstanding successes in every size, each attained at varying locations and under radically different circumstances.

If one were to select one of these successful merchants, regardless of the size of his business, and delve into his history, it would be found that success was probably a direct result of the application of three cardinal principles: first, analysis of trade territory and type of trade within that territory; second, careful buying both in quality and quantity to suit the demands of that trade; third, vigorous sales promotion in keeping with that type of trade and kind of business.

These principles are comparatively simple to apply to pro merchandising—if the pro will take the time and trouble to do so. In doing so the pro might liken himself to the bond salesman, a business that requires an intimate, every day knowledge of a limited clientele's financial status. In the pro's case it is an intimate every day knowledge of his clientele's golfing requirements. A