

was made in a match in 1895 on the frozen river Tay by George Fox of Perth. . . Fox and five other fellows played a golf match on skates. . . Atlantic City (N.J.) CC celebrating its 50th year. . . National amateur was held there in 1901. . . Finals were postponed because of death of Pres. McKinley. . . Herbert Tweedie designed the first course. . . Bill Flynn made an entirely new layout in 1923. . . John Reid was first pro and was succeeded by Johnnie McDermott, first homebred to win the National Open. . . Leo Fraser now heads the group owning the club.

Bob Craigs, for 34 years pro at Audubon CC, Louisville, Ky., wrote a fine article on golf rules as one of the Courier-Journal series on "How to Play Golf." . . Col. Lee S. Read, Southern GA and Audubon official, says Bob's remarkable record of developing young pros in his area, his tutoring of amateurs and his relations with members make the Monifieth product one of the most beloved golfers in the south.

George S. May says the 1948 All-A-Meyrican will have \$50,000 prize money and PGA will order all its members to wear numbers. . . PGA at May's tournament released a statement advising that its players are not allowed to request appearance money at tournaments. . . Statement also



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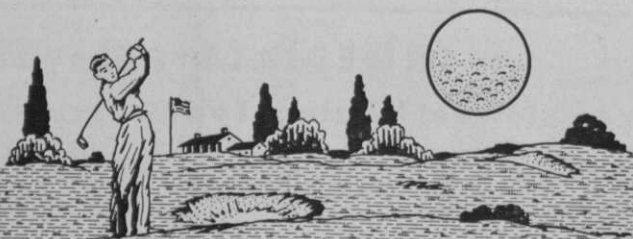
declared that PGA tournament players now commit themselves 60 days in advance to appear at events.

In Britain there are 195 artisan golf clubs with 10,000 members. . . No more courses have been opened to artisan clubs hence no more such clubs can be formed. . . Maurie Luxford, widely known Southern Calif. golf promoter, is establishing his own sporting goods and sports apparel company. . . Fred Eaton has become Pacific Coast distributor for Springfield clubs and balls, making his headquarters at Claremont Fairways, Foothill Blvd., Claremont, Calif.

Kid classes of Fred Bolton, Pendleton (Ore.) CC pro, getting big play. . . Johnny Armour, Tommy's younger, who's a time-study man for Goodrich Rubber at Akron, got an ace on the 150 yd. third at Fairlawn. . . More than 600 Goodrich golfers were in the company's annual tournament at Akron. . . Pederson boys got a fine illustrated story on their club making in a recent issue of Pic magazine.

Mexico, Central and South America planning many golf events to draw American tourists. . . Columbian Open championship will be played at Bogata CC, Sept. 26-28. . . Pro prizes will be Col. \$1700. . . Tro-

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phies for pro and amateur winners. . . Amateurs with handicaps not exceeding 15 are eligible. . . No entry fees. . . Medal play at 72 holes with 36 holes on the middle day. . . For entry blanks write Alberto Escallon Ortiz, sec., Asociacion Colombiana de Golf, Apartado 1548, Bogoto, Col.

Country club at Guadalajara, Jal., Mex., where Charles S. Smith is mgr.-sec., is having its annual tournament week beginning Oct. 6. . . It draws 120 players. . . Golf is getting to be a big sport in Mexico. . . Charley is one of the fellows who has given it plenty of promotion. . . Al Espinosa, gen. mgr., Country Club of Mexico City, also has done a great job of promotion. . . Mexico's president Miguel Aleman is an enthusiastic golfer, batting around in the low 90s when he can get away from work. . . He's interested in boosting the game there.

W. H. (Bertie) Way honored by Mayfield CC. . . Bertie, now 75, came from England to the U.S. in 1896. . . He played in the second U.S. National Open. . . His first pro job in the U.S. was on Long Island, then he went to Detroit and came to Cleveland in 1900 to build the long since defunct Euclid club. . . Bertie came to Mayfield when it was formed in 1909. . . He, George Low and Val Fitzjohn were second to Wil-

(Continued on page 77)

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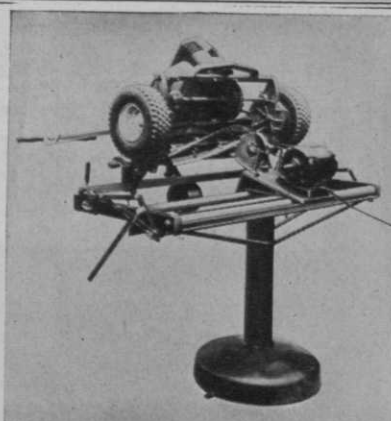
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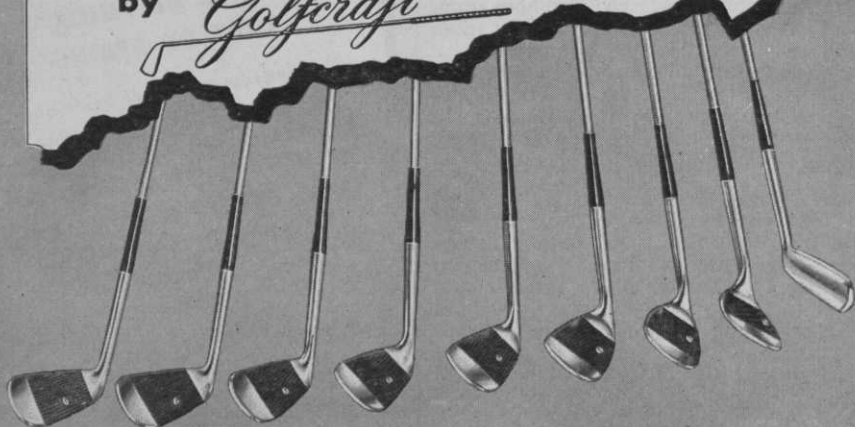


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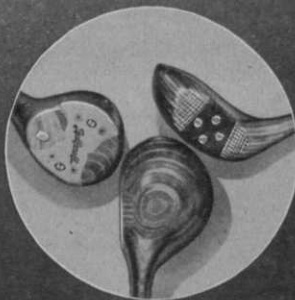
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Harry Bassler's "7 Success Steps" Mean 50Gs A Year

By JOE McDONALD

To do a business of over \$50,000 a year for the past 5 years a pro must have "something."

A quarter-million dollars worth of business transacted during the "war years" (1941-1945) with their shortage of clubs and balls! And this, mind you, does not include any teaching fees for 4 of the 5 years, as the pro could not take the time out to teach.

Who's the pro? Where is he located? How did he do it?

The answers to the first 2 questions are easy.

The pro is Harry Bassler. Location: Fox Hills-Baldwin golf courses, Culver City, Calif., about 10 miles from downtown Los Angeles. (Two 18-hole daily fee courses adjacent to each other.)

Answering the third question of "How did he do it?" will constitute the balance of this article.

We'll try to explain Bassler's success formula. Maybe other pros, particularly public course pros, will find some ideas herein which they might be able to apply to their pro shop business.

Bassler's Business Rules

Bassler's cardinal rules for successful shop operation and merchandising for any type of golf course are:

1. See that location of your golf shop demands that all players must pass through it to get to the first tee.
2. Have a display of ALL leading manufacturers clubs, bags, balls and other supplies.
3. Use various "eye-catchers" scattered throughout your shop that will make most of the golfers "stop to look."
4. Always be in your shop from at least 1:00 P.M. until closing—there are 5 times more clubs sold in the after-



Harry Bassler, a star at scoring with the sales slips as well as with the clubs.

- noons and evenings than in the mornings.
5. Use and wear the latest in golfing equipment and apparel for yourself and staff.
6. Keep your assistants thoroughly informed of costs and operating expenses so they learn that an article selling for \$30 and which cost \$20 does NOT mean \$10 profit.
7. The pro should DO, and be willing to do from time to time, any job in the shop that he asks his assistants to do—which includes cleaning up and sweeping out.

There it is. Looks like 7 simple steps, doesn't it? Maybe you'll claim you are already performing most of them.

But, we'll tip you off.

Shop Location Success Key

The "key" step is that No. 1 step!
LOCATION OF YOUR GOLF SHOP.



Harry Bassler and his staff of golf "merchandisers": Left to right—Bassler, Dick Boggs, Bill Martin and Ed Schwerin. Observe the neat display of items in showcase.

—Photo Waldo Glover & Associates

The other steps can be followed quite easily, we believe. But, in our estimation, that No. 1 step is the step YOU want to see put into effect at YOUR course in order to do a volume business. From there on if you are a hustler, a good merchandiser, a good teaching pro, a good playing pro, you might do over \$50,000 a year business as Bassler does!

At too many daily fee and municipal golf courses (and private clubs too) the pro's shop looks like some old room or building they didn't know what else to use the darn thing for, and in most cases is "located" anywhere from 50 yards to 100 yards away from the clubhouse and first tee. Sometimes down a hill (which customers do not want to climb) or off on the side partially hidden by a clump of trees "under which you can teach privately, in quiet."

In many instances, the pro shop is merely a section of the main clubhouse, or the "dining room" where the golfers come to buy their sandwiches, coffee or pop beverages—but located so that the golfers do not have to pass the pro's display, nor do they have to meet him, in any way, before going to the first tee.

Such golf shop layouts and locations, Bassler says, are strictly "negative" as far as helping the golfers see, and be in the position of buying, balls, clubs and accessories that will further their enjoyment of the game, bring them back for additional

rounds—and help the pro increase his sales.

Too often such locations and layouts of golf shops do not allow space for the carrying of sufficient stock, or display to catch the eyes of the golfers—thus presenting to the pro the minimum of sales and service opportunities. In such a position the pro is up against it right from the start.

Increase Golfers' Traffic

Bassler insists you MUST arrange that 100% of the golfers at your course MUST walk right through the middle of your shop if you ever hope to get their business, or the majority of their business. YOU MUST INCREASE THE TRAFFIC OF GOLFERS THROUGH YOUR SHOP AND THIS IS THE BEST WAY TO DO IT.

If the golfers do not have to come into your shop, they won't. And sales will always be at a low ebb. At private clubs, the members, in many instances, usually phone the pro shop and say, "Send a caddie with my clubs and a couple of balls to the first tee, please." And that's the extent to which the pro "contacted" that customer that day! What a fine chance he had to sell or serve that golfer!

Bassler came to the realization of this situation after locations at both private and public courses and at every opportunity "fought" for a location nearer the first tee, or the handling of starting tees or cards, so that the rendering of these services would bring the golfers into his shop.

In every instance where he was given such privileges his business increased immediately.

Boss Realizes Pro Shop Value

So, when he came over to his present location at Fox Hills-Baldwin golf courses, the first deal he made with Al Bryant, the manager, was that his shop would be (a) big enough to allow him to carry a large enough stock to properly serve the courses' customers, and (b) that the pro shop would be located so that every player approaching the first tee would have to walk through the pro shop.

Al Bryant, the course owner and manager, gladly conceded this to Bassler, as Bryant himself was anxious to have a well-stocked, modern golf shop on his properties to serve his many customers, along with a qualified pro who could help the customers select the proper equipment and clubs suited to their play; keep them happier about their game, and keep them playing.

And, put up fences and hedges Bassler did!

At Fox Hills and Baldwin courses you cannot get to the first tee without passing through the pro shop. The trees, fences, hedges and paths all lead to the pro shop—and through it—if you want to get to

the first tee and beginning of the play.

Well, pros, there's Step No. 1 to big business.

Can you accomplish it at your course?

Have Full Display

Step No. 2. Have a display of all leading manufacturers' clubs, bags, balls and other supplies.

Bassler claims that too many pros allow sentiment or other partiality to one manufacturer (usually the maker of the clubs the pro uses himself) to sway him into carrying unbalanced stock of one "pet" brand. Such pros stock up on only two or three leading brands and are then placed in a position where they are trying to "force" their customers to buy their "pet" brand of goods.

This is an unbusinesslike policy, Bassler contends, and has lost more sales in a pro shop than any other reason. He counters with the suggestion that the pro stock at least 3 to 5 sets of all top-flight club makers. From these sets the pro can take orders for special, or other sets, not then in stock. In this manner the pro is giving the customer what he wants, which is a more "positive" action and more likely to lead to sales.

Bassler also points out that the "right



Part of the club and bag display at Fox Hills-Baldwin golf courses pro shop. Assistant Dick Boggs is near that "Bargain Barrel" which is shifted around two and three times daily.

—Photo Waldo Glover & Associates

answers to the customers' questions" make or lose the sale. Example: A golfer enters the shop and asks if he can buy a set of clubs of a brand which the shop is temporarily out of, or does not carry. After a talk it is agreed that the pro is to order this special set from the factory.

At this point Mr. Customer asks the pro: "When will I get delivery of these clubs?" And, it is at this point, Bassler says, that most pros fall down. Usually the pro starts to "think out loud" by enumerating the number of days to get the order to the factory, and for the factory to get the clubs to the pro. Then, after doing this simple arithmetic, the pro announces the clubs will be back by a certain date; generally two weeks later.

Then, much to the dismay of the pro, the customer says: "Well, let it go. I wanted these clubs to be able to play with them next Tuesday with my boss at the Swanky CC (or some special tournament) where he has invited me to play. But, since they won't arrive by then, let it go."

A lost sale.

The Right Answer

Bassler says the pro's answer when the customer asked, "When will I get these clubs?" should have been, "When do you want them Mr. Customer?" Then the reply of the customer immediately lets the pro know if he could order of the factory and get them back in time. If not, then Bassler's policy is to offer the customer Bassler's own personal set of clubs for use until the factory set arrives. The pro's clubs are usually the latest and most beautiful in design and appearance and the customer can only be flattered by such an offer; usually is, and meanwhile gives the order for the set to come from the factory at a later date.

Bassler's hint in stocking up is to buy as many different brands of clubs as you can afford; have as wide a variety of brands as you can. Bassler's current inventory shows over 150 varieties of clubs, balls, bags, shoes, wearing apparel and accessories valued at no less than \$10,000.

Step No. 3. Use various "eye-catchers" scattered throughout the shop that will make many golfers "stop to look."

A simple example: Ask for, or buy from your local newspaperman or photographer some 8x10 inch glossy prints of top-flight golfers and tournament winners in your area, and of some of the nationally known players.

Frame these and put them on your shop walls.

Conversation Openers

Bassler is willing to bet that the first

day these pictures are put up many, many golfers will stop to look at them and gab with you about them. And, before you know it, they are talking a little "golf," getting better acquainted and looking at your supplies displayed nearby.

Out of the hundreds of golfers who stop to look at your pictures and talk with you about them many will start discussing their own game that will lead into buying new clubs, simply because you "gave them the opportunity."

Bassler has framed photos of golfers stuck up all over his shop. To date he must have spent over \$250 for such pictures and he claims they never fail to stop the first-timer visiting his shop.

There are other "eye-catchers" you can employ, but let's see you start with this one.

Sells to the "Unsatisfied"

Step No. 4: Always be in your shop from at least 1:00 P.M. to closing as there are 5 times as many clubs sold after 1:00 P.M. than in the morning.

The basic psychological reason for this, according to Bassler, is that the golfer, having finished his round, is not satisfied with his game that day. He never is, don't you know? And, right there in the shop, moving around, is Bassler when the golfer comes in from the 18th green.

His "opener" for conversation—a perfectly normal and proper one—is, "Well, how was your game today?"

That's all the golfer needs to "open up," and usually complain. Generally the golfer puts the blame on his clubs—an easy "out" for him—and it is quite likely that Bassler will agree with him.

Then tactfully, the golfer is shown a newer, finer club; asked to "feel" it out, and the sale is in the making. The golfer's clubs are looked over, and if not bought from Bassler originally, several reasons may be immediately apparent why the golfer isn't getting his best from them.

But, getting back to the psychological reason and best time of the day to sell a golfer. It is not when he appears at the course to start play. He has usually pepped himself up mentally to think that "today is the day I'm going to bust 90," and is in a frame of mind "to prove it."

After finishing his round, much to his disappointment, then he enters his "weakest sales resistance period"; is willing to listen to **any** suggestion to improve his game—lessons, new clubs or some helpful suggestions.

Moral: Be circulating around your shop

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