

JUNE • 1952

Pros Tell Ideas That Increase Sales

By HERB GRAFFIS

Attractive programs of events are the most certain means of keeping pro shop business up through the summer and well into fall, according to the experience of successful pros. That's no new discovery. Club managers found a long time ago that at the majority of clubs house volume depended to a large degree on the party programs.

The pro who has live committees staging men's and women's events has good assurance of traffic on the course and at the shop but if the committee only have routine programs of events the pro himself has to be the sparkplug and engineer of events for which the committee gets credit and the pro gets business.

Often the women's committees complain about not having enough of a prize budget. Sometimes it pays the pro to contribute a few prizes. At numerous clubs the pro can get prizes contributed by members or local businessmen to expand the list of competitive events and the prize list so more players have a chance to win something. The prizes are good advertising for contributing local merchants.

Darrell Napier at the Country Club of Virginia says he never has to resort to forced draft to keep shop sales up in late summer and early fall because the club's calendar is drawing play in that period. There are team matches, parent-child events, stag day, sweepstakes with wide distribution of prizes and, in September, the club championship with eight days of qualifying.

"Sales" Increase Play

Pro opinion is divided on the wisdom of price-cutting sales. The type of club and membership generally determines whether it's wise to have sales. Incidentally there are late August and September sales at

the pro shops of some of the foremost clubs, so the income of members doesn't seem to be the controlling factor. Sometimes it seems that the temperament of the pros rather than that of the members determines whether or not there are going to be sales.

Bud Williamson at the Country Club of Lincoln, Neb., is one of the most alert pro businessmen. Bud sometimes gets overstocked as the result of trying to give his members better supply service than they possibly could get elsewhere.

When pros overloaded with balls during the Korean war shortage scare, Bud found himself overstocked. He stacked 100 doz. on a table with a large sign, "\$9.85 in dozen lots only. \$1 each, out of the case." He sold 75 dozen balls in two weeks and sold some members who'd been buying cheap cut-price balls at stores.

When he's overstocked on shirts he puts an assortment on a table and makes sure that there are enough very special buys in the lot to make the sale present bargains the buyers will talk about. That sort of a sale stirs up a lot of talk among women who frequently buy more for their husbands than their husbands would buy for themselves.

Bud brings out an interesting point in connection with apparel sales. He says they promote the smart grooming which should be the mark of the first class club member. Men aren't as inclined to buy as women are in response to a genuine bargain appeal in quality merchandise. So the women get the men stocked up and the men have a wider variety of good-looking golfwear.

Williamson also has noticed that golfers who are prevailed upon to buy adequate golfing wardrobes, and balls in dozen quantities, don't go for long stretches before they buy again. Like

Diamond Jim Brady said about diamonds, "Them as has 'em, wears 'em."

Pros Balance Inventories

Last year, more than ever before, pros in various districts compared inventories and traded with each other to get the situation balanced, get merchandise converted into cash and keep credit rating high. Manufacturers' salesmen in many instances were active in this job.

This kept merchandise moving, reminded pros to keep close inventory control and cleared the decks for purchase of next year's lines. It resulted in an appreciable reduction of the bad habit of returning clubs to manufacturers in lieu of paying bills which has been a costly factor in pro-manufacturer relations and has backfired on pros by having stores

sell the returned clubs at cut-prices at the start of the following season.

The stock-balancing procedure had an interesting psychological effect last year. When a pro got rid of some stock he couldn't sell, to another pro whose players wanted merchandise, the pro who got rid of the merchandise was prompted to examine his own selling methods as well as his inventory. It was obvious that somebody was buying and because a pro's own members weren't perhaps the fault might not be entirely that of the members, but due to something the pro hadn't done.

Trade-ins Expand the Market

Trade-ins are beginning to have a definite effect in enlarging the golf market and are offsetting, to some extent, the increased manufacturing costs and selling prices of better grade golf clubs. Whether the practice will grow to be the costly nuisance it became in the automobile business has some pros and manufacturers wondering but for the past few years the trade-in proposition seems to be getting a lot of old clubs out of the bags of golfers who could afford to buy new equipment but need a little inducement of saving.

PGA sections are beginning to follow the Northern California PGA in having standard allowances for trade-ins although there are bound to be cases in which the pro gives an edge to some prospective buyer who should be getting rid of old bats but might go to a store and buy some new cheap stuff.

Newspaper ads, classified or in small display space, are used effectively by pros in selling the trade-ins.

Roy Grinnell, pro at Kinderton CC, Clarksville, Va., has a good idea that other pros should pick up. Roy says:

"Many clubs have a number of young people who are just starting out in married life. The husband and wife want to pick up good second-hand sets of clubs and enjoy the game without spending money they need for their homes.

"In my long experience as a home-club pro I have found that giving this type of customer a good bargain, although at small profit to myself, is a great good-will builder and establishes the basis for sales of good new clubs later.

"There's always a good market for trade-ins at golf ranges and at public courses."

Ralph Ebling, Haverhill (Mass.) CC pro, expresses the opinion of many pros that the trade-in allowances will have to be established on a basis that won't cut the profit on new club sales down to the point where the pro will be fooling himself if he thinks he makes a profit. "The

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EASY-PAY CONTRACT SELLS CLUBS

Sold To _____			
Tele. _____	Address _____		
Description of Merchandise			
_____	Amount _____		
_____	_____		
_____	_____		
Terms of Sale			
Date Due	Amount	Date Paid	Balance
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

CONDITIONAL SALE CONTRACT

Juniper Hill Golf Course agrees, in consideration of payments as above stated that the sum of \$ _____, shall cover the entire cost for the merchandise specified, and that provided payments are made as agreed, they will make NO CHARGE WHATSOEVER FOR INTEREST OR CARRYING CHARGES.

Should any payment be delayed 15 days or longer, there will be a carrying charge equal to 2% of the unpaid balance, for each and every time such delay occurs.

Possession of the merchandise specified is not to be considered evidence of ownership, but it is expressly agreed that all title shall remain with Juniper Hill Golf Course until payments are completed.

In the event of failure to pay as agreed, all payments shall become immediately due and Juniper Hill Golf Course may take possession of said merchandise and declare this contract ended and may retain all moneys paid herein as liquidated damages and rental.

Customer's
Signature _____

Homer D. Darling, Juniper Hill Golf Course, Northboro, Mass., had above term payment contract printed, as suggested by a GOLFDOM article, Juniper Hill is a semi-public course played by working golfers who would find a \$95 set of irons, a \$25 pair of golf shoes or a \$35 bag, out of price range. This term payment plan has sold considerable first quality golf merchandise at Juniper Hill. It also encourages golfers to play more at the course. There's been considerable repeat business on this term payment plan.



The accomplished golfer and the successful business man

want only the best, both in work and in play. As a result, they enjoy a mutual admiration in their **ULTRA HAIG** woods, irons and golf balls. There is nothing finer, and they're available only through golf professionals, the grandest gentlemen I know.



Walter Hagen

The Haig[★]

THE ULTRA IN
GOLF EQUIPMENT



WALTER HAGEN • Division of Wilson Sporting Goods Co., Grand Rapids 2, Michigan

How a Sound Labor Relations Plan Grew at A Golf Club

By LEO J. FESER

Looking back over a trail 30 years long is not half as interesting as looking forward on one of unlimited horizon. Few greenkeepers who looked ahead on that trail thru the land of golf in 1921 expected to see what we have now seen. The surprises were many and varied, some exceedingly pleasant, some depressing to the extreme. The trail certainly had its ups and downs. Gazing back we see the high spots but remember the low ones. Looking ahead, we see only the high spots, but know that the low ones are there. Experience is of value only as we look ahead and seek to apply the benefits of past experience to the problems of the future.

As the clouds of World War I were fading away, few of us looking up that trail expected to find that people and personalities would prove to be as interesting as "greens, tees, grass, trees, soils, seeds and golfer's needs". Yet I dare say that the influence of personalities, the individual golfer, the club officials, the salesmen, the technical men, and in no small way the workmen who did our bidding, was of immeasurable greater importance to our progress than all other factors combined.

The workmen who did our bidding and those who will do it in the future are of utmost importance in construction consideration of the trail ahead. Labor relation is not a problem peculiar to some member who happens to employ a lot of people in his plant. It is not something that might be settled for all time by friendly discussion with the people involved. Labor relations constitute a difficult problem demanding constant and endless consideration of those who are responsible for meeting the golfer's requirements on the golf course.

If we lived in the never-never land where altruism supreme ruled our thoughts and action, we should make certain assumptions as a sound basis on which a successful plan for labor relations could be constructed. Those assumptions are quite simple; the first would be that every laborer and every labor organization is primarily interested in giving the employer a full measure of service for every dollar paid to labor. The second would be that the employers are primarily interested in the security and welfare of

their employees, from the day they are employed until death do them part.

Golf Has Been Lucky

Par on the links of labor relations depends entirely upon how much weight can safely be placed on these assumptions. Obviously, neither assumption has carried too much weight in this land of reality, but looking back over the years, it seems that golf as a business comes closer to being that never-never land than any other industry. Perhaps the shrewd labor exploiter becomes more of an advocate of employee security when he joins a golf club. Perhaps the laborer who sleeps at his bench becomes a tireless marathon paragon behind a power mower. More likely it is because somewhere in the golf set-up, somebody is constantly striving both assumption to a high degree of practicality.

One of my privileges during the past 30 years has been being that somebody. Having retired as a golf course superintendent, there is nothing to gain by boasting about past accomplishments; I merely hope that by outlining past policy and efforts, and by recording some of the results obtained, the trail ahead may be made a bit more pleasant for those who are going to travel on it. As a golf course superintendent, many of my most pleasant and interesting moments were spent in discussion of the problem with my club officials and with the men who actually did the work on the golf course. While at times it appeared that a solution of a specific problem was impossible, thanks to the practical attitude of all concerned, "labor trouble" with us was something we read about in the papers.

All of these experiences took place in Minnesota. No apology is intended, but the following quotations from the 1941 Yearbook of Agriculture indicates the seasonal characteristic of golf course maintenance in this state: "Wide variations in the length of the growing season are to be expected . . . 90 to . . . 160 days. Snow-fall from 20 inches . . . to 70 inches. Vegetation is dormant during 7 months of the year."

Not the best climate for year-round employment of golf labor, but one that offered a top challenge to the workability of the assumption that employers are pri-

marily interested in the security and welfare of their employees. How to make the terms "security" and "welfare" mean something was a nice question back in 1921, just as it is today. Our approach was an effort to set up year-round employment for at least six maintenance men and make the investment pay off to the satisfaction of hard-headed business men who controlled the purse strings of the club.

In 1921 the late '20s boom, the following depression and the New Deal were all in the future. We didn't anticipate a government-sponsored social security plan. We didn't know that within a few years all business men would be struggling desperately to remain solvent, and that unemployment of millions of wage earners was to become an accepted burden on our economy. We had a country club that we wanted to operate in a way that would give the members the most pleasure for their dollars. To accomplish that, labor was necessary. If the hard-heads could be convinced that year-round employment of labor would give the members more pleasure for their dollars, they would open the purse enough to make that possible. It was that simple.

It was generally agreed that if we could develop a skilled labor force that could do all the usual technical maintenance jobs during the growing season and retain that force year after year, the efficiency resulting in actual maintenance would be much greater than that obtained by a crew composed of yearly new-comers. It was agreed that by re-

taining the same men over the years, a certain esprit de corps would be developed, stimulating a pride in workmanship. But how could six men be kept profitably busy thru a long snow-and frost-bound winter?

Program Developed

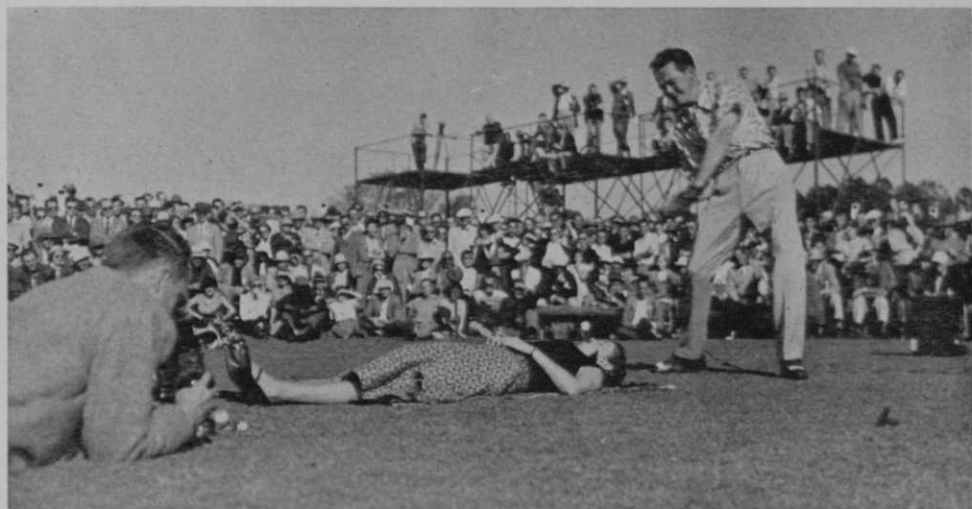
It would be presumptive to state that we sat down and worked out a program, and then just followed the plan. Rather we felt our way along, developing the program from year to year, to meet the requirements of changing conditions. But in a general way a plan of four major parts was followed.

The first was to maintain all the physical property of the club with our own workmen with a minimum amount of outside help. The second was to set up a long list of major improvement projects that could be carried out during the slack months. The third was to gradually acquire equipment that would make possible the extension of winter work, and the fourth was to promote winter activities at the club that would require labor.

Maintenance of our physical plant involved the training of men to do the many jobs usually accomplished by especially skilled labor. We sent men to trade schools to learn the fundamentals of carpentry, plumbing, furniture repair, painting, plastering, masonry and welding. When necessary, outside contractors were employed who would agree to use our men under the supervision of their foremen, and in this way they developed various skills by actually doing. We post-

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THE CIRCUS COMES TO THE MASTERS'



Paul Hahn, the young trick shot expert who's been headlining with his exhibitions, puts on a performance before the large gallery at the Masters' tournament. Hahn's sideshow got high approval from the crowd at Augusta.

MORE HITTING POWER



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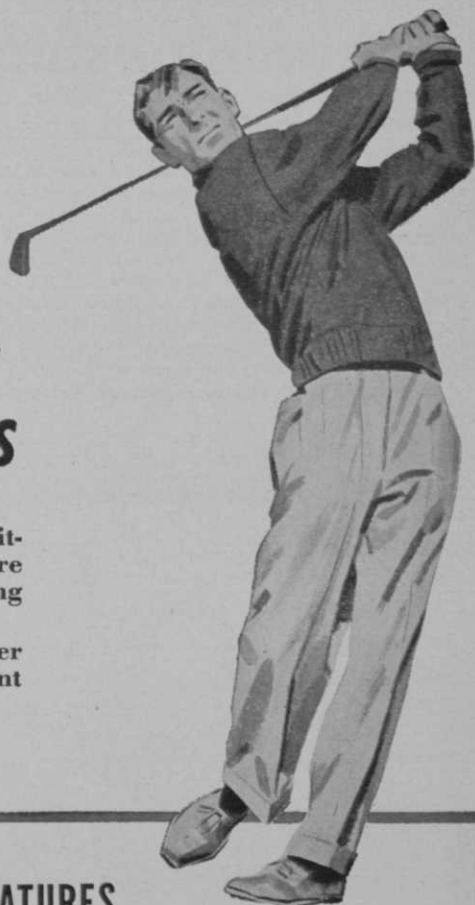
Gold Line

TOP-FLITE IRONS

tops in power because:

(a) Concentration of hitting weight over a smaller, more compact area—without reducing hitting area.

(b) Uniformly low center of gravity directly behind point of impact.



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1. New scientific weight distribution (mentioned above).

2. Spalding's patented screw assembly.

3. Spalding's own type of mild stainless steel.

4. Spalding's panel-form grips with their shock-absorbing molded cork foundations.

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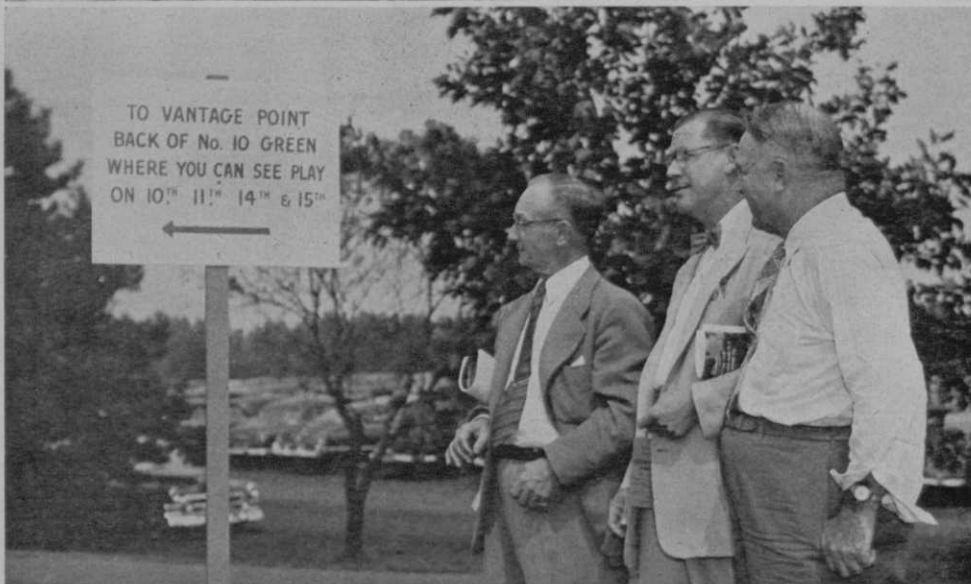
SETS THE PACE IN SPORTS



Championship Innovations

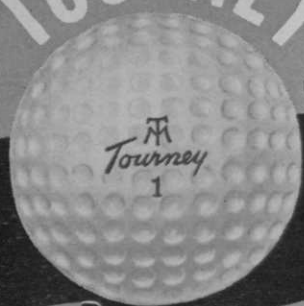
Below: The gale swept in from the Bristol Channel so strong during the 1951 British Amateur at Porthcawl, Wales, a canvas windshield was erected to give the players a break at the first tee. It's Bob Hope who's teeing off. Bottom: A great aid to the galleries during the 1951 U. S. Amateur at Saucon Valley were the signs directing spectators to vantage points where they could see a lot of play without running wild. It saved marshals' work. Upper right: Portable Coca-Cola stands (without the advertising) gave class, convenience and cleanliness to outdoor food, drink and tobacco service at the 1951 Amateur. The tables, the refuse containers and prompt policing kept refreshment areas attractive and tidy instead of the pig-stys they usually are at championships. This photograph was taken during an infrequent lull. The stands, which were strategically spotted around the course, did big business. Lower right: Instead of the usual confusion and delay in getting contestants bags at a championship, at the 1951 Amateur all bags were brought into an enclosure and filed alphabetically, with markers stuck in the turf to show alphabetical location. At left, with caddie, is Ralph Hutchison, Saucon Valley pro, and at right is caddie-master Tom Kelly.

Photographs by Alex Bremner





TOURNEY



GOLF BALL of CHAMPIONS

Pro-Claimed



Home Pro John Thoren, Myopia Hunt Club, South Hamilton, Massachusetts, "The Tourney is a great golf ball!"



Home Pro Willie Goggin, Upper Montclair Country Club, Upper Montclair, New Jersey, "Our club's better players are turning to the MacGregor Tourney."



Home Pro Jackson Bradley, Edgewater Golf Course, Chicago, Illinois, "Tourney has the 'click' and 'feel' necessary in a great golf ball."



Home Pro Zell Eaton, Montebello Golf Club, Montebello, California, "There's no doubt in my mind Tourney's the longest ball being played today."