



more than a combination men's and women's wear store with sportswear, accessories and playing equipment practically bulging through the walls.

But a good deal of reflection restrained me from doing this. I helped organize Rolling Hills in 1947-48, converting it from a public course originally known as Westlink. In the 11 years I had served the Rolling Hills members I had built my reputation as a teaching pro and not as a merchandising expert. I decided that if I made my shop an out and out commercial affair, and not one with a little warmth, my lesson business, along with sales of sportswear and equipment, would decline. So, I insisted on a lounge area in the front part of the shop. It is fronted by a 3 x 8-ft. picture window, has six easy chairs and a couple book racks and gives a magnificent view from which the golfer can see nearly 50 per cent of the course.

#### Wants to Retain Warmth

Don't get the impression that I am being unrealistic about the merchandising end of my business. I have as many motives in the back of my head as the next professional. I am as much on the lookout for the dollar bill as anyone running a business. But I want to be at least subtle in trying to get it. I don't think we should make our pro shops dry goods stores or little  
(Continued on page 83)

With more than 500 golfers at his club, the majority of them serious players, O'Brien has to keep a large stock of equipment on hand. Lesson business still is his bread and butter income producer but sportswear (below) is continually paying larger dividends.



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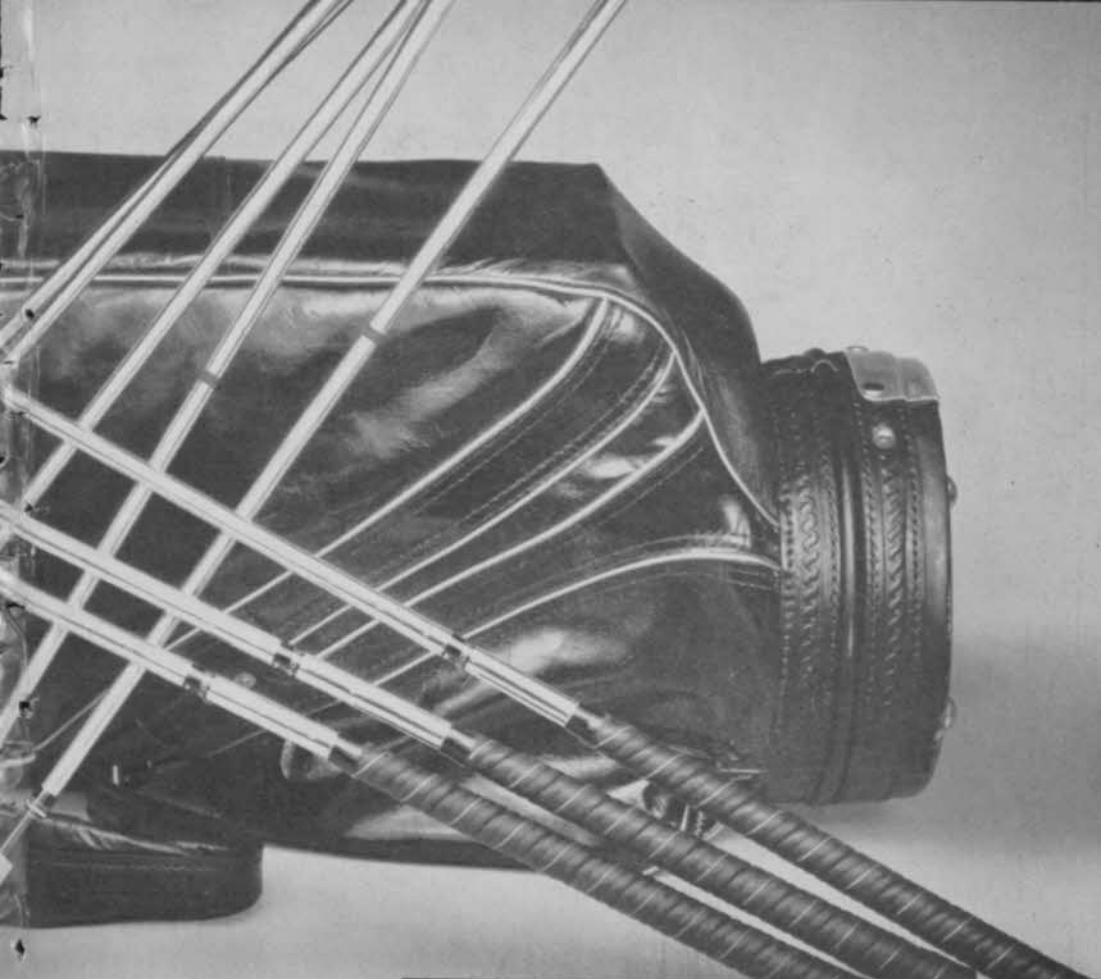
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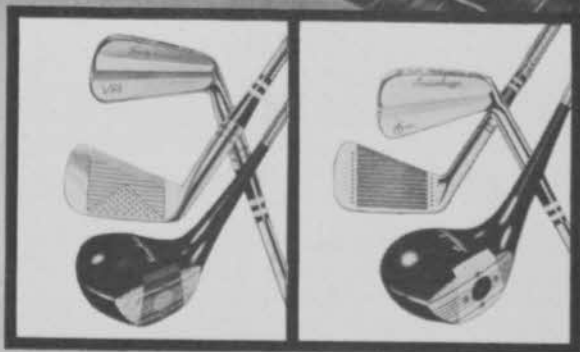
**TOURNEY IRONS** feature the proved Flame Ceramic face . . . the most durable in golf. Exclusive new "Less Drag" design gives these irons built-in accuracy and feel never before available.

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# Pro Shop Sales Lag Behind Increase in Golf Play

## Club Sales Off Because Outside Competition Is Tearing Down Price Structure

BY HERB GRAFFIS

PROFESSIONALS, whose observations have been the basis of Golfdom's accurate forecasts of golf business in past years, estimate that golf play this year is up 12 per cent over 1959. Part of the rise is due to an increase of slightly more than 4 per cent in the number of golf courses in the U. S.

This means that there will be about 93,000,000 rounds of golf played on the 6250 courses operating in the U. S. in 1960.

That is surprising growth in play for a year in which rain in some districts in April and May washed out a great deal of play. How much of this is play by women can't be estimated with sufficient accuracy or reason to satisfy Golfdom which is cautious because of the extensive use of its data in golf sales and advertising programs.

### Wide Variance

Pro estimates of rounds played by women range from 50 per cent at a number of first class private clubs to less than 10 per cent at metropolitan area public courses. Public courses in metropolitan areas apparently are going to have to give women a much better deal than they are now getting.

Pro shop sales didn't keep up with the increase in play. This lag probably is to be expected. Many newcomers don't buy much equipment. Whether or not pros are getting their share of this new business as a dividend on their promotion activities is a subject of considerable discussion.

Pro shop sales of clubs, balls and bags are about six per cent ahead of 1959. Sales of apparel and shoes this year will be about eight per cent ahead of last year.

### Equipment, Golfwear Ratio

There is such a wide variation between the percentage of pro shop sales volume from clubs, balls, bags and playing accessories and the percentage of revenue from apparel and shoe sales that too much

weight can't be put on the indicated national average of 63 per cent of total sales for playing equipment and 37 per cent for soft goods, shoes and headwear. In approximately 200 shops, mostly at private clubs but including some at municipal courses in large cities, sales income is reported on a basis of 75 per cent from clubs, balls, bags, etc. and 25 per cent from golfwear.

Almost one out of six shops that show much higher than average annual sales income has a greater dollar volume in soft goods and shoes than in playing equipment.

As you might expect, members of higher bracket clubs do a higher percentage of their buying from professionals than those at public courses or private clubs where prices are lower. Percentages of clubs, balls and bags purchased from professionals at private clubs range from 100 to 60, with 75 per cent being most common.

### Trade-In Situation

An important and interesting figure is the percentage of new club sales that involve acceptance of trade-ins. The average is higher this year than that of the 1959 survey. The percentage of trade-ins on new club sales jumped to 67 from the 1959 figure of 57. A number of pros explain this increase as being due to women's clubs figuring in the trade-in picture. Women's club sales, according to pros, are up about 25 per cent over 1959.

One question not asked the pros this year pertained to the percentage of women's lessons to the total given at the clubs. Several professionals volunteered information that nearly 70 per cent of their lessons are given to women.

Although higher priced woods and irons are mainly sold by professionals and account for about 55 per cent of the manufacturers' dollar volume of sales revenue from clubs, many professionals claim they are having a tough time selling this equipment due to its price range. This condi-

Look to the Leader in '61

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tion prevails in spite of the trade-in allowance policy at pro shops and the energetic merchandising of used clubs to beginners and public course players. Store competition is tearing down the club prices without doing a thing to increase the market, numerous pros declare.

#### **Price-Cutting Competition**

The price-cutters are primarily the "discount" houses. Next are the sporting goods stores, then sports departments of depart-

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ment stores, then employee co-ops, and last, but in some areas not least, pros at golf ranges and public courses.

Professionals from all over the U. S. supplied the data from which this round-up of 1960 pro business is compiled. The number and percentage of pros cooperating was greater than in any previous survey. The professionals' thoughts on possible effect of providing a professional with information on club finances will be the subject of an article in January *Golfdom*.

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Ball manufacturers, figures on 1960 sales indicated that about 60 per cent of the balls sold are in the top quality bracket. They account for approximately 75 per cent of the manufacturers' ball sales income. The pros don't regard the ball price-cutting problem as one that endangers the price structure as seriously as the club picture shows.

From what numerous professionals have to say it is obvious that they are going to have to have help from manufacturers if the present quality and price structures in golf club marketing are to continue.

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#### **Dedman Associates Organized to Handle Club Planning, Operation**

Harold Murphy, former field service rep for National Golf Foundation, has announced formation of a golf and country club development and operation consulting service known as Dedman Associates.

The new service and its staff of project directors and consulting associates will assist private, semi-private, municipal, industrial and military course and club planners in market research, site selection and acquisition, project planning and organization, conduct of membership-sales campaigns, design and construction, and operation and management.

In partnership with Robert H. Dedman, Dallas attorney and the key figure in the development and ownership of seven Texas and California clubs, which include nine courses now in play, Murphy has been named pres. of the new corporation. He will retain his vice-presidency in Country Clubs, Inc., parent company in the growing Dedman organization.

#### **Conservative Policy**

Murphy emphasizes that the new company has a conservative policy. "The majority of those who have been active as professional free-lance contributors to country club development," Murphy says, "have been specialists in fund raising and have shown little interest in the 'whole nature and needs of clubs, or in the financial preparations for long term plants and programs.'"

Dedman Associates, using both project directors capable of programming for and administering to all phases of club development, and an association of consultants representing the best professional talent in many fields, provides any or all of the personnel or programming necessary to any or all of the many segments of club development and operation. In addition, Country Clubs, Inc., can aid in obtaining capital investment or in attracting equity investment or ownership.

At the present time, Country Clubs, Inc., owns the 54-hole, two-clubhouse Brookhaven CC in Dallas; the 18-hole Knollwood GC, also in Dallas; the 18-hole Tanglewood-on-the-Lake, a resort club on Lake Texoma between Texas and Oklahoma; a hunting and fishing lodge near Dallas, an additional facility belonging to Brookhaven; the Preston Hills Tennis Club in Dallas; and the 63-hole Deauville Golf and Beach Clubs in the San Fernando Valley, California. Country Clubs will announce plans for at least four more major projects in the first quarter of 1961.

Dedman, general counsel to the new American professional football league, will represent the new company's Dallas office from 730 Mercantile Securities Building. Murphy has offices at 5344 Yolanda, Tarzana, Calif.

Complete information on the Dedman services can be obtained from Murphy.

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More than 200 turf specialists attended the Midwest Turf Field days held at Purdue University in mid-September. The two-day sessions were conducted by W. H. Daniel, Purdue agronomist.

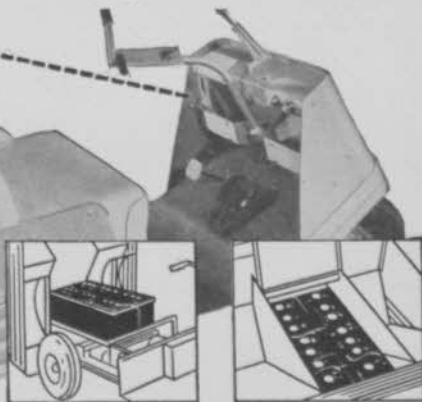
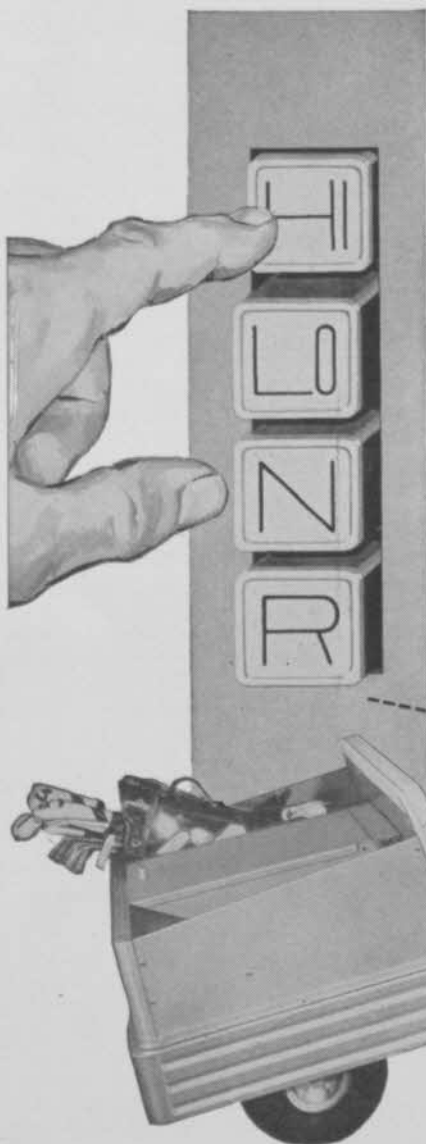
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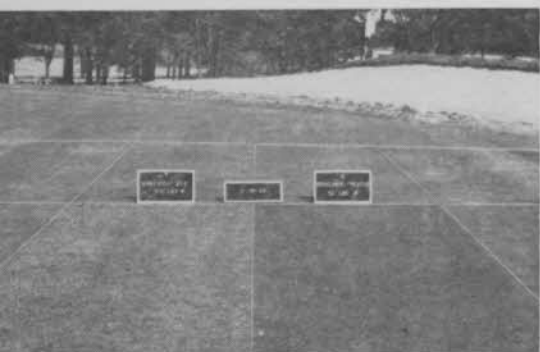
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## Report On Overseeding Trials At East Lake, Sea Island



Domestic rye plot is on left and Pennlawn-fescue on right. Photo was taken late in March.

Mel Warneke, supt., East Lake CC, Atlanta, Ga., and T. M. Baumgardner, vp, and Supt. Marion McKendee of Sea Island, Ga., have been collaborating with Charles G. Wilson, Milwaukee Sewerage Commission sales mgr. and agronomist, in overseeding trials.

Kentucky blue, *Poa trivialis*, Pennlawn creeping red fescue, Highland, Astoria, Seaside and Penncross bents, and Redtop, domestic and perennial rye were seeded individually and in various combinations. The seeding was done in the fall of 1959.

### Monthly Ratings Made

Cooperators made monthly ratings on disease, putting quality, color, density, etc. Results were recorded on film on four occasions during the winter.

All grasses were seeded to furnish the same number of seeds per 1,000 sq. ft., based on rye grass seeding at the 50 lb. rate.

One half of each plot was fertilized and fungicide treatments for "damping off" disease were superimposed at a right angle to the Milorganite treatment. Thus the plots provide fertilized, non fertilized, fungicided and non fungicided areas.

Wilson remarks: "Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on how you look at it, there was no disease at either location and the Milorganite treatment helped the initial stand."

### Pennlawn Fescue Outstanding

"The outstanding individual grass at East Lake was Pennlawn fescue," Wilson continues. "It was excellent early and late and vanished this spring with no transition problems. *Poa trivialis* was also good at

East Lake and ranked best at Sea Island. The Pennlawn fescue was disappointing at Sea Island. Among the bents, Penncross ranked best at both locations, closely followed by Seaside.

"Transition problems were severe with Penncross, probably due to its vigor," says Wilson. "Highland was the poorest overseeded plot among the bents, faring worse than Redtop. Astoria was intermediate. Perennial rye grass was better than domestic early in the season but difficulty was experienced with cutting it clean at Sea Island this spring. As a result, the plot was badly off color and unacceptable there."

### Drawbacks to Bent, Rye

Wilson makes these observations: "Many courses have switched to bent rather than rye. Northern golfers prefer it and it is similar in texture to improved Bermuda strains. Unfortunately, bent is sometimes slow to become established in the fall. It germinates rapidly but then stands still for four to six weeks. Conversely, rye grass is excellent early in the season, but passes out with a rush at the first sign of hot weather in the spring.

"The above has led us to suggest combining the virtues of both grasses. Seed bent first at 2 to 3 lbs. per thousand sq. ft. and three to four weeks later overseed with rye grass at 20 to 25 lbs. per 1000 sq. ft. The mixture of these grasses was excellent at both Sea Island and East Lake. We still consider *Poa trivialis* and Pennlawn fescue to be in the experimental stage."

### Two Superintendents Learn Value of Turf Nurseries

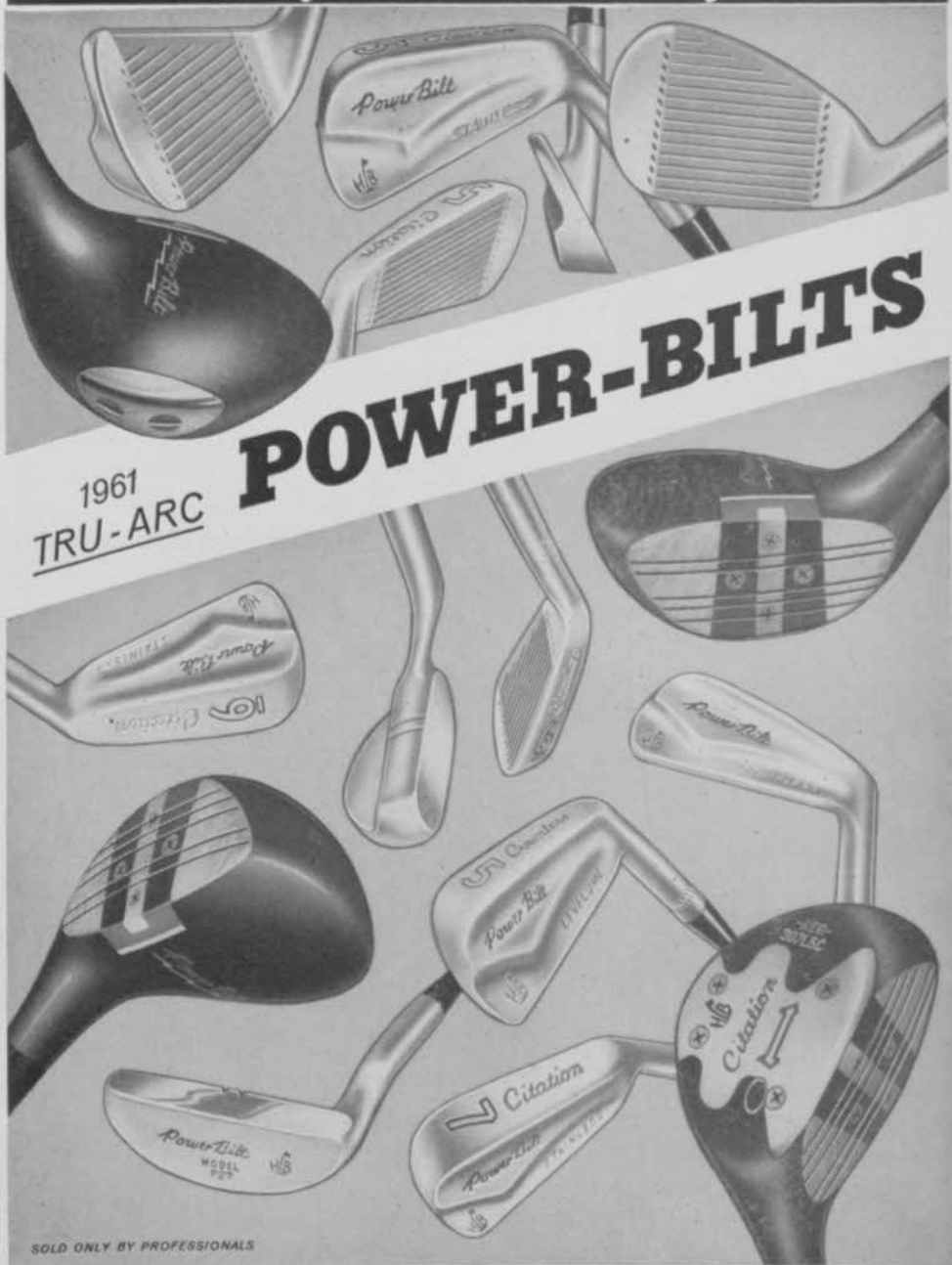
The value of maintaining turf nurseries was very forcefully impressed on two supts. in recent months. At Paradise Valley CC in Phoenix, Supt. Art Snyder found that vandals had defaced one of his greens the night before an important tournament was to be played at the club. It was impossible to patch the damaged area and so Snyder stripped the sod and replaced it with sod from his nursery. At the Oaks CC in Tulsa, a windstorm uprooted or broke off large branches from about 50 trees and a great deal of the debris landed on and damaged several greens. Supt. Les Snyder (no relation of Art) quickly cleared the damaged areas and transplanted sod from his nursery to places where the greens had been badly gouged. It took him only two or three days to do this, much less time than if he had no turf replacement to fall back on.



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Owner John Polakovic is shown in front of clubhouse at Midwest CC, one of country's finest semi-private operations.

## Capitalize on that "Dead Time"

*Nearly 20 per cent of the course laborer's time may be non-productive. Here is how one semi-private club owner uses it to increase the value of his investment*

GETTING eight hour a day value out of course labor is a problem that has been confronting private, semi-private and public courses practically since the time the eight-hour day was universally accepted more than four decades ago. Because of the playing schedule on which courses necessarily have to be operated, it is doubtful if more than 6½ hours of a laborer's 8-hour day is put to productive use. The 1½ hour's difference between truly productive effort and non-productive work may not be completely "dead" time because through skillful juggling of the overall course work load with laborers' time schedules, many supts. arrange to get jobs done that normally would be neglected. Yet, in the estimation of many persons close to the golf maintenance scene, there is a certain amount of boondoggling that must be considered inherent. This undoubtedly is due to the fact that even though the average laborer's day is in effect a 6½ hour one, he must be employed or paid for eight hours or his services aren't available.

At Midwest Country Club in Hinsdale, Ill., one of the most profitable semi-private operations in the northern part of the U.S.,