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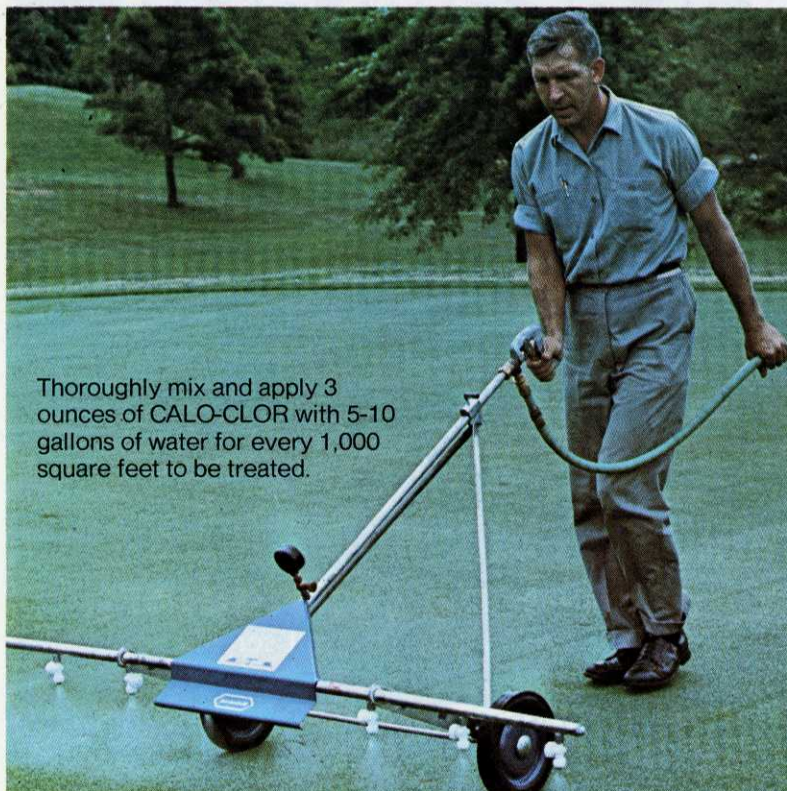
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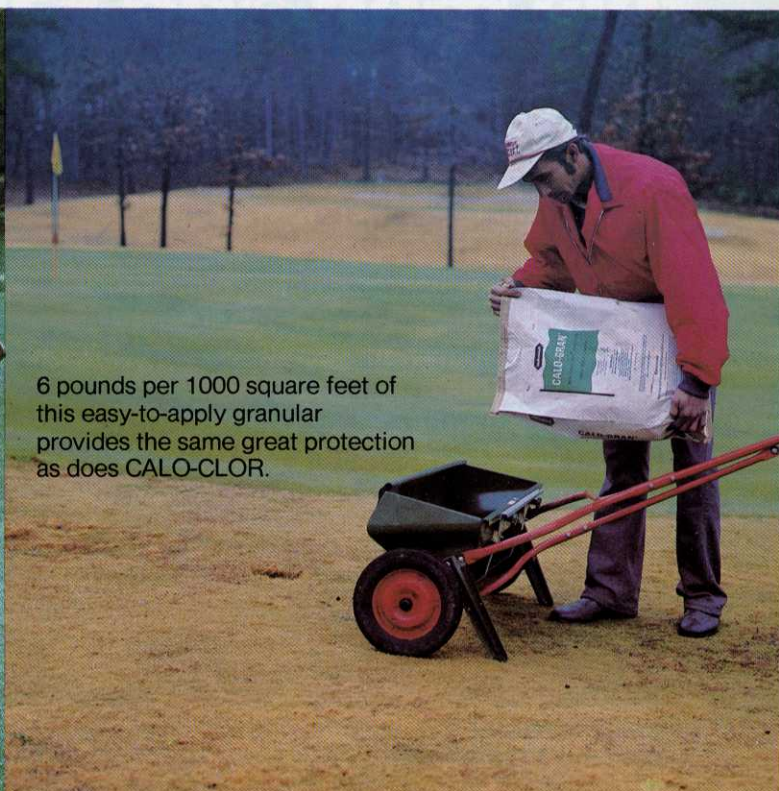
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GUIDE TO EXHIBITORS

EXHIBITOR	BOOTH
Advanced Drainage Systems, Inc.	410
Advanced Engine Products	166
Alpine Mfg.	409
American Pelletizing Corp.	203
American Society of Golf Course Architects	423
Ametek, Inc./Plymouth Products Div.	208
Applied Biochemists, Inc.	441
Aquatrols Corp. of America	455
Atwater Strong Div.	169, 170
Batrow Inc.	451
Bogue Electric Mfg. Co.	233
Briggs & Stratton Corp.	236, 237
Broyhill Co.	321, 322
Bunton Co.	island 340
E. F. Burlingham & Sons	471, 472
Causco, Inc.	408
Central Texas GCSA	main concourse
Certified Laboratories, Inc.	356
Champion Co.	341, 342
Ciba-Geigy Corp.	306
W. A. Cleary Chemical Corp.	142, 143
Coursigns, Inc.	172
Cushman/OMC-Lincoln	island 338
Dedoes Industries, Inc.	island 355
Diamond Shamrock Corp.	432, 433, 434
Dotech, Inc.	430
Dow Chemical U.S.A.	439, 440
Du Pont Co.	102, 103
Eagle-Picher Industries	135
Elanco Products Co.	460, 461, 462
Jack Erhardt & Associates	475
Excel Industries, Inc.	island 365
E-Z-Go Car/Textron Inc.	island 318
FMC Corp.	323, 324, 325, 326
Foley Manufacturing Co.	335, 336
Ford Motor Co.	island 159
Fore-Par, Inc.	242
Gandy Co.	227
GCSAA Membership & Scholarship & Research	main concourse
Giant-Vac Mfg. Inc.	island 156
Glenmac Inc.	133, 134
GOLF BUSINESS	238, 239
Golf Course Builders of America	407
Great Lakes Biochemical Co.	370
Griswold Controls	213, 137

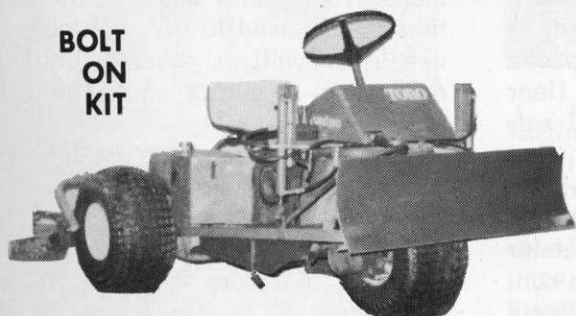
Hahn Inc./Turf Ag Div.	island 160
Hancor, Inc.	223
AMF Harley-Davidson Motor Co.	island 369
Harvest Business Publications	238, 239
Heckendorn Mfg. Co.	476, 477
Hercules Inc.	343, 344
HMC	235, 248
Howard Commercial Turf Equip., Inc.	177, 178
Howard Rotavator Co.	165
H. D. Hudson Manufacturing Co.	225
ICI United States Inc.	164
International Harvester	island 339
International Seeds Inc.	211, 212
International Spike, Inc.	141
Jacobsen Mfg. Co.	island 158
Johns-Manville	island 150
Kay-Fries Chemicals, Inc.	224
Kohler Co.	215, 216/445, 446
Lakeshore Equipment & Supply Co.	201, 202
Lawnmower Parts Manufacturing Co.	245, 246
Lebanon Chemical Corp. (Agrico)	349, 350
Lely Pacific Inc.	119, 120
LEWISystems/Menasha Corp.	316
Lindig Manufacturing Corp.	364
Linn-Benton Community College	243
Little Giant Industries, Inc.	425
Locke Manufacturing Co./div. Stellar Inds. Inc.	175, 176
Lofts Pedigreed Seed, Inc.	207
Mallinckrodt, Inc.	453
Manhattan Ryegrass Association	island 320
Milorganite Div./Milwaukee Sewerage Commission	449, 450
Monsanto Agricultural Products Co.	232
Montco Products Corp.	163
Moody Sprinkler Co.	island 219
Moridge Mfg., Inc.	139, 140
Mott Corp.	104, 105, 106
F. E. Myers Co.	347, 348, 351, 352
National Chemsearch	167
National Golf Foundation	244
National Mower Co.	456, 457, 458, 459
L. R. Nelson Corp.	435, 436
Northrup King & Co.	362, 363
Nursery Specialty Products	138
Occidental Chemical Co./Best Prods. Div.	466, 467, 468
Oil Capital Valve Co.	168
Oil-Dri Corp. of America	346
Olathe Mfg. Inc.	317
Onan/div. of Onan Corp.	437, 438
Onex Industries, Ltd.	251, 252
Oregon Fine Fescue Commission	247

Oregon GCSA	main concourse
Oregon Ryegrass/Highland Bentgrass	228
Par Aide Products Co.	109, 110, 111
Pargo, Inc.	478, 479
Penn-Gro Sales Corp.	214, island 221
Plant Marvel Distr. Co.	429
Portland Community College	428
Pumping Systems Inc.	173, 174
R & R Products, Inc.	469, 470
Rain Bird	island 157
Rain-O-Mat Sprinklers, Inc.	108
Rhodia Inc./Agricultural Div.	116, 117, 118
Richway Products, Inc.	226
Roseman Mower Corp.	island 368
Royal Coach Sprinklers, Inc.	209, 210
Royer Foundry & Machine Co.	332, 333, 334
Ryan Turf Equipment/OMC-Lincoln	island 338
Safe-T-Lawn Inc.	island 374
O. M. Scott & Sons Co.	island 154
Sioux Steam Cleaner Corp.	359, 360
Smithco Inc.	island 315
Snow Co.	357, 358
Southern Golf/Turf-Grass Times	171
Standard Golf Co.	island 144
Stauffer Chemical Co.	474
Sto-Cote Products, Inc.	240, 241
Swift Agricultural Chemicals Corp.	327, 328
Taylor-Dunn Mfg. Co.	411, 412
Tee-2-Green Corp.	island 320
Teledyne Wisconsin Motor	162, 206
Texas Refinery Corp.	107
The Golf Superintendent	179
Thompson Manufacturing Co.	448
The Toro Co./Turf Products	island 153
The Toro Co./Irrigation Div.	112, 113, 114, 115
Tuco/div. of The Upjohn Co.	329, 330, 331
Turf Vac Corp.	403, 404
Universal Sign Systems, Inc.	463
U.S. Golf Association Green Section	229
USS Agri-Chemicals	447
Vandermolen Corp.	101
Vaughan-Jacklin Corp.	405
Velsicol Chemical Corp.	311, 312
Vermeer Manufacturing Co.	345
Warren's Turf Nursery	121
Weather-Matic Div./Telsco Industries	464, 465
Weather Tec Corp.	406
WEEDS TREES & TURF	238, 239
Whitney-Dickinson Seeds, Inc.	island 320
Wisconsin Marine Inc.	307, 308, 309, 310
Yankee Engineering Co.	431
Yazoo Mfg. Co.	442, 443, 444
Yeats Appliance Dolly Co.	473

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This could happen to you! Would your club have enough insurance?



by David J. Slaybaugh, editor

It was in the early morning hours of a typical muggy Ohio summer night: Sunday, August 3, 1975. The assistant manager of the Kirtland Country Club was watching television with club bartender Frederick Burke in Burke's apartment in the main clubhouse building. About 12:15 a.m. Burke smelled smoke. He went to a nearby wall and put his hand to it. It was hot to his touch.

The two men called the fire department and roused a couple from Florida sleeping in a guest room on the second floor. Firemen arrived and began pumping water directly from the East Branch of the Chagrin River, which winds through the club's 530 acres. They also took water from the club swimming pool, eventually pumping it dry.

By the time the blaze was brought

under control 5 hours later, some 60 firemen from Kirtland and three neighboring communities had joined in the battle. Six of them were treated at a nearby hospital for smoke inhalation and exhaustion. Assistant Fire Chief Edward Kalman of Willoughby, one of those who helped, said the next day that the thick stone walls of the mansion clubhouse had caused temperatures inside the building to reach an estimated 1,100 degrees.

According to Kalman, the fire started either in an air conditioner or wiring on the third floor, then spread to the second floor. The third floor was destroyed, and the second suffered extensive damage. The first floor was damaged by smoke and water. Club President Douglas Wick and Vice President Edward L. Meister said the next morning that they considered the building, built as a private home in 1910 and taken over by the club in 1921, to be nearly a total loss.

Kalman estimated the damage at more than \$1 million.

The aftermath

Wick and Meister met with other club officials within a few days after the fire. Since the building was insured for \$1.7 million, it was decided to go ahead with a reconstruction program.

Other buildings at Kirtland included a carriage house, a men's locker room, and a golf clubhouse; these were used to carry on club activities as well as possible until the new main building could be completed.

Almost a year later to the day — on Sunday, August 1, 1976 — Kirtland Country Club opened its new clubhouse to members. A handsome, spacious two-story building, it cost more than \$2 million. Most of the funds came from insurance, with assessments on the members paying

the balance. (The club has 300 resident members, who pay \$100 a month dues.)

Architects Collins and Rimer maintained much of the look of the original building in the new clubhouse, which was built on the original foundation and utilized the walls which were left standing after the fire. The decorators also tried to match the original club's feeling as closely as possible — though it was impossible to replace the beautiful old paneling — and used what furniture they could of that which was carried from the burning building a year earlier.

Could your club do as well?

Kirtland Country Club has one important thing in a quantity that many private and most public golf facilities could not match. That thing is, of course, money.

When it was founded, Kirtland's membership roster carried such names as Hanna and Bolton and Blossom. Today, it still includes mostly the uppermost crust of Cleveland society. Because its members — and, in turn, the club itself — had access to enough funds, and because the club-

house was fairly well insured, Kirtland Country Club recovered rather well from its disastrous fire.

But what about your club or course? You probably don't have 300 well-to-do members to turn to for hundreds of thousands of dollars to replace or rebuild your clubhouse after a disaster. That means you would have to depend on insurance.

Perhaps now is the time to ask yourself or your manager these questions: Do you have the right kind of property insurance? Do you have enough? Should you work with a broker or deal with the underwriter directly?

We talked with insurance executives to get some answers that could apply to most golf facilities.

What is property insurance?

There are two aspects to consider in defining property insurance. The first concerns what will be insured.

A club can buy insurance on its clubhouse and/or any other part of its physical property and the contents thereof. The usual golf club property insurance policy — the type we'll be discussing here — covers the club-

“You probably don't have 300 well-to-do members to turn to for money.”

house (foodservice facility, bar, lounges, lobby, locker rooms, and pro shop, if part of the building) and its contents (furnishings, equipment, and inventory of sale goods).

The second aspect concerns the perils you will insure your property against. Normally these would include fire, theft, vandalism, and natural perils such as lightning or wind. Another item to consider, especially if your facilities are so limited that you absolutely could not run the club without them, is business interruption insurance; this would insure your club against losses of profit and continuing expenses incurred if you *had* to shut down after a fire or other disaster.

Depending on what company insures your club, the policy can be



Kirtland Country Club in northeastern Ohio opened its new clubhouse (above) one year after fire destroyed practically all of the original building (facing page). The new grill room, with a beamed ceiling and tile-look carpeting on the floor, is typical of the new decor.

This could happen to you!

written two ways: 1) naming specifically those perils insured against, or 2) naming those perils excluded from coverage. Either way, just be sure the policy says what you want it to. Too often, people (and businesses) think they are insured against something, only to find after the fact that they were not.

Try to get coverage as broad as possible, tempered by the cost. Obviously, you pay more for broader coverage.

One way to hold insurance costs down, however, is the consideration of deductibles. This works the same way for a club's property insurance as it does for your personal home or car insurance: in case of a claim against the policy, the insurer pays the amount of the damage above and beyond the deductible amount. Damages which do not add up to more than the deductible must be absorbed by the policy holder. A deductible often is a wise choice, since many clubs do not need first-dollar coverage, but rather must have insurance against large losses.

Buy direct?

One of the first decisions you must make in buying insurance is whether to buy through a broker or direct from the underwriter.

The bases for making this decision are basically these: buying direct is usually cheaper, but a broker can provide the experience, contacts, and familiarity with different types of coverage that you as a layman lack. What the broker offers you is service. When you buy insurance, he will shop for you and, presumably, find the coverage that suits you best at the best possible price. When you have a claim, he will act as your agent in dealing with the insurer. You pay for the broker's services through the premiums you pay to the insurer.

How much is enough?

That is undoubtedly the most asked, if not the most important, question in regard to any kind of insurance.

If your facility is new, you should have no trouble answering the question. You already know what it would cost to replace what you just built — and that is how much property insurance coverage you should buy, plus

“What you must determine is the replacement cost. However, this is not the same as cash value.”

coverage for the contents of the building.

For older facilities, the answers are harder to come by. What you must determine is the *replacement cost*. Be aware, however, that this is not the same as the cash value. It often will cost more to replace a building than you could have sold it for before it was destroyed. Too many people arrive at a replacement cost by making a “guesstimate” based on the cost of the original building, no matter how old it was. Sometimes they come close to an accurate figure, but more often than not they end up under-insured.

To be sure your club is properly insured, you should consider having a commercial appraisal made by professional appraisers. This could cost several thousand dollars if yours is a large, well-furnished facility — but it would be worth it in the long run to insure adequate coverage. If your clubhouse does not contain elaborate lounge or dining rooms with expensive furnishings, you could possibly save some money by forgoing appraisal of the contents.

Another reason for getting a professional appraisal of your club's property is that many insurers have “co-insurance” provisions which require that your policy with them provide coverage in the amount of some percentage (usually 80 percent or more) of the replacement value of the property; they may require a commercial appraisal to determine the amount of coverage. “Co-insurance” means simply that you will share any losses with the underwriter in exchange for a lower premium.

Need to update

The insurance executives we talked with were, not surprisingly, unanimous in their opinion that most golf

clubs are not adequately insured. Most clubs are on a tight budget, many are nonprofit organizations, and all of them would rather spend their money on the golf course than on insurance. You should, however, review your insurance coverage annually — whether you have to or not.

At one time, most property insurance policies were contracts for a 3-year period. That is still true for many smaller clubs, but the common practice now is to have to renew the policy once a year. This gives the insurers, of course, a chance to rid themselves of unnecessarily bad risks; it also gives the opportunity to keep coverage up to date. Coverage should be increased in proportion to the value of improvements made in the property during the year, if any; or increase coverage to keep up with inflation and spiraling building costs.

It is not necessary to have the property reappraised every time you renew your insurance policy. Many appraisers do offer an updating service at a nominal cost for clubs which have had a full-scale appraisal done by them in the past. In most cases, however, you can plot any insurance increases by “factors” compiled and provided by the industry. These factors will not vary more than a point or two between companies; all of them are based on current rates of inflation, construction costs, and interest rates.

How rates are set

The rates your club pays for property insurance will depend not only on the type of coverage you want, but also on the type of facilities you have and where they are located. Many factors are taken into account in determining these rates (construction materials and their combustibility, presence of cooking equipment, water availability, proximity of fire department, sprinkler systems, fire alarm, etc.), and the rates are not just set capriciously by the insurance companies. They are regulated by the state governments (except in Illinois).

For information on how to improve your facility and get a better rate on property insurance, contact your broker, insurer, state Insurance Service Office, or the National Fire Protection Association (470 Atlantic Ave., Boston, MA 02210). □

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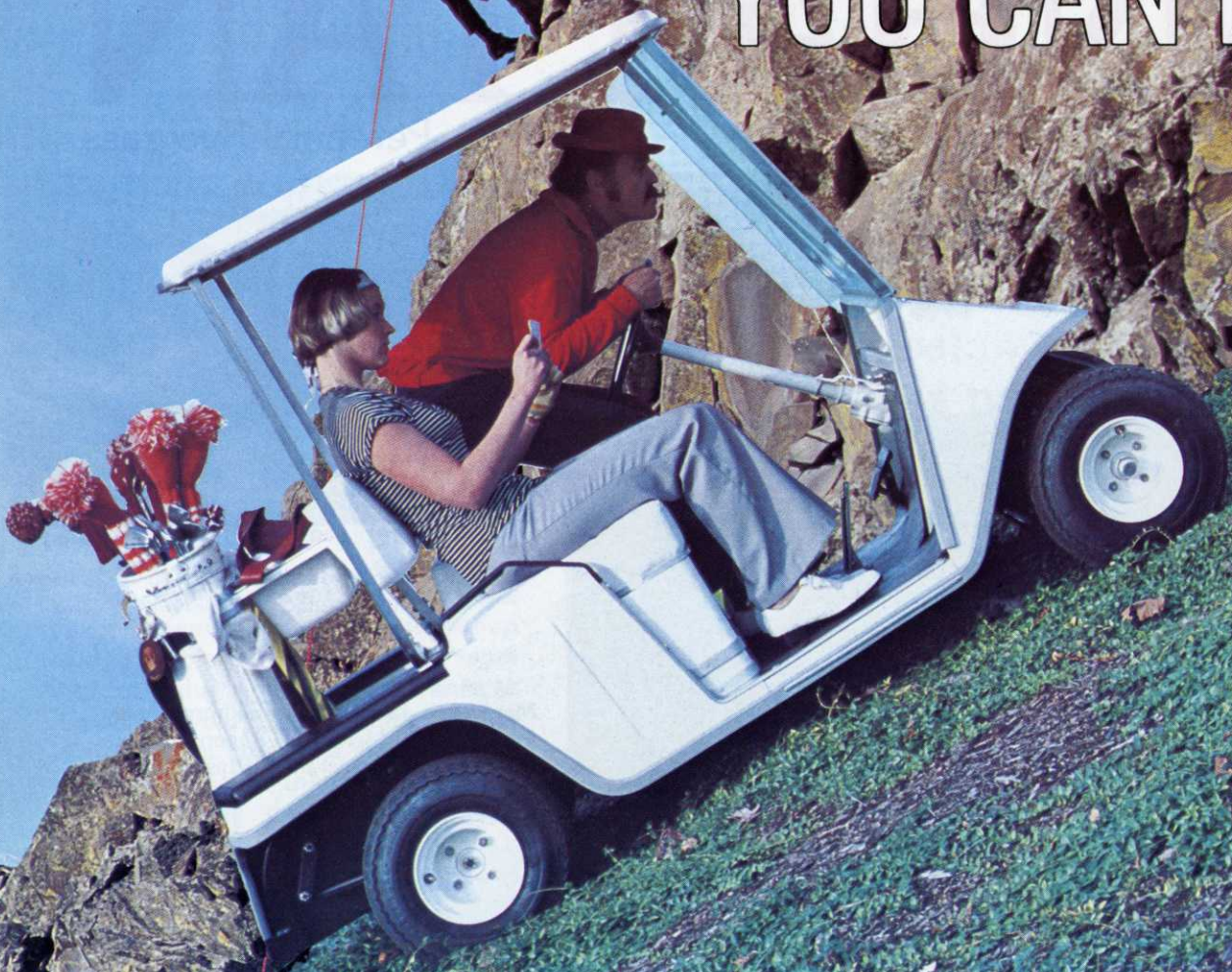
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 FOR PRODUCT, DISPLAY, SALES EXPERTISE

Take advantage of the salesmen who call on your pro shop

by Nick Romano, managing editor

Working the road is not a fun job. But traveling from club to club, course to course, mile after mile is something you live with if you are a golf product salesman in the field.

There are hundreds of them out there. Most work for manufacturers as part of their staffs, but many operate on their own, as independent representatives. Often these reps and salesmen see the industry more clearly than many club professionals and can get an overview that is unique in the business.

Golf salesmen are viewed by the pro as either allies or enemies, depending on the experience the pro has had over the years. There is little doubt that the experience salesmen bring to their jobs can be a valuable asset to the golf professional. The problem is, many pros never take or ask for the advice of the rep, even though it is there for the asking.

Ideas on display, use of lighting, salesmanship, promotions, and a variety of other sales techniques are available from the golf rep. If the professional is wise, he will utilize the free information. As one rep told GOLF BUSINESS, "The pros think they know it all. When I walk into a shop, I look at myself as going into a partnership with the pro. I supply suggestions that are going to help move more product, my product."

In a random sampling of golf salesmen and reps all over the country, GOLF BUSINESS found many of the field people felt they did not get enough of their accounts' time. Pete Knezevich, Acushnet's salesman in central Ohio, says the pro has missed the boat when it comes to merchandising.

"There is so much disorganization in pro shops today. Many pros just aren't interested in display. Maybe it's the time element involved," Knezevich said. With over 200 accounts in a region revolving around Columbus, Knezevich attempts to look at each



"The younger pros and the older smart ones do listen. They are the ones with profitable shops."

operation separately, determining the problems or pluses.

Knezevich thinks the pro has failed in utilizing his edge in market knowledge against the competition that has sprung up from the sporting goods dealers and golf speciality shops that have acquired pro line equipment. The Acushnet salesman insists the professional must have a gimmick to get people to look at his equipment. That gimmick can be his golf ball line. The ball can be offered as a loss leader to stimulate interest in the shop.

Besides the golf professionals in

his area, Knezevich also covers the daily fee, public operations with an assortment of owner-operators in the shop. He contends this group is not interested in moving equipment for the most part. Such operators are caught up in the revenue supplied by green fees and car rentals and are leery of being tied to an equipment inventory.

In the final analysis, Knezevich considers many owner-operators to be really unqualified to talk about the subtleties of equipment and to not have adequate product knowledge, necessary to get more of their customers to buy.

Reps offer experience

The independent representative is an active part of the marketplace today. Many of these men got started with the old-line companies and then decided to try it on their own, repping several lines. Such is the case with Dan Barbaro in metropolitan New York City. Barbaro spent 9 years with PGA/Victor, became disenchnated

with the product line, and decided to try it on his own. He handles Browning golf equipment and Munsingwear apparel in over 350 pro shops in the metro New York area along with suburban Orange and Fairfax counties, and Fairfield county in Connecticut.

"Golf professionals are funny creatures. There are many that don't want to accept your ideas. The younger pros coming in and the older, smart ones do listen. They are the ones with profitable shops," Barbaro noted.

Unlike Knezevich, Barbaro's accounts are primarily at the private county clubs and are PGA pros. In his 10 years as a salesman in the area, Barbaro feels his customers are more knowledgeable about product than ever, mostly due to the concerted effort made by the Metropolitan PGA section. The section puts out one of the most comprehensive newsletters in the country, keeping its pros abreast of the business activity of the section and of the salesmen within it.

Progressive thinking is important to Barbaro and he attempts to convey this to his accounts, especially the new ones. When he talks to a new professional at a club, he will try to get him around to thinking about merchandising, but builds the individual relationship between salesman and buyer first. "Establishing trust is very important in this business," Barbaro added.

Salesmen and reps must be selective in the items they will try to sell to various shops. For example, there are many courses that do not have the type of customers interested in buying high-priced sweaters and slacks. The rep can caution the new pro against this decision, if he knows the club's buying habits. This is just another way to build the relationship.

Southern view

In the south, the 12-month season is prevalent and the golf salesman works the year round. Such is the case with a pair of AMF Ben Hogan fieldmen: Bill Awalt, who covers the Miami and southern Florida markets, and Ray Coleman, who works out of Birmingham, Ala., but whose territory crosses parts of Georgia and Tennessee. Coleman has more than 225 accounts, while Awalt handles 120. Both work with private and semi-private clubs as the bulk of their accounts.

"Product knowledge and the willingness to share it with his customer is the biggest thing a salesman has going for him," Coleman said. Now in his third year in the region, Coleman has worked for Hogan since 1967, when he started in the Fort Worth factory. Eventually he was put in charge of quality control. He probably knows the inner workings of his company's equipment line better than anyone in the firm.

Awalt also worked for Hogan, before his assignment to Miami. He was in the public relations business in the Dallas area and worked some of the PGA tour events. Like Coleman, Awalt is a firm believer in establishing rapport with the pro first. "If the account knows I will work for him, the personal basis of the relationship is established," Awalt said.

Emphasizing the service aspect of the business is the key for Coleman. If he can convince his accounts that service is the edge they have over the golf speciality shops and retailers, Coleman has achieved his mission.

Most salesmen realize the day of the 40 percent markup is over. "I know some people in my area," says Coleman, "that are working on 20 to 25 percent, and it's tough to get that." It has not been a good year for hardgoods in the south, but Coleman points to the fact his sales are up over last year.

In the Miami area, Awalt stresses the softgoods market, which he contends has taken over in his region. At this time, 70 percent of the space in shops in southern Florida is allocated for softgoods. "The stiff discount competition the pros get in the area from golf retailers has forced them to look at the apparel possibilities at their club," Awalt commented.

Going a step beyond the norm is the key for Awalt. With his public relations background he is a good speaker and readily volunteers to speak for the pros at their clubs. Most presentations are made to the men's or women's associations. Hogan has a strong film presentation underscoring its product line, and Awalt works off this to answer any questions golfers may have on club making.

Some see both sides

With 11 years under his belt in the northern New Jersey area, Pat Manturi has been one of the top salesmen

for Wilson. A former club professional with experience in both New Jersey and Colorado, Manturi knows both sides of the counter. This insight has guided him well in knowing what his customers want and need.

Most of the courses Manturi calls on are daily fee operations. Like his counterparts in other areas, he has seen a significant slowdown in hardgoods. "Most of these people want to deal with the firms that will be around tomorrow," Manturi pointed out. A good part of his market is made up of farm families who had some land and decided to develop a golf facility.

"Owner-operators tend to be more limited in their product knowledge of the various clubs around. They prefer to stay with the more known brands and shy away from the deals that creep up from newer companies on the scene," said Manturi.

Another former pro turned salesman is Dennis Metzler, handling the Philadelphia territory for MacGregor. With more than 3 years under his belt, Metzler services 165 accounts in eastern Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey, and Delaware.

"People in my area are concerned with the growing retail competition. It has been hard over the last 2 years to get accounts to look at the big ticket items like clubs and bags," Metzler said. Although Metzler thinks the emphasis of lighting and display is important in a shop, he doesn't make suggestions to the club professional unless he feels the pro is asking for assistance.

No substitute for experience

Probably one of the biggest territories in size and geographic scope belongs to Ted Horvath in St. Paul, Minn. For 28 years, Horvath has worked the area of Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and northern Iowa for Spalding. He works with more than 500 accounts.

Weather over the last 2 years has played havoc with the golf market in the upper midwest. A crippling drought that devastated courses in that region last summer hurt rounds and, indirectly, sales.

"Last August had to have been the worst month I ever saw for golf. Ball sales were the lowest I can remember," Horvath said. Stiff retail competition from Minneapolis