

Shall a Professional Assume Greenkeeping Cares?

IS it more satisfactory for a Golf Club to employ both a Professional and Greenkeeper, or to put one man in charge of the combined duties?

This is a question on which Club Committees hold widely different views, based of course on their own good or bad fortune with either plan. We think the topic worthy of discussion, and have been requested to give our ideas by a "Golf Course" reader, who in acting as a Chairman has just decided the matter for himself.

To answer the question in a few words—it all depends on the individual or individuals employed, though nowadays the larger Clubs find it necessary to have capable men in each position. This system usually works out far better.

The professional's duties are many, and if attended to properly will leave no time for greenkeeping cares, especially during the seasons of the year when the condition of a Golf Course needs attention most. A good professional is a good instructor, and his time is pretty well filled with giving lessons, in fact, at many clubs he is forced to employ an assistant, in order to meet the demand for instructions by club members.

In addition to teaching, a professional should keep a tidy shop with an attractive stock of clubs and balls, and have facilities of repairing clubs promptly, and cleaning them regularly when this is desired. Many professionals lose much profit by not attending to their customer's wants, and neglect of the workshop.

Besides the above duties, the professional is frequently asked to act as starter and lend his help in connection

with weekly and other tournaments, also being privileged at some clubs to run off sweepstake competitions for his own profit, derived from the sale of balls. The finest golf players are not always the most handy professionals, since much of their time is occupied in attending open tournaments in different parts of the country, but many clubs prefer a prominent tournament player to a stay-at-home. We merely mention the above to emphasize the fact that the pro. has plenty to attend to without assuming responsibility for the condition of the course. We know a few men who attend in a capable way to the duties of professional and greenkeeper, but they are certainly in the minority.

Up-to-date greenkeeping is of such importance that it should be considered as a department all by itself, and a club usually saves money in the long run by paying a liberal salary to a really efficient greenkeeper. Good men in this line are scarce today, owing to the great increase in the number of golf courses, and can demand much larger wages than was the case a few years ago.

Many clubs cannot afford to pay high salaries to both professional and greenkeeper, and these are the clubs we would advise to seek out one good man to fill both positions, rather than to employ two men of mediocre ability. At a small club with a comparatively small membership, fewer demands are made on a professional, and his time is not usually so completely taken up, in giving instructions, etc. It follows, therefore, that he has more opportunity to study turf conditions, and we know many professionals in such positions

who become quite proficient in green-keeping work.

There are of course exceptions to all rules, but speaking generally we would advise the hiring of two good men where this can be afforded, or one good man rather than two of questionable ability, and lacking in experience.

If possible, the supervision of the game should be kept entirely separate from the supervision of the grounds. Neither the Professional nor Greenkeeper should receive instructions from the other, but each take orders directly from the Golf Committee and Grounds Committee respectively. A bright boy should also be chosen from among the older caddies to act as Caddy Master, and relieve the Professional of this detail.

It is impossible to name any set scale of wages to be paid the professional and greenkeeper, since conditions vary so much at different clubs.

The topnotch professional depends largely on the privileges attached to the position for his income, and though only a modest salary be paid, a tidy sum is realized by giving lessons and the sale of golf clubs, balls, etc., etc. Then, too, certain professionals who are able to compete in open tournaments whenever they like pick up considerable prize money during a year.

The greenkeeper has much less opportunity to realize anything above his salary, but, as stated previously, the wages paid him are steadily increasing and some clubs are employing men with the understanding that when called upon they are at liberty to visit other clubs or estates where expert advice is sought and receive, of course, a liberal fee for this.

The professionals and greenkeepers who through natural ability and conscientious work have made a reputation for themselves are being well paid today and their prospects are constantly improving.

Lime and Manure

WE had begun to think that there was no longer any necessity of warning Green Committees of the folly of mixing lime and manure or of liming soil which has been recently covered with animal manure of any kind. However, visits to a considerable number of clubs in the past few months have demonstrated that this mistake is still made with alarming frequency.

If lime is mixed with animal manure, it promptly proceeds to convert the nitrogen into gaseous ammonia, which, of course, at once escapes into the air. This naturally wastes much of the value of the manure.

The same mistake is also made in the construction of compost piles. If lime is used in compost piles, humus should be used to supply the organic matter necessary.

For the same reason, lime should not be mixed with sulphate of ammonia or materials containing it.

JIMMIE is a greenkeeper of small stature, but with a big brain. He had been instructed by the Chairman of the Green Committee to make a teeing ground by planting yarrow exclusively. The yarrow had made its appearance on the putting greens in many spots, and after Jimmie had removed the objectionable plants, he collected them as directed. The experiment was a success, and Jimmie explained his methods as follows:

"Now, you see," he said, as he gravely Fletcherized a cheek full of fine cut, "this yarrow grows easy enough where I don't want it, but it's so cussed contrary that I saw that it wouldn't grow where I did want it. I figured that the fool thing spent most of its time choking out my good grass on the greens, so I just fooled that doggone yarrow by slappin' in with it a little grass seed to make it think that I was tryin' to make a green."

Now, when you consider a theory such as Jimmie had, it comes mighty close to being common sense. In any event, it worked.