

The quiet power struggle in today's clubs

By TERRY BUCHEN

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. — The golf industry's upper echelon management is changing so rapidly that it is sometimes hard to tell the players without a scorecard.

Management at most golf courses is traditionally consists of the "Big 3" — the superintendent, manager and professional. The greatest change in trend is seen at clubs where one of these individuals is in charge over the other two.

The course manager usually has a food and beverage or sometimes accounting background and they usually aspire to be the general manager.

Head golf professionals more and more often desire to become director of golf, in charge of the golf operation and, therefore, the superintendent. Pros also are more often eyeing general manager positions as well.

Course superintendents usually are in charge of everything that grows outside and can be promoted to a director of golf and grounds position. They many times fill the director of golf and/or general manager's position.

It is interesting to note that traditionally the general manager is promoted from the food-and-beverage, or accounting ranks and the director of golf has been a head golf professional. But there is nothing cut in stone prohibiting the professional or superintendent from being the general manager.

Likewise, there is nothing prohibiting the general manager from being the director of golf or superintendent, or prohibiting the superintendent from being either the director of golf or general manager. Tradition is changing rapidly.

The general manager has a new classification emulating the chief executive officer (CEO) designation, while the director of golf has a classification to be the general manager. Because of the quest for power within their respective courses, the "Big 3" approach to management is becoming more and more competitive internally.

At the private club level, the "triangle" team management concept is still used, with the "Big 3" considered and work "with each other" instead of two working for the third.

The "triangle" most usually has a committee chairman to whom each "Big 3" representative reports. But this works only as well as the board of directors will let it, or promote it to continue to exist. "Triangle" management seems to be a

1ST OF 2 PARTS

dying concept. The combined titles of general manager/CEO, or director of golf/general manager are making headway while the traditional committee system remains intact.

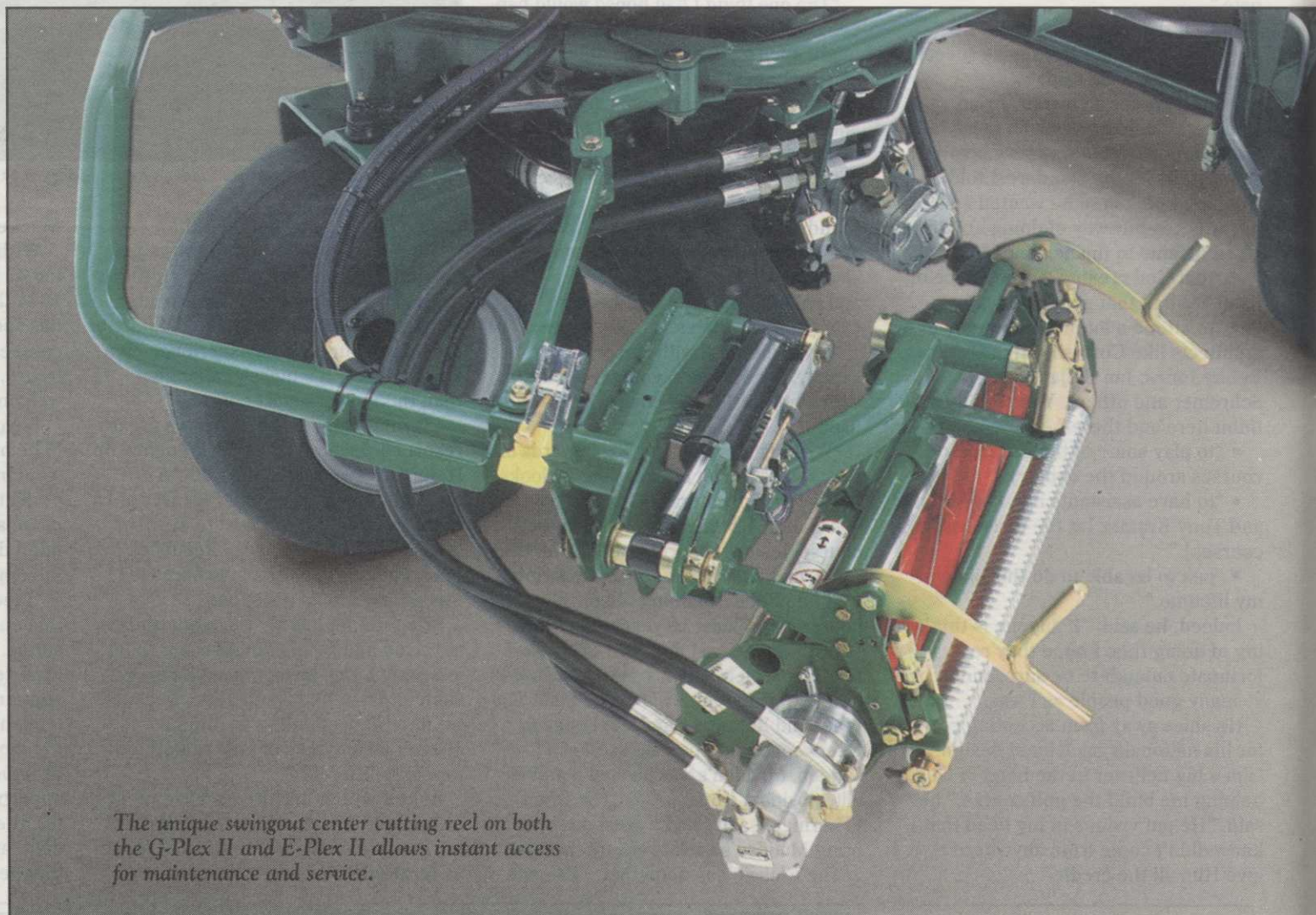
What will happen in the future to the way a golf course is operated, whether it is public access or private?

An unscientific, random poll of a number of "Big 3" officials at many courses throughout the country revealed there is a quiet power struggle that will

get more competitive as time goes on.

Who will be the victor? It is anyone's guess, but the two individuals in the clubhouse have a slight advantage because of their proximity to the golfing public and the bureaucracy at hand.

SAVVY SUPERINTENDENT



The unique swingout center cutting reel on both the G-Plex II and E-Plex II allows instant access for maintenance and service.



Our latest with one

Introducing the G-Plex II™ and E-Plex II™ greens mowers. Now with swingout center reels and dozens more forward-thinking advancements.

The next generation of triplex greens mowers is here, and Ransomes is bringing it to you. The new G-Plex II and E-Plex II have put the highest quality cut, more efficient greens care and the power of innovation right at your fingertips.

Feel the innovation. Just place your hand on the new patented swingout arm. It's that easy to access the center cutting reel without any tools...and without even bending down.

See the innovation. Look at the superior finish of a green mowed with one of these ultra-precise machines. A new (and also patented) stabilizer linkage levels all three cutting units parallel to the ground before and after use for a smooth cut over all terrains.