What Makes the Perfect Clubhouse?

By HENRY HAL POPPE
Manager, Club Rio Del Mar

Have you ever seen the ideal clubhouse? I am afraid I am going to start something, but my statement is, that I have never yet seen one which in my opinion is meeting all the requirements of a modern clubhouse to the fullest extent.

I have looked through all the available literature in search for a perfect clubhouse.

Amongst all the pictures, floor-plans and blue prints I have seen, there was none I dare recommend. Thus, I think it would do us all a lot of good, if GOLFDOM could start something in the form of a friendly competition, without being a contest, for the submission and reproduction of clubhouse plans, in order to make its readers familiar with the most modern and practical ideas about clubhouses.

The pro of a club which intends to put up a modest lodge, asked me what I think is lacking in most clubhouses. He was shocked when I found an answer. Here are the faults I find:

1. Important space lost in locker-rooms that are too large.
2. Locker-rooms too far

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from dining-room or grill.
3. Too much space devoted to lounge or lobby.
4. Dining-room too small or wrongly placed in relation with first tee or last green.
5. Pantry too large, too far from kitchen, store-room or refrigeration.
6. Kitchen too small, too far from dining-room, store-room or help's quarters.
7. Insufficient store-rooms or larders.
8. Inefficient refrigeration.
9. Inadequate and wrongly placed living-quarters for help.
10. Poor fire protection.
11. Lack of guest rooms, or entirely missing.
12. Insufficient rooms for lady members.
13. Manager's office wrongly placed.
14. Basements lacking or missing.

Why the Errors

Why? Here is my answer:
1. Many clubs think too far into the future by making their locker-rooms too large in the hope of a large membership, while additional locker-rooms could be added to the caddie house in case of need.
2. I deem it very important to have the locker-rooms so arranged as to have them close to the dining-room, in order to induce players to eat at their clubhouse, instead of sneaking in and out almost unobserved.
3. The lobby, hall or lounge, or whatever it is called, is often too large. Many players come only to play and not to sit around. Social gatherings often prove this, when only a disappointingly small number will participate.
4. Re-seats and the Sunday rush are evidences that many dining-rooms are too small. Higher priced meals could be served if members could enjoy their meals at leisure, without keeping someone waiting for a seat. Every dining-room should be placed as close and as visibly as possible to the first tee and the ninth hole, also to the tenth tee and the last hole. This is important sales-psychology to fill your household funds.
5. Many pantries are too large; at their beginning some clubs had the funny notion that eating is a secondary evil for a golf club, and many players would only snatch a sandwich while their foursome is waiting. The pantry should be adjoining the kitchen, where it cannot escape the jurisdiction of the chef, and should be as
close to the store room and refrigeration as possible, to avoid steps and waste.

6. For the above reasons kitchens are too small, also because someone thought modern devices could do most of the work and save help. Hot meals, and especially exclusive banquets, are very hard to prepare in a small kitchen. During a rush it becomes congested, and the service gets "stuck" because the help has no working space. Many kitchens are in the basement, where stairs mean a murderous strain on the feet of waiters, also they are too hot and stuffy, often a reason why cooks quit. The help's quarters should be easily reached from their working sphere. It is a very poor sight to observe a perspiring cook or a greasy pot-washer sneak up to his room through a gay crowd of well dressed members. In cases I know of, a storeroom was built where a platform could be placed for delivery trucks, yet it is a whole flight of stairs from the kitchen, forcing help to run half a mile for every trifile they need in a hurry. Kitchens, storerooms and pantries should always be on the north side of the building.

7. Where the store-room is too small, sufficient food cannot be bought at the most profitable time, and cannot be stored for emergencies. Furthermore commissaries piled into a crowded place are hard to count, and when something spoils it is easily overlooked.

Refrigeration Important

8. Many clubs spend huge sums on ice, because they are afraid to throw the old ice-box out. When there is much ice in the box, there is no room for food, when the ice makes room, the food spoils. Good refrigeration can prevent all losses of this kind, it also avoids too frequent deliveries where food keeps longer.

9. Strangely, many clubs make no provisions for their help. It is very hard anyhow to keep help at clubs, they are lonesome places for people without cars. How much worse, if the rooms are poor

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or employes are crowded together. Their living rooms should be absolutely isolated from parts frequented by members, for reasons stated before.

10. Out in the country, or even in the suburbs, almost every club has to rely on its own fire protection. It is nearly always surprisingly neglected.

11. I have found guest-rooms to be a great help to swell the club funds. Many members love to play Saturday afternoons, have dinner, sleep at the club, breakfast early to get a good start, and spend the rest of the Sunday at their club. Rooms bring real money after they have been furnished. The extra meals the member eats through this convenience are double profit. It is one of the striking examples which proves that a clubhouse should be managed on the financial principles of a hotel.

Care for Women
12. Women members should by all means have their drawing room, where they can talk to their heart’s delight while the men go around the course, where they are undisturbed in their peculiar feminine ways and where a dainty and profitable light repast can be served. Women should have something like a playground or a kindergarten to take care of their children. Many women will eat an expensive meal if they do not have to fuss with their children.

13. The office of the manager, steward or whoever is in charge, should be so located as to give complete control over the course of events in kitchen, pantry, store-room and dining-room. It should be reached by errand boys, or “somebody looking for somebody” without undue confusion.

14. Oftentimes the builders of club-houses seem to forget that woodpiles, garbage cans or coal sheds are hard to camouflage. Costly fences are built around the general dumping place, while on the other hand the place could be neat and free from stench and flies, if a spacious basement could hide all those unsightly necessities.

I do not know if the readers of GOLFDOM completely pulverized—thoroughly mixed

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DOM agree with me. But I think it mighty interesting to all of us, if we get together and make some architect sift and select our different ideas (if he has enough patience) and let him design the perfect clubhouse.

How Do You Buy? Two Good Buyers Tell Their Way

ONE of the surest signs that golf is setting business principles into operation is evident in the studious interest being given the highly important subject of buying. Not only do the clubs have much to gain, obviously, from informed and through buying operations, but the manufacturers and salesmen of proper equipment and supplies for golf courses are rejoicing; they know that the more thoughtful consideration given to buying means that the unscrupulous salesmen will not continue to victimize golf clubs, as they have done so frequently in the past.

A. G. Chapman, green-chairman at Audubon Country club, Louisville, Ky., has given a two-year trial to a method that he has found eminently satisfactory. A couple of years ago he began asking every greenkeeper with whom he came in contact, the different kinds of equipment and supplies they used. He found that the judgment of the greenkeepers varied considerably, but he took the majority opinion of those he talked with.

Mr. Chapman says: "If I were in the market today for a fairway mower, for example, and were in doubt as to what to buy, I think I would make inquiry of prominent greenkeepers in a confidential way as to what they are using and what experience they have had. Then, of course, we would study the strong points and the weak points of the several models presented and make our selection.

"Generally speaking, I believe that any golf course is better off by sticking to one..."