"One for All; All for One," Theme As Department Heads Meet

By HERB GRAFFIS

FOR the first time since golf began to exhibit symptoms of business growing pains, national representatives of the three departments in golf club operation assembled to bury their hatchets with snappy ceremonial.

The historic occasion was staged at the Long Vue C. C. (Pittsburgh district) on Monday prior to the opening of the Fifth annual convention of the Club Managers' association of America. Manager Ralph Sykora of Long Vue saw to it that the innards of the potential combatants were packed with peaceful viands, thus preventing what some keen observers of the golf business scene had forecast would be the battle of the century.

It had taken a year to bring the managers, pros and greenkeepers together in official session. All camps seemed to have a fear the other fellows were going to drag in a Trojan horse as a dastardly and mysterious stunt. Four elements figured in getting the groups represented under one roof. First, there was the recent indication that the U. S. G. A. is taking an intimate and promising interest in the functioning of the golf club department heads for whose work and ambitions the Club Managers' association, the National Greenkeepers' association and the Professional Golfers' association are directly responsible. Then there was the triumph of the idea the association sages had been broadcasting—that the man had to work for the club first, and get his own financial reward in direction proportion to his first principle. Third was the conviction of many of the department heads that there was no real reason for lack of complete unity between pros, greenkeepers and managers. Fourth, and possibly not the least, was all this recent talk about general management of golf clubs. Just who's going to be who under that plan, and why and where, undoubtedly was a spur to the meeting.

The invitations were extended by Henry Dutton, secretary of the Club Managers' association, acting on instructions from that organization's officials. In attendance were the executive board of the Club Managers' association, Alex Pirie, honorary president of the P. G. A. and spokesman for that group, and John Morley, president, Fred Burkhartd, sec., and John Quail, treas. of the National Association of Greenkeepers. The boy reporters, Leigh Metcalfe of Club Management and Herb Graffis of GOLFDOM, were permitted to throw a few shovelsful during the ceremonial of burying the hatchets.

Why the Squabbles?

A few lively rounds featured the general management part of the show. The greenkeepers and pros registered a protest against the prospect of having some bossy guy who didn't know what it was all about come out and tell them about dotting the i's and crossing the t's of their jobs. The dope at that stage indicated that the house managers were aiming for all the general management jobs so they could add to their own pay by subordinating other department heads. Very promptly the leaders in house management romped all over this idea. They maintained that the lack of men properly qualified for general management of golf clubs today was fully appreciated by the managers and that any fellow worth promotion to such a position was going to have to have tact and teamwork as major qualifications for holding the position.

The managers there further declared that unless general management were predicated on highest type, harmonious operation of each department by a well-paid man, the scheme of centralization would be a sorry flop. When the last thud along that line echoed away the boys got down to some constructive themes.

It was freely expressed in the privacy of this family circle that golf club business operation is in the remote distance as long as club officials, who are unacquainted with the complex details of operations, bluntly dictate policies and methods without the department head affected be-
ing able to make expert and adverse com-
ment. Unless the greenkeeper, pro and 
manager are recognized as a unit operat-
ning competently for the good of the entire 
club, things don't fare so well for any of 
the three individuals concerned under 
today's general executive policy at golf 
clubs, the assembly decided. For that rea-
son, unless the three department heads can get along together as able and broad-
minded men should do, they should be 
replaced by competent men who will co-
operate. That was the conclusion in which 
all of the three factions concurred.

Criticize in Private

It was agreed that tolerance, helpfulness 
and understanding between department 
heads were essential to the correct opera-
tion of golf clubs on a service and finance 
basis and also essential to the department 
heads on the grounds of advance in their 
salaries and general status. Without a 
dissenting voice the triumvirate con-
demned any department head who would 
publicly express criticism of the head of 
any other department. If complaints are 
heard, in all helpfulness and diplomacy, 
take them privately to the man concerned, 
and then if good intentions are repeatedly 
scorned there is license for an expression 
to the directorate that will correct the 
situation, if it happens to impede the 
efforts the complainant is making for the 
club. That's the sort of direct dope the 
fellows got together on after the prelimi-
nary misunderstandings were removed.

To Connect Directorates

Definite action was initiated in assem-
bbling machinery for a close and under-
standing contact between department heads 
through their respective organizations, 
when Alex Pirie, speaking for the Profes-
sional Golfers' association, said that the 
pro organization would provide places in 
their executive council for two representa-
tives each from the Club Managers' asso-
ciation and the National Association of 
Greenkeepers. Officials of the greenkeep-
ers' and managers' organization hailed this 
pro move as the first step in getting golf 
club operation on a foundation that would 
be infinitely better for clubs and depart-
ment heads than the basis now too fre-
cently obvious. The representatives of 
the other two organizations committed 
themselves to a similar extension of group 
contact as soon as proper executive com-
mittee action could be taken.

Are You Helping Yourself by Taking Part 
in the Maintenance Cost Research?

MORE reports are desired for examination in 
connection with the course upkeep per-
centage research being made at Massachusetts 
Agricultural college by Jay M. Heald. 

Full details of this important work are given 
on pages 66, 67 and 70 of February GOLFDOM. 

Course superintendents and green-chairmen of 
many of the best run 18-hole and nine-hole clubs of the country have supplied this information and 
made it possible to approximate a basis for course 
maintenance expenses that will be helpful and 
fair to both the club and the man responsible 
for the work.

This study, being financed by GOLFDOM, is 
pronounced by leading practical greenkeeping 
authorities one of especially timely significance 
and an impressive item in showing how green-
keepers are taking command of the financial 
details of their operations.

Additional returns are especially requested 
from clubs in Arizona, Arkansas, Delaware, 
Florida, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oklahoma, 
South Carolina, Utah, Wyoming and Rhode 
Island.

Prompt attention of other greenkeepers and 
chairmen who know their costs in supplying this 
data will be greatly appreciated by all concerned.

Please address the data to 

JAY M. HEALD 

Care of Prof. L. S. Dickinson 

Massachusetts Agricultural College 

Amherst, Mass.

INTERNATIONAL interest attaches to the 
P. G. A. instruction pictures. Golf in 
Australia, commenting on the P. G. A. pic-
tures and the appointment of George Sar-
gen as American head of the international 
committee on relations between the pro 
associations of the United States and Great 
Britain, says:

"Why could not this committee be ex-
tended to include Australia? True, the 
P. G. A. of Australia is in its infancy com-
pared with those other two bodies, but 
each has identical problems and needs. 
How our professionals' work could be simpli-
fied and the results be made manifold if 
these valuable films could be secured at 
anything like a reasonable cost! At any 
rate, it would be worthwhile finding out if 
they are procurable, and we feel sure that 
Walter Hagen and Joe Kirkwood would 
lend their aid. Professionals, how about 
it?"