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For more information circle number 129 on card

Accent on management

By **KEN EMERSON**

Executive Director, National Club Association

What does a club manager do to keep his members coming after the ground freezes, the grass dies, and the snow begins to fly?

Until recently many of the managers counted on the winter months as a time of rest, recuperation, and repair, but rising costs, increased real estate and property taxes, and the difficulties of retaining or reacquiring membership attention in the spring have caused many clubs to reappraise winter closing policies.

Of course, if you're an Ed McKellar at Oahu Country Club in Honolulu or a Marion Boswell at Pasadena Golf Club in St. Petersburg you aren't faced with the problem. The golfers keep coming all year. But the manager in the northern half of the country must compete with winter sports, public entertainment, new restaurants, and an increasingly sophisticated membership. How does he do it?

Many make full use of the season. Stan Hale at Minneapolis Golf Club and Bud Hall at Pinehurst Golf Club in Littleton, Colorado, are two of the many managers who provide tickets and busses to local football games, often buying season tickets in large blocks and capitalizing on them to sell both lunches and dinners.

Others expand a simple idea. Charles Viviano, Shannopin Country Club; Bill Dornetto, Highland Country Club, and John Chereka, Wildwood Golf Club, all of Pittsburgh, have developed duplicate bridge into an annual, interclub tournament. Horace Duncan of Cherry Hills in Denver provides art classes for his membership and many other activities.

What can a manager do to justify keeping his club open in the winter? The possibilities are limited only by your own imagination and good judgment. A time of trial and financial concern can be turned into one of activity and success—and you need begin with nothing more

than a pencil, paper, and a freewheeling imagination.

For starters here are some ideas that other clubs have found to be successful:

Skiing excursions—the club providing busses (rented for a day or a week), box lunches, beverages and overnight accommodations. . . . Hunting trips—with the same arrangements, permit a convivial atmosphere of hot food, companionship—and sales—on return.

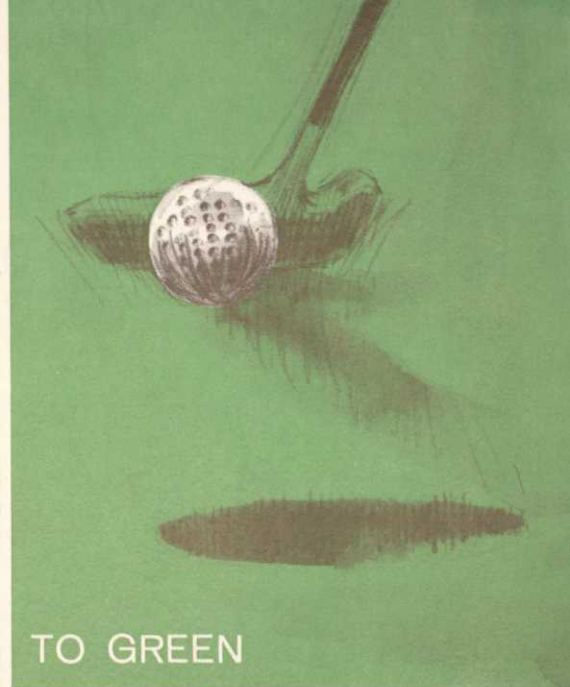
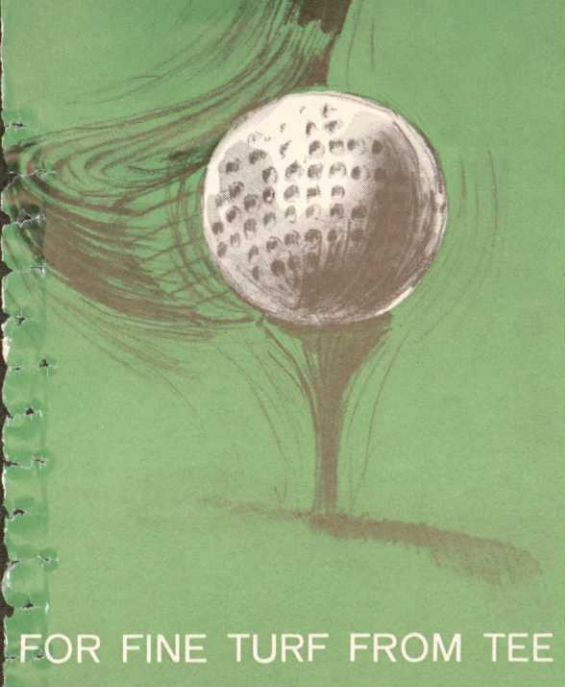
Children's activities—(if the kids come, can the parents be far behind?) Flood a section of the parking lot or lawn for an ice-skating rink. If it's visible from the dining room, so much the better. Lay out a downhill run for junior slalomers. . . . a race course for snowmobiles. You can rent one these winter hot rods if necessary and run a regular racing meet.

As a private club you qualify for chartered airplane tours. Plan one to include southern golf courses, Mexico, the Bahamas, or Hawaii. If your membership just can't get away in the winter months, run an indoor golf tournament in January, a la miniature golf.

Want to have a "different" party? Here are a few unusual themes: Nov. 5, Guy Fawkes Day; Nov. 12, Elizabeth Dady Stanton Day, (woman suffragist); Nov. 29, Admiral Byrd reached the North Pole; Dec. 17, first flight of the Wright Brothers; December 24, Los Posados; December 30, Rizal Day; January 6, Swap Day; January 24, Discovery of Gold in California; between January 21 and February 12, Chinese New Year.

Your winter activities can even capitalize on repairs and renovation. Try a Sidewalk Superintendent's Cocktail Hour, a Builder's Breakfast, or a Contractor's Kibitzer Luncheon to retain and encourage members' interest. •

(For ideas on holiday parties, see Jerry Marlatt's article on page 61.)



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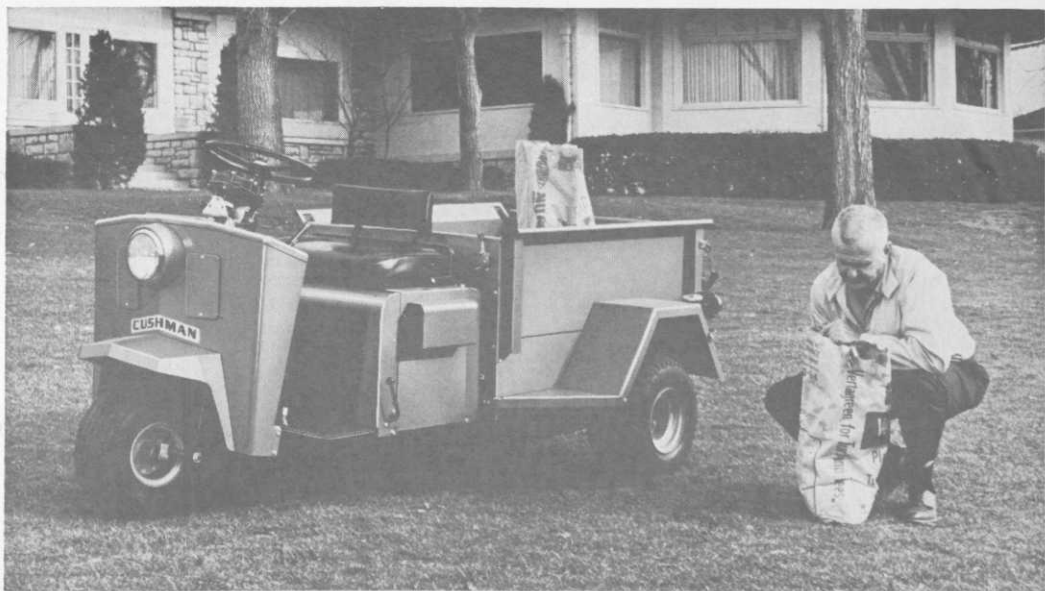
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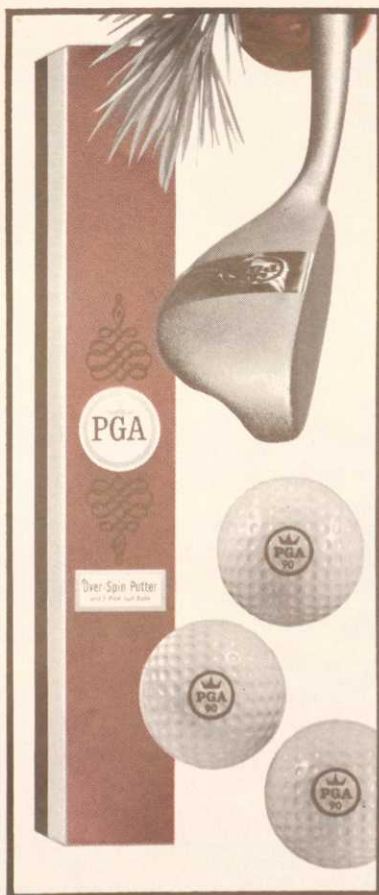
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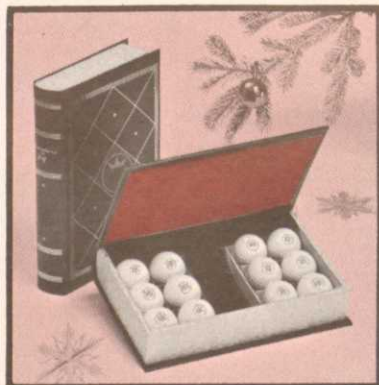
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