

# T a l k i n g   I t   O v e r

## Raising Standards of Small Town Golf

One of the most significant trends in golf is the eagerness of clubs in the smaller towns to reach metropolitan standards of course architecture and maintenance. Some of the smaller clubs are doing notable work in this respect, due to the energy and application of studious officials. Other clubs continue to grope around in hope of the path upward.

Recently we had a letter from the president of a club in a small town asking us if we could put him in touch with a greenkeeper whose salary could be paid out of a club annual income that approximated \$3,500. Here was a case of ambition, but not much hope for its attainment. The only advice we could offer was that this president make an arrangement with clubs in neighboring towns and share the expense of a competent greenkeeper who could divide his time between the clubs, and maintain close supervision over the operations.

Considering this particular case, and that of other smaller town clubs, we have about reached the conclusion that the general construction of good roads binding neighboring small towns together is ushering in a period when we may see fewer new golf clubs established in the more densely settled parts of the nation, but these new ones will be infinitely above the prevailing standard of the small town courses of today.

We know of one typical bit of central states territory where there are six golf courses within a circle of a 20-mile radius. They are average courses, all getting greater play each year. Construction was done by "the loving hands at home" and maintenance is haphazard. When the leases on the land where these courses are built expire, the time will be ripe for the construction of one first-class course, properly maintained, and, due to the good roads, handy enough to be convenient to a big and lively field of players—enough of them to support the club on a substantial basis.

This seems to be an era of industrial mergers, with decided economic benefits. The merger policy might well be studied by golf clubs in smaller towns that happen to be close enough together to make the construction and operation of one first-class course practical for all concerned. It would be vast improvement over the present condition.

## Where Is the "Big Money" in the Pro Field?

Gene Tunney in 30 minutes, fourteen seconds of which were spent sedentarily, earned several times as much as the prize and exhibition money earned by all of the country's golf professionals this year. Surely an impressive reminder that the pro's financial status as a professional athlete is not much, and that his salvation as a money-maker must come from his better merchandising at his club.

The average club member who will take cartoonist Goldberg's advice

# Between Ourselves

and "divide by two," will get a better idea of the pro's yearly earnings than now is harbored. The young pro is on the right track who pilots his course by business methods rather than by the will-o'-the-wisp of spectacular and triumphant tournament performances.

We can name a number of pros whose incomes run in excess of \$10,000 a year, yet they are practically unknown as tournament winners. Some of the champions of past years have had plenty of opportunities for comparison, and you'll note that now they are merchandisers—good ones, too. Jock Hutchison and Cyril Walker are two we call to mind. They have been in both of the pictures, and they've made their choice—to make golf a business like any other business man would.

## Deal the Manager a Hand in the Board Meetings

always done.

We shrink from thinking of the money spent unwisely in building and altering golf clubs that might have been used to better results if the manager were allowed to take even "a small speaking part" in the deliberations prior to the spending decisions.

With so many budgets to be made up during the next few months among the country's golf clubs, there is great need for expert, practical guidance. If the manager can't help his club spend right, cut him loose. But the chances are 500 to 1 that if he has been good enough to hold his job for a couple of years, his judgment on clubhouse expenditures is valuable.

Give him a chance to be heard before it's too late.

## "Say It With Cash" When Praising Greenkeeper

for achievement and economy.

Of this practice, Southmoor's president, J. C. Vlasak, says, "One can pat a man on the back and praise his work to show appreciation of his efforts, but we decided to pay a bonus, in addition to a compliment, at the end of the season. We did not promise to pay any specific amount, but used our judgment. Our method has brought results and we have greens of which we are very proud."

This proposition deserves consideration by other clubs. If the greenkeeper does his work in a highly satisfactory manner, and helps his club keep its budget down, why not share the benefits in cash with that conscientious worthy?

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At many of the most smoothly operated clubs we have noticed that the manager sits in on the board meetings. Such a simple and apparently logical thing to do that it's a wonder it is not

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Southmoor Country club, in the Chicago District, is successfully employing an idea that gives its greenkeeper a substantial incentive. At the end of each year he is paid a bonus as a reward