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Big Job Cut Out for General Manager

BY R. S. RICHARDSON Manager Kanawha Country Club

OST successful enterprises today have as a recognized head an executive who knows the business in all of its departments and whose experience and training is such that he can personally do the actual work of a subordinate, should that be necessary. Thus he is capable of supervising and instructing the men of his organization in all the details and ramifications of the business. A modern banker is usually a man who has had experience in every line of work that is essential to good banking. He is capable of organizing a new bank and taking complete charge of its operations, establishing its systems, selecting and directing its personnel, and in the end turning over to the directors a smoothly running institution. It has become more and more the practice of placing at the head of our great railroads men who have come up from the ranks and who know every angle of railroading. The same thing is true of great industrial enterprises, as well as the smaller units of manufacturing and merchandising.

Golf has come to be a real business. Country clubs are safely established on a permanent basis. Millions upon millions of dollars are invested in them and this investment comes from men who stand first in the business and social life of the country. Because of its recreational character the same keen thought and judgment has not been given to golf, as a business, that would naturally enter into the channels of manufacture and trade. Club management is frequently in the hands of a caterer; too frequently in the hands of men who do not know golf. One reason, perhaps, is that it is difficult to find men trained and equipped in all the departments of golf and club management. A man who has a knowledge of accounting. who is experienced in club or hotel man-

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agement, who knows something of greenskeeping, who plays a good game of golf and loves to play it, who has perhaps taught golf as a professional—such a man would be invaluable to the modern country club.

Engaged in the business of golf are men who achieve success as clubhouse managers, men who are good golf professionals and instructors, who know grasses and soils and are good greenkeepers, men who are clubhouse architects and golf course architects. Many of them, as a rule, know simply their own line of work and are not efficient in other departments. I have seen a good many country clubs—north, east and south—and as a general thing the professional knows nothing of club management, and in many cases the club manager does not know how to play golf.

I have seen many country club buildings designed by famous house architects. They are beautiful and imposing, but it is clear that some of the architects do not understand golf nor the needs and comforts of the golfer. It is no adverse criticism of the architect to say that because of his ignorance of the game he inevitably misses the little things that count so much in a golfer's life, especially when he is off his game and the world seems hard anyway. I know one such golf club where, for example, there is no way to get from the locker room to the golf shop without going around the building, and the golf shop is on the side of the house away from the first tee. A country club should not only look well to the outside observer, but the members want service, comfort, and convenience, and the building should be arranged to give them what they want. It is my conviction that an architect who does not play golf is unable to design a building as well as one who plays and loves the game.

A new country club of today usually employs a course architect, a clubhouse architect, and then employs a manager to open the club and put it in running order. If they would first employ a man who could superintend the building of the golf course, superintend the building of the clubhouse, and then open the club, establish the systems, and turn over to the executives a smoothly running club, I am positive they could save a great deal of money and derive greater satisfaction from their expenditure. A man of this kind must have a great deal of experience, but



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it is possible, and men are being trained today for such work.

If a good golfer who knows accounting should become a golf professional and teach the game successfully a few years, and then act as assistant to some well known golf architect, studying carefully the building of the course, the building of the greens, the drainage, and noting the different grasses that are used in different climates and soil; and then get into the managing and secretarial end of the business where his accounting experience would help him in criticizing the systems and the service already established; this experience, together with his keeping up with the growth of the game by reading the excellent advice derived from the United States Golf association and the articles in the good golf magazines of today, would qualify him for the general work outlined above.

The country club business is growing and it is time that all men connected with its management should try to improve their knowledge of all departments so that when they have a title of General Manager, they will be General Manager in reality.

Martin's Picture Book Is Players' Aid

D ODD, MEAD & CO. have published Pictorial Golf by H. B. Martin. It is one of the simplest worthwhile golf instruction books we have seen. The book consists of the clearly illustrated golf pointers picked up by Martin during the last fifteen years' observation of many leading players. Much of it has appeared as newspaper syndicated material and "went over big" in the daily papers. Martin has done an excellent job of clarifying baffling points in golf instruction and in vividly illustrating vital playing details so they will be more easily imitated and retained by the average player.

The book strikes us as one that will do a whole lot more than its cost in good to the game of the average player. While it is by no means as elaborate as Bob Mac-Donald's photographic classis of golf instruction, the new Martin book is a remarkably practical piece of work. Its cost is \$2.00.

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