



Why do most locker-rooms look like sections of the county jail? Here is the locker-room at Knollwood (Chicago District) to give an idea of possibilities with this section of clubhouses

Today's Conditions Make Winter Operation Big Query

By *EARLE G. LEE**

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MY ADVICE on keeping the country club open in the winter was sought by an acquaintance, an officer of a newly organized club. Their plan was to organize a club to feature golf—with a membership composed of men of moderate means. They wished to operate as economically as consistent with the providing of good golf. My answer was as follows: Construct your course, build a clubhouse, provide good locker and lounging facilities, a quick service restaurant with as little overhead as possible, state emphatically in your by-laws the purpose of your organization, the activities you are to provide and that the clubhouse will be closed at the end of the playing season and opened in the spring as soon as playing conditions warrant.

There is no doubt that closing in winter

**Club managers' convention address.*

is a money saver, but with the prevailing times, can the country club remain closed?

Conditions Change

It can be considered from many angles and standpoints. Fifteen to twenty years ago, when the country club was all the name implied, it was a foregone conclusion that it would be closed in winter. As it presents itself today it is a question and a problem, for there is a growing demand on the part of the members for an all year club. The strength of this growth depends entirely upon the number of members residing or intending to, in the near vicinity of the club. The number is increasing, due to improved transportation facilities and the desire for an all year round home in the country.

We all know the real reason for closing the club in winter is the lack of demand for its use and the added expense incurred. The demand is on the increase, the amount

to cover the expense must be provided. Members opposed to such a plan years ago are being won over, good roads are a help in this direction.

I have spoken of what I consider confronts the average country club now operating, organized ten or fifteen years ago, originally to feature some one or two sports and has allowed itself to be drawn in deeper and deeper with added activities, added expense and added assessments.

There is to my knowledge just one club in the Chicago district, meeting the situation successfully. It has devised a plan whereby the winter operation takes care of its own expense. The regular membership being closed, it offers a limited number of winter memberships to those qualified and to whom it may appeal, it also collects a fee for winter sport privileges, and the increased membership number, by helping in carrying the departments satisfactorily. However, at the time of organizing it was in the country, but abreast with the times the membership gradually moved to the suburb and their homes now surround the Club. (This is the Skokie Country Club whose winter operations were described in November GOLFDOM.)

Of course, there are clubs of old standing that have and are now operating on an all year round basis—on a limited scale and with as little added expense as possible—funds to cover being taken from the dues income. It is a very unsatisfactory method, and one that only clubs of the wealthier sort can afford to assume.

I do not mean to say that conditions such as I have related are to remain. I believe it will be the means of a more definite understanding in the beginning between the organizer and the proposed member, as to just what the nature of the club's activities are to be, thereby eliminating a possibility of a condition such as exists today.

From the standpoint of the Club Manager, today's general condition I cannot see other than as a detriment. By keeping open, even on a limited basis we are able to some extent to keep the organization together—a great help at spring when a smooth working machine must be produced in short time.

All in all, it is a hands-off proposition for the manager. When the question arises my advice is to handle it as diplomatically as possible, avoiding the expression of opinion, for there will be a divided membership, factional disputes and the like. It is strictly a problem for the Governing

Board, and we must accept the decision and be controlled accordingly.

I do not know what has been accomplished in my attempt to analyze this subject. It depends upon conditions and the period of time in which we live. As we live in cycles, by the time we have all the members moved and residing near the Club, the trend may be reversed—the all year home may be back in the city and the members flying to and from the club. However, the question "shall we close in winter" would still exist and I truly believe it to be one of the greatest problems confronting our operation today.

Written Tie-Ups Help Smooth Operations

THERE is some difference of opinion as to the advisability of a large directorate for a golf club, but at the Meadow Lake Country club (Kansas City, Mo.) a directorate of thirteen functions efficiently and smoothly because each new director who is concerned with committee affairs comes onto the board with a written report from his predecessor to guide him.

The system at Meadow Lake is described by H. C. Allen, who was president of this organization for three terms. Mr. Allen says:

Our method of organization is not complicated. We have a Board of Governors consisting of thirteen members. The terms are arranged for one, two and three-year periods. A Nominating Committee is appointed by the President, and twice the number of board members to be elected are nominated. This list is sent out to the membership at large and is posted at the Club Room and the annual election is held the first Tuesday after the first Monday in December of each year.

The first meeting of the new board is then held according to the club by-laws the third Monday in December. At this meeting the following officers are elected: President, First and Second Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. Our standing committees consist of Finance, House, Greens, Handicap and Tournament, Membership, Entertainment and Caddie. The chairman of each of the standing committees, with the exception of the Caddie, must be a member of the Board of Governors, as provided in our by-laws.

The President selects from the Board of Governors the chairman of each committee and makes his recommendations for other members to serve on the com-