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Pittsburgh held its annual equipment demonstration May 22, at Highland C. C., where John Quail, secretary of the National Association of Greenkeepers, presides over course maintenance. Approximately 40 representatives of clubs in the western Pennsylvania territory witnessed the equipment of many leading manufacturers put through the paces.

Greenkeeper's Job Calls For Four-Square Diplomacy

By EDWARD B. DEARIE, Jr.

A GREENKEEPER is involved in four distinct relationships to which he should give his attention. These relationships are with his subordinates, his green-chairman, his club and with nature.

Relations with nature should be cordial—whenever possible. He should endeavor to co-operate with her and should make a special effort to get along peaceably with her despite her many whims.

Relations with the green-chairman should be based upon mutual respect. The greenkeeper should remember that his chairman is the representative of the club officials and the chairman should remember that the greenkeeper is the superintendent on the golf course.

Co-operation between greenkeeper and green-chairman is highly desirable. It is the foundation of economical and efficient course maintenance. Friction between them almost always has the opposite effect. The ultimate result, if the dissension be long continued, is usually deterioration of the course, a loss of members' interest in the course and financial waste.

Almost invariably the greenkeeper knows more about course maintenance than the green-chairman. This is only natural inasmuch as the greenkeeper in most cases has had considerable experience in this line of work. He should have been hired for his competency and once having established that his ability to manage the course is proven beyond question, the greenkeeper then should seldom be interfered with. The greenkeeper must prove his ability to his chairman so the chairman can help improve the greenkeeper's position as a greens executive to the members. Consider the greenkeeper in selecting the equipment and supplies required for the course because he will be responsible for results.

Knowledge of the fundamental principles of greenkeeping should be sought by the green-chairman as soon as he has been elected to office. The intelligent greenkeeper will make every effort to give his chairman as much information as possible in regard to the course at the earliest opportunity. It is only through insight

into turf problems that a green-chairman is able to co-operate to the fullest extent with the greenkeeper.

Advocate Long Term for Chairman

The election or appointment of a long-term green-chairman is highly to be commended. The one-season chairman is just getting familiar with his work when his term expires. As a result he seldom knows enough about turf problems to intelligently approve or disapprove the actions and recommendations of the greenkeeper.

As spokesman before the board of directors, the green-chairman is in a position to be of great assistance to the greenkeeper. Frequently he will be able to put over ideas and obtain appropriations which the greenkeeper would never be able to obtain alone. If he is a good fighter, he will battle with the finance committee, the treasurer and the board of governors and insist upon large enough appropriations for adequate maintenance.

The budget that is turned over to the new green-chairman too often consists only of good wishes and sympathy. Seldom is he given any definite facts regarding the maintenance of the course. How fortunate is the green-chairman who is presented by the greenkeeper with complete self-explanatory course records which present a true picture of its development!

"The reward of the permanent chairman is lots of work and little honor" according to one of them. This is undoubtedly true. However, in almost every club some member is intrigued by the interesting and fascinating problems or maintenance than in golf. If such a member is appointed as green-chairman, he will give his best efforts and will regard the responsibility as an honor.

Give Chairman Figures

As business men most green-chairmen are used to figures. They will appreciate comprehensive and intelligent weekly reports which will keep them posted in regard to the progress of course maintenance. The greenkeeper who suffers from an inferiority complex has no one to blame but himself if he does not develop the course in accordance with the resources of the club. Often the sole reason a greenkeeper is obliged to use inadequate equipment and to get along without necessary supplies is because he has failed to impress upon his green-chairman and his club the desirability of

adequate equipment and the necessity of needed supplies.

While playing golf, the green-chairman will have an opportunity to think of many suggestions for course betterment which are always worth respectful attention. He should visit as many courses in the district as possible. If he plays his home course continuously, he is seldom capable of seeing its weaknesses.

Criticism by the green-chairman should always be accepted in the proper spirit. While they may sometimes be provoking in view of the circumstances, the greenkeeper should remember that complaints of members to the green-chairman may have been unreasonable too. The tactful greenkeeper will endeavor to explain the reason for any unsatisfactory condition upon the course. In few cases are these unsatisfactory conditions the fault of the greenkeeper personally.

Relations with employes should be one of mutual advantage. The greenkeeper is desirous of employing satisfactory employes and the employes are anxious to retain satisfactory employment.

One of the first duties confronting the greenkeeper on the new course is the organization of a working force sufficient to take care of the property with a minimum of expense and with a maximum of satisfaction.

The hiring of employes for course maintenance is almost always left to the greenkeeper. This is only right because he is best qualified to judge the capabilities of applicants. Also, he is responsible for the work performed and the results. In the hiring of employes the greenkeeper usually is handicapped through the club's appropriation for labor which is often woefully inadequate. Few clubs have the foresight to secure a competent estimate of such cost before commencing operation. Instead, they are inclined to make a rough guess at such cost and expect the greenkeeper to keep within the resulting appropriation. This is often wholly impossible—even when it is possible to get one man to do the work of two.

Get Greenkeeper at Start

No one connected with a golf club is better qualified to estimate probable labor cost than the greenkeeper. He is able to estimate the minimum and maximum amount of work likely to be encountered upon the property. He should certainly be called upon for information as soon as possible. In fact, the wise club has the

greenkeeper on the job even before construction work is completed. His advice and recommendations are worth just as much, if not more, than later.

The fixing of salaries, also, is left largely to the greenkeeper who must divide the labor appropriation fairly so as to accomplish the most satisfactory results. The prevailing wages in the district for similar work usually is a controlling factor. However, it must be remembered that minimum salaries usually produce minimum efforts and consequently, minimum results. Usually underpaid labor is inexperienced and will not permit the greenkeeper to insist on work above the average in efficiency.

The satisfaction of employes is an important factor of efficient maintenance. Dissatisfied employes are likely to be careless and require constant supervision. Satisfied employes will be more careful and more efficient generally. Often an improvement in the morale of the working force, such as might be caused by raising the wage scale a cent or two an hour, will work wonders in the general condition of the course.

Hope of reward is more effective than fear of punishment in the production of efficient work by employes. A greenkeeper who is continually criticizing needs either a new set of employes or a new disposition. Some incentive besides a minimum salary should always be placed before employes. They should be able to look for an increase in pay with an increase in efficiency.

Other incentives should be offered employes whenever possible. Promotions should be made as rewards wherever practical. For this reason it is often best not to make any definite appointments to the most important subordinate jobs at once. Employes may act as foremen and subforemen without having the definite titles. Let these jobs be earned.

Get Men Who Like Nature

Love of nature is essential for efficiency in all phases of golf course maintenance. This should be possessed by every member of the greenkeeping staff. Employes to whom turf culture represents nothing more than so much daily drudgery are seldom efficient. Because a man has spent his life in agricultural work does not mean that he necessarily has any absolute liking for it. He may remain in it because of circumstances beyond his control.

A short probationary period for all new employes is suggested. Within this period the greenkeeper should observe both the attitude and the work of the new employe closely to ascertain his real aptitude. Unfitted employes can be laid off at the end of such probationary period without the hard feelings which might exist had they been hired on a permanent basis. It will not be necessary to make enemies of them or to resort to silly excuses.

Two opposite policies may be followed in the training of employes. Under one system each employe is trained for a definite task and under the other system tasks are rotated. Each arrangement has its advantages. When an employe is continuously responsible for the performance of certain tasks, he is likely to become quite proficient at them. When jobs are rotated, each employe gets a chance at the more desirable jobs; therefore, he cannot object to the less desirable duties.

The training of employes should be given considerable attention. Greenkeepers should teach their employes in such a manner that they will not only understand thoroughly what is expected of them, but the necessity for the work. In other words he should make every effort to help them develop interest because with it will come greater efficiency.

Governed by Duties—Not Time

Hours of labor frequently are regulated by necessity. There is a certain amount of work to be done each day and nature will not await the pleasure of man. Over-time is not to be favored as a general rule, for usually the longer the hours the less efficiency. When an employe has completed a day's work, he is entitled to his leisure. Frequently it will be found that an employe may perform the same amount of work in eight hours as in nine hours if he is given an incentive. After the length of time that a task ordinarily requires has been established, it is often practical to pay on this basis regardless of the actual time required. However, employes should not be permitted to shirk their duties or do sloppy work in order to finish it sooner.

Retaining as many employes as possible over the winter should be earnestly considered. Usually it is not practical to retain the entire maintenance staff. There are many jobs which may be done with profit during the idle months. Permanent employment should be one of the rewards of efficient work during the summer.