

Let Manager Manage, to Escape House Operating Deficit

By THOMAS REAM

Manager of Calumet Country Club

ALTHOUGH the country club manager is finding that his number of "bosses" has practically doubled during the last four years his job of management is getting simplified.

The increase in the number of "bosses" is due to the great interest women have taken in golf clubs. Where the manager a few years ago, could consider that he had 300 "bosses," this being the number of men at the average metropolitan district golf club, he now has every wife as an added equal owner in the club's assets and feeling an equal and rightful importance in the club's management.

Where the paradox of simplified management under this recent development comes is in the general re-organization of the house operating plan. In the old days it was not uncommon to have large and unwieldy house-committees with each member telling the manager what to do and how and, as a result the entire membership was encouraged to have its say in uninformed and extravagant management of the club. In addition to harassing and hopelessly handicapping a manager who otherwise would have had a fighting chance to run the club smoothly and profitably, this meddling method invariably got the club in an uproar and assured the continuance of cliques that were serious menaces to the club's progress.

However, this picture is almost disappearing and I feel sure that its entire elimination will have much to do with erasure of many deficits in house operation. The operation of a golf clubhouse on an even-break basis is difficult enough job for an experienced manager with a free hand to care for the situation as his experience and observation dictates. But when he must follow the wild hunches and



Thomas Ream, at
Calumet House Helm

whims of at least a quartette of committee-members he might as well throw in the sponge. The best he can do is to tactfully accept the notions presented by a surplus of committeemen and endeavor to fit them into the operating plan with the minimum of waste and disturbance. When the end of the year comes and he finds himself confronted by a sizable deficit he can only point out the deficits of other clubs, and refrain from stating that the other club deficits too are undoubtedly cases of too many cooks.

Focus Responsibility

At Calumet we are operating on a satisfactory basis because it's up to me and I don't make this statement as a boast. I carry out the policies laid down to me by my house-chairman and he sees to it that these policies are the law for the good of the order and not just the idiosyncrasies of some members here and there, as they are at clubs where the old idea still dominates and the club wonders why its house operation shows such a loss. The collaboration of the chairman of the house committee as the author of the general idea and the manager as the author and director of the practical details and operations is the modern and correct idea in house management. Its extension will go far to dispel the old idea that a golf clubhouse must be run deeply in the red every year.

How significantly true that a manager cannot function up to his entire ability if he is checked by the ever-restraining hands of a superfluous governing body. Hail the manager and exit the steward with his sundry bosses; the uniformed heads of each department who handicapped the possibilities of an ambitious man.

The mirage of yesteryear is pointed in its contrast to the country club management of today.

Look about you at the club rooms with the smart and tasty arrangements, the snappy-groomed and uniformed attendants, ultra-serviced dining rooms, enduring co-operation among manager and employee, the clean shining kitchens, and you will see the result of successful supervision made possible by the present efficient arrangement of officers in a club. Man preserves the sanctity of his home, and the clubhouse is home to the wide-awake manager.

I speak of the above from my own experience. We have the usual board, and I operate under one man only, the chairman of the house committee. I work out my plans to be submitted, always with an eye towards banishing waste and extravagance, present it to the chairman of the house committee, and he, in turn, has it passed before the board, and my answer is back on my desk. No hitch, nor unpleasantness, and all with clock-like tactics. My work is a pleasure to me. I am sure I would find difficulty working under dissimilar conditions. No businessman, operating a trade office or any other kind of business, can boast of smoother methods than we have here.

Locker-Room Operation

As an example, I want to point out a few features in the locker room: 1. Plenty of guest lockers in each aisle of locker-room. 2. Telephone inside of shower-room enabling member to have his call convenient to his shower. 3. Being exacting in detail, I have everything from a razor blade to an umbrella in the locker room to meet the demands of the man accustomed to good service. 4. In the wash-room, we have put in adhesive tape with scissors hanging on the wall for use. 5. There, also, they can find everything from an eye-cup to mouth-wash. 6. Our new fountains of the latest type, filter attached, has won high favor over the former 5-gallon water bottle type. 7. Radio in every room of the clubhouse, pouring forth effervescent melodies and current events.

I am a firm believer in as near-to-permanent organizations as I can create, but, of course, the winter break makes that not quite possible, yet by the donation of a goodly season-bonus and a small increase in salary, I have had the good fortune to retain about 90 per cent of my most de-

sirable employees year after year for the three years I have managed this club. I have found that breaking in new employees is costly.

Watch Over Food Quality

It is needless to say, of course, that we use only the best of food commodities obtainable. A satisfied palate seems to be more beneficial than a few dollars increase in the restaurant surplus. We serve a dinner for \$1.75 of chicken and steak, and a \$1.50 dinner of roast-beef, chops, eggs, etc. The waitress orders the meat course as she serves the appetizer; no delays, smooth-running efficiency, and up to the minute detail in serving the man who desires impressive service for himself and family.

Our store-room is in charge of a competent young man, who checks all of the articles in and out, a perpetual inventory system entered on index cards; fluctuating price, size of article, poundage, brand, materials used daily, etc.; and then a daily list kept of what is needed.

Our clubhouse has been operating on an even-break and sometimes surplus basis. The restaurant, being such an uncertain proposition, has had both red and blue ink, but not much of either.



The eighteenth at Bierly-Jansen indoor course at General Motors Bldg., Detroit. One of the five cups gives a free round.