

"One for All; All for One," Theme As Department Heads Meet

By HERB GRAFFIS

FOR the first time since golf began to exhibit symptoms of business growing pains, national representatives of the three departments in golf club operation assembled to bury their hatchets with snappy ceremonial.

The historic occasion was staged at the Long Vue C. C. (Pittsburgh district) on Monday prior to the opening of the Fifth annual convention of the Club Managers' association of America. Manager Ralph Sykora of Long Vue saw to it that the innards of the potential combatants were packed with peaceful viands, thus preventing what some keen observers of the golf business scene had forecast would be the battle of the century.

It had taken a year to bring the managers, pros and greenkeepers together in official session. All camps seemed to have a fear the other fellows were going to drag in a Trojan horse as a dastardly and mysterious stunt. Four elements figured in getting the groups represented under one roof. First, there was the recent indication that the U. S. G. A. is taking an intimate and promising interest in the functioning of the golf club department heads for whose work and ambitions the Club Managers' Association of America, the National Greenkeepers' association and the Professional Golfers' association are directly responsible. Then there was the triumph of the idea the association sages had been broadcasting—that the man had to work for the club first, and get his own financial reward in direction proportion to his first principle. Third was the conviction of many of the department heads that there was no real reason for lack of complete unity between pros, greenkeepers and managers. Fourth, and possibly not the least, was all this recent talk about general management of golf clubs. Just who's going to be who under that plan, and why and where, undoubtedly was a spur to the meeting.

The invitations were extended by Henry Dutton, secretary of the Club Managers' association, acting on instructions from

that organization's officials. In attendance were the executive board of the Club Managers' association, Alex Pirie, honorary president of the P. G. A. and spokesman for that group, and John Morley, president, Fred Burkhardt, sec., and John Quail, treas. of the National Association of Greenkeepers. The boy reporters, Leigh Metcalfe of Club Management and Herb Graffis of GOLFDOM, were permitted to throw a few shovelsful during the ceremonial of burying the hatchets.

Why the Squabbles?

A few lively rounds featured the general management part of the show. The greenkeepers and pros registered a protest against the prospect of having some bossy guy who didn't know what it was all about come out and tell them about dotting the i's and crossing the t's of their jobs. The dope at that stage indicated that the house managers were aiming for all the general management jobs so they could add to their own pay by subordinating other department heads. Very promptly the leaders in house management romped all over this idea. They maintained that the lack of men properly qualified for general management of golf clubs today was fully appreciated by the managers and that any fellow worth promotion to such a position was going to have to have tact and teamwork as major qualifications for holding the position.

The managers there further declared that unless general management were predicated on highest type, harmonious operation of each department by a well-paid man, the scheme of centralization would be a sorry flop. When the last thud along that line echoed away the boys got down to some constructive themes.

It was freely expressed in the privacy of this family circle that golf club business operation is in the remote distance as long as club officials, who are unacquainted with the complex details of operations, bluntly dictate policies and methods without the department head affected be-

ing able to make expert and adverse comment. Unless the greenkeeper, pro and manager are recognized as a unit operating competently for the good of the entire club, things don't fare so well for any of the three individuals concerned under today's general executive policy at golf clubs, the assembly decided. For that reason, unless the three department heads can get along together as able and broad-minded men should do, they should be replaced by competent men who will cooperate. That was the conclusion in which all of the three factions concurred.

Criticize in Private

It was agreed that tolerance, helpfulness and understanding between department heads were essential to the correct operation of golf clubs on a service and finance basis and also essential to the department heads on the grounds of advance in their salaries and general status. Without a dissenting voice the triumvirate condemned any department head who would publicly express criticism of the head of any other department. If complaints are heard, in all helpfulness and diplomacy, take them privately to the man concerned, and then if good intentions are repeatedly scorned there is license for an expression to the directorate that will correct the situation, if it happens to impede the efforts the complainant is making for the club. That's the sort of direct dope the fellows got together on after the preliminary misunderstandings were removed.

To Connect Directorates

Definite action was initiated in assembling machinery for a close and understanding contact between department heads through their respective organizations, when Alex Pirie, speaking for the Professional Golfers' association, said that the pro organization would provide places in their executive council for two representatives each from the Club Managers' association and the National Association of Greenkeepers. Officials of the greenkeepers' and managers' organization hailed this pro move as the first step in getting golf club operation on a foundation that would be infinitely better for clubs and department heads than the basis now too frequently obvious. The representatives of the other two organizations committed themselves to a similar extension of group contact as soon as proper executive committee action could be taken.

Are You Helping Yourself by Taking Part in the Maintenance Cost Research?

MORE reports are desired for examination in connection with the course upkeep percentage research being made at Massachusetts Agricultural college by Jay M. Heald.

Full details of this important work are given on pages 66, 67 and 70 of February GOLFDOM.

Course superintendents and green-chairmen of many of the best run 18-hole and nine-hole clubs of the country have supplied this information and made it possible to approximate a basis for course maintenance expenses that will be helpful and fair to both the club and the man responsible for the work.

This study, being financed by GOLFDOM, is pronounced by leading practical greenkeeping authorities one of especially timely significance and an impressive item in showing how greenkeepers are taking command of the financial details of their operations.

Additional returns are especially requested from clubs in Arizona, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah, Wyoming and Rhode Island.

Prompt attention of other greenkeepers and chairmen who know their costs in supplying this data will be greatly appreciated by all concerned.

Please address the data to

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INTERNATIONAL interest attaches to the P. G. A. instruction pictures. *Golf in Australia*, commenting on the P. G. A. pictures and the appointment of George Sargent as American head of the international committee on relations between the pro associations of the United States and Great Britain, says:

"Why could not this committee be extended to include Australia? True, the P. G. A. of Australia is in its infancy compared with those other two bodies, but each has identical problems and needs. How our professionals' work could be simplified and the results be made manifold if these valuable films could be secured at anything like a reasonable cost! At any rate, it would be worthwhile finding out if they are procurable, and we feel sure that Walter Hagen and Joe Kirkwood would lend their aid. Professionals, how about it?"