

"'Zat So? I Manage Different And It Works"; Tom to Louie

Tom Ream of Calumet can't see a thing to last month's article wherein Louis M. Gund, manager of Westborough C. C. (St. Louis) told us about some of his managerial methods, and sends GOLFDOM this criticism.

GOLFDOM stands neutral in the matter, but is happy to have started some controversy, since it believes a clean argument out in the open can do more to clear up misunderstandings and advance the cause of better club operation than any amount of growling and moaning in private.

Every issue of GOLFDOM probably contains statements at variance with the firm convictions of many of its 20,000 readers. And whenever this happens, we like to hear the evidence of "the other side," as here.

A CLUB MANAGER unfamiliar with the physical differences and general construction of two similar 18 hole golf courses would find some advantage gained by making the comparison and knowing whereof he speaks before attempting to flay his fellow club managers with the practical and familiar information of his small circle. When judged by points, the service of a membership country club rates so much higher than that of a syndicate-owned or a concession-run golf course that it is unfair, to say the least, to attempt comparison of notes.

A busy club executive, in this turbulent area of the Mid-West finds no time for toting his truck down to the South Water Market District to haggle over the weight of a cabbage, the solidity of a tomato or the number of strawberries in a box. It would seem unnecessary to state that the responsibility of operating a large and busy golf club constitutes a bevy of troublesome incidents, which call for the individuality of the manager, the patience of Job and the cunning of Mephistopheles.

Were I to spend most of my time between the dining room and the kitchen (as per the boast of Mr. Gund in the May issue of GOLFDOM), having my victuals done to a turn to suit my testy palate, my chef, I fear, would wield a wicked cleaver midst his blameless associates. Then, I do not want to destroy the trust nor question the intelligence of my head waitress in her ability to handle her work. No siree, the turmoil created among a once peaceable people would do more harm

to the placidity of my organization than a stray cat once did to our martins out here.

Mr. Gund believes in seeing what he buys. So do I. But what is to prevent him from so doing when the stuff arrives in his kitchen? What is there to stop him from returning it if it is not the quality product he ordered? Surely a man who runs a club that does \$90,000 worth of restaurant business in a year should know the type of food that is brought to his kitchen door just as well as at the market. He also says: "There is too much opportunity to send goods of inferior quality" and I say, "How long can a produce company last, who would pull stunts like that?" Competition is keen; prices are down; price beaters on all sides. Nix, Mr. Gund, they could not afford to take the chance with a reputation that took years to build.

Then again, you say a merchant adds a cent or two to the price of things. Well, he won't while I'm conscious, because our own *Chicago Tribune* gives out market prices on foodstuffs each day, and competitors furnish price lists which are ever in front of me for comparison. Furthermore, no merchant has ever "dictated" to me while I have been in this business and I have had many a birthday out here in this country.

Clubs of this type do not include the profit from caddie sales in with the restaurant. To us, that is a separate issue and the surplus goes for the betterment of the caddie department, tournaments for the

boys and equipment for them to play with. If I caught our caddie-master giving our boys "bum stuff" he would know how it felt to be among the unemployed.

Nearly all clubs make their own desserts, pies, pastries, schnecken, etc. That is no novel idea, Mr. Gund; you have not taken us by complete surprise. Our members, too, walk out of the place trailing the odiferous fragrances of delicious pastries. I know of no club which doesn't experience this general "clean-up" of the bakery department when the members depart for home.

Then the excerpt, "We make our own desserts because I can make them cheaper and much better tasting than the goods to be had from the local bakers." Well, that is what God made little pantry girls and pastry bakers for, my good man.

General Manager Plan Doesn't Mean Serfdom

Says RALPH DOWNS

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The article you carried in your May GOLFDOM written by Arthur E. Swanson was the most comprehensive and clearly defined article I have seen in any magazine on the subject of a general manager, and I take this opportunity of congratulating Mr. Swanson and GOLFDOM, as I feel that educational work along this line is eventually going to benefit club members and country clubs by reducing the tremendous cost caused by unbusinesslike methods in operation.

It seems to me that if professionals and greenkeepers of country clubs feel at liberty to write their opinions on this all important subject, that I can do likewise, having had 30 years' experience in the hotel, club and catering business.

The professionals and greenkeepers in country clubs seem to question the advisability of adopting the general manager plan, primarily on account of the possibility that the manager would be uninformed regarding these two all important positions. Therefore, may I take the liberty of clarifying the situation in the two above mentioned departments as it appears to me.

The club professional thinks a general manager should be capable of playing golf and giving lessons; in fact, really

should be a professional. The greenkeeper thinks the general manager should know grasses, how to plan the upkeep of the course, build bunkers, traps, etc.; in fact, should be a greenkeeper.

I have operated golf clubs, hotels, etc. for the past number of years and at present am in full charge of one of the largest and most prosperous country clubs on the Pacific Coast. I give general supervision to the following operations: the golf course, the professional, the superintendent of grounds, the chief engineer, the electrical department, the clubhouse, with room accommodations for 100 people, the restaurant, doing a business comparable with any country club west of Chicago. We have 510 acres devoted not only to golf, but to tennis, riding, swimming, archery, etc., as well. I give a great deal of my time to the membership situation and general office work supervising the club's financial affairs.

And listen: I do *not* know how to play golf well, I do *not* know a great deal about the different kinds of grasses or the laying out of a golf course. I do *not* know how to cook well enough to please our members, I do *not* know how to make a bed as well as my housekeeper, I do *not* know how to repair pumps or electrical apparatus, I am *not* a plumber, I am *not* a good gardener, I am *not* a good locker-room attendant. But I seem to get along without knowing how to cook—we have fine meals—in fact, I get along without being an expert in fifteen or twenty different lines of work.

But I *do* attend all meetings of the board of directors and the executive committee, the house committee, the green committee, the tournament committee, and I *do* know what is being planned in every branch of the clubs activities. It is up to me to do a lot of the work of these different committees. Heads of the different departments bring their troubles to me; I either take the responsibility of settling them or take them to the board of directors; they tell me what to do.

A general manager who is fitted for his job as an organizer having the confidence of its club officers, operating under the supervision of the board of directors, directed through its president will successfully operate a club.

This is my answer to the General Manager question:—A CLUB SHOULD EMPLOY A GENERAL MANAGER.