

We've Found Hands-Off Policy Lets Us Show Profits

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IT IS OUR guess and opinion that country club management is due to undergo a complete change. Those clubs that have not already made drastic changes in the mode of handling their managerial problems are due to do so in the very near future. This prophecy is not arrived at by mere crystal gazing.

Outside our metropolitan districts, clubs that have operated in the past with an array of stewards, house managers, greenkeepers, professionals, and assistants to all, have been forced through reduced income, to cut expenses. Some clubs closed their clubhouses, operating only a small grill room in some portion of the closed clubhouse or locker room. No doubt, this method has effected some saving, but it has not cured the great fault to which most clubs have been subjected to; namely, mismanagement. By merely reducing the number of department heads in an organization and then turning over to those left, duties and responsibilities with which they are not familiar, is admittedly a step in the right direction, but it has not gone far enough.

The general manager method of running an organization has proved successful in business; why not in a country club? If a club is large enough, the manager can select department heads capable of handling their individual jobs successfully. Probably in most clubs, a steward, professional and greenkeeper would be sufficient. In the smaller clubs, one or all of these positions could be dispensed with, in accordance with the ability of the manager to take over the various duties. In the business world, successful executives will tell you that one of the reasons for their success is the fact that they have surrounded themselves with men capable of assuming all minor details and duties, leaving himself free to take care of major business problems and policies. If the general manager is successful in business why not in club management?

The Orville Meyers are responsible for just about every departmental activity at the Fort Madison Country Club. Last season, with the same number of members as in former years and with dues 30 per cent reduced, they still managed to show a nice profit on the year's operation. Thus the Meyers are qualified to make certain observations on club management policies, as printed below.

The management of a club is a business. In lots of clubs it has been too many people's business, by which is meant committees that have been appointed by the officials of the club. We have all seen this condition exist. The green-committee goes over the head of the greenkeeper, the house-committee overrules the manager, and so on down the line. If these committees, who really are making a success in their own business, are more capable of running the different departments at their club than the ones they have selected, they should do one of two things. Either change their line of endeavor or replace the inefficient help at their club.

We don't mean this as a general denunciation of all standing club committees. To be sure, they have certain work to do, and in most cases it is indeed a thankless job. We do, however, think they can, in many cases, save themselves many unkind words and hard feelings from fellow members by giving their club managers just a wee bit more authority and responsibility. We can certainly see the justification of committee existence, but at the same time we think their time should be occupied straightening out club policies and finances. Mere details such as where shall meats and supplies be purchased, or when shall the greens be topdressed and what type of fertilizer shall be used, should be left entirely up to the person or persons charged with these duties. This is just plain good logic. If club officials think sufficiently of

a person's ability to put him in charge of a club department, that should be evidence enough of his ability to make minor decisions for himself.

By a system of checking all purchases and the money spent for supplies, equipment and labor by the person in charge, any discrepancies can soon be discovered. It does not necessitate any elaborate cost system for the one in charge to keep an accurate record of all invoices for supplies, etc., and charging them to the proper account. At the end of the month these records can be turned over to the secretary of the club along with regular weekly or monthly records of cash received from meals, green-fees, etc., for checking and payment.

Let us emphasize again, we have no ax to grind with club officials or committees, but do think that in a great many cases they have reduced their department head's efficiency by over-ruling them in a number of minor matters.

Fortunately and indeed pleasing to myself and Mrs. Meyer, our own committees and club officials are very considerate and seldom worry themselves or ourselves by going over our heads, or interfering with our judgment in matters pertaining to club operations.

While we have made some mistakes in the past year, our club ended up the year 1933 with a small profit for the year's operation, which indicates we must be about right in most matters. This profit was made in spite of the fact that while our membership roster was about the same as in better years, our yearly dues were cut 30 per cent and service and maintenance standards were higher. The concessions at the club (which are given entirely to us) showed a slight profit, not enough to allow us to winter in Florida, but we came through the winter eating regularly and emerged fat and sassy for the coming season.

Metropolitan PGA to Hold Dance September 29

MEMBERS OF THE Metropolitan section of the PGA, according to word from John Inglis, have marked a big red circle on their calendars around September 29, when the organization will hold a dinner dance and entertainment at the Commodore Hotel, New York City. From early indications, a big crowd will attend.

1935 Ryder Cup Matches Awarded Ridgewood (N. J.) C. C.

AT A MEETING held in mid-July, the Ryder Cup committee of the PGA, consisting of J. B. Mackie, Leo Diegel, Tom Boyd, Jack Pirie and Doc Tracy, selected the course of the Ridgewood (N. J.) CC as the venue for the 1935 Ryder Cup matches.

The selection is a wise one on at least two counts. In the first place, New Jersey has not had a tournament of major importance since 1915, although one of the finest golfing states in the Union. By locating the Ryder Cup encounter in this long neglected area, there is a fine chance that galleries for the matches will be ample, particularly since Ridgewood is only commuting distance from the other clubs of the New York metropolitan district.

Also by awarding the event to Ridgewood, the PGA pays subtle tribute to the conscientious way in which George Jacobus has handled the presidency of the association in recent years. Ridgewood is George's home club.

Sod Webworm Woeful Subject at Iowa Meeting

JULY MEETING of the Iowa Greenkeepers association was held Tuesday July 10 at the Cedar Rapids (Ia.) C. C. More than 35 greenkeepers turned out in spite of the fact that sod webworms are keeping most of the boys busy. The main topic of the day was a discussion of various remedies and their effectiveness for this pest. Kerosene emulsion seems to be the most effective and inexpensive remedy, but there is considerable labor and expense involved in making and applying it. Opinions regarding the value of lead arsenate and the pyrethrum spray treatments vary greatly. The present infestation of sod webworms is one of the heaviest Iowa greenkeepers have had for many years and is quite general over the southern part of the state.

Joe Benson, pro-greenkeeper of the Cedar Rapids club, was a fine host and put on one of the most interesting meetings of the season. The course is located on the edge of an exclusive residential section of the city and is outstanding for the beauty of its scenery, trees and water hazards. The clubhouse is one to be proud of, and the club has a fine modern outdoor swimming pool. Joe has made a long study of turf culture and his club has profited greatly by his skill and knowledge.