

Blue Hills Modernizes Its Committee Set-Up

IF YOU ARE a club official—and most of the readers of this article will fall in that category—it is unnecessary to take trouble proving to you that the monthly board meetings you attend are a bore, not so much because matters discussed and conclusions arrived at are in themselves tiresome, but rather because of the seemingly interminable and useless conversation that passes across the table with every new matter brought up for attention.

There are few clubs with so much business to transact at any given monthly meeting that more than two hours need be spent to dispose of the lot—provided, and here is the rub, the various committees function in the manner they were meant to function when the club's by-laws were written. But they don't. Every member of the Board, irrespective of his particular duties on that body, seems to feel it is his privilege and obligation to stick his nose into the workings of each committee, to ask innumerable questions of no particular importance, and in other ways to prove that he is one smart guy in all administrative and financial problems that arise.

Perhaps it is a human weakness for the membership chairman to display considerable interest in the total insurance carried by the club; and for the green-chairman to ask questions about the number of musicians in the orchestra to be hired for the club's next dinner dance; and for the club treasurer to argue that the championship should be at medal play instead of match play as in the past—but in final analysis is it any of their business, assuming the club's committee organization is sound?

A refreshing variation in the usual club committee set-up has recently been put into effect at the Blue Hills Club of Kansas City, Mo., where E. T. Mahood is president. The method not only holds down the size of some committees, thus preventing too many cooks from spoiling the broth, but it also permits each committee to solve to a great extent its own minor problems without consulting or wasting the time of the Board of Governors.

Mr. Mahood writes: "We have eight committees, four of which control our operations while the other four handle membership activities. The following committees consist of only two members each, at least one of whom is on the Board of

Governors: Greens, House, Finance and Meadow Lake. The latter committee has charge of the operation of a fee-course which we conduct separately from Blue Hills.

"The eight men, with the president or one of the vice-presidents of the club as chairman, constitute our Executive Committee and meet once a month prior to our Board Meeting to go over operating matters. Thus the Executive Committee has supervision through our manager over all the employes of the club and over all current expenditures, and has developed a system of monthly reports so the facts may be readily reviewed and wrong tendencies corrected. Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting are read at the subsequent Board Meeting.

"By confining the Executive Committee to a relatively small number of people, we concentrate authority and we think gain efficiency. While each member of the Executive Committee has a definite assignment on a subsidiary committee, such as the Green-Committee, all members of the Executive Committee feel privileged to discuss plans and expenditures relating to all four committees. Thus, at a meeting of the Executive Committee, all of the financial and business affairs of the club are gone over.

"Our other four committees—Membership, Social, Tournament and Publicity—have to do with member activities, and under the supervision of another vice-president they are primarily advisory rather than executive in character. Being advisory, these committees are composed of a large number of people selected from the membership. A chairman, who is a member of the Board of Governors, serves as the only official link between each of these committees and the Board, and reports at the monthly meeting on how the activities of the club may be shaped to the wishes of the members.

"When the Board approves the plans which involve expenditures, presented by these committees, the execution automatically becomes a function of the manager and the club employes, under the supervision of the Executive Committee.

"Thus, under our present committee organization, meetings of the Board of Governors consist largely of discussions relating to membership activities, along with an overall review of operations presented by the Executive Committee."