

GREENKEEPERS ARE KEY MEN

... but the average member is ignorant of their importance

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AFTER 42 years in golf course work a man is bound to feel that, when concluding his activities, he should leave behind him something to make the job easier, more pleasant, and improved in method and results. I've learned that there is but one unvarying factor in successful operation of the greens department: realization by the green-committee that men are more important than grass.

Get the right men, treat them right, and the result is an excellent golf course even when the men have to work with and for less money than the job really should have. The fact that numerous courses have been kept in such fine shape during the depression despite serious inadequacies of budgets, plainly demonstrates that men are the primary consideration of well-managed courses.

Many an enthusiastic and serious member will be appointed green-chairmen during the next few months. He will promptly begin to read up on the technicalities of grass-growing and maintenance, and by April will begin to tell his experienced greenkeeper exactly what to do. This has been happening for the last twenty-years—ever since players began insisting on niceties in course maintenance—and it will continue to cost golf maintenance dearly because the greenkeeper seldom can sit down and explain the situation without offense to the chairman.

The greenkeeper is in an uncomfortable position. If he wears a white collar and is an efficient executive he is criticized by some of the members as lazy. If he sweats and gets soiled working with his men, many members will consider him merely a horny-handed, strong-backed farm hand who is lucky to have a job with nice people. At least the green-chairman among all the members and officials should know the greenkeeper's qualifications, responsibilities, personality and general nature of duties so well that the greenkeeper could tell one dues-paying

member of the entire organization just what the problems are.

Most club members and probably the majority of green-chairmen have only the sketchiest idea of the labor problems in golf course maintenance. Mowing, watering, topdressing and the application of fungicides may be considered ordinary farm-hand jobs by the players, but I know I'd be one of the wealthiest men in the world if I had the money wasted in these four duties by inadequately trained men during the time I have been in golf course work. It takes training and experience for men to handle course work correctly. A greenkeeper cannot recruit the greater part of a new force each season and get the work done right until he's had ample opportunity to train the new men.

When Crew Is Let Out in Fall, Re-Hiring Is No Easy Matter

Many men who comprise the course staff at clubs in the vicinity of larger cities have tiny homes not far away and are trying to keep their children in school. Golf course work usually is limited to eight months. The pay is not much. And I regret to say that I have known of cases where clubs have kept workers waiting for their last fall month's pay until the following spring. Such a performance is criminal and were it known to the membership-at large, would call for the most strenuous censure of officials. However the greenkeeper is left to try and handle this situation, which can't be explained in view of the fact that golf course employment practically has forced men and their families to become objects of charity. I say, that in the light of conditions that so often prevail, the big achievement of greenkeepers during the depression has

not been that of keeping their grass but of keeping their good men so they'll come back each season. With general industrial and agricultural employment conditions improving, the problem of getting competent men as course workers is going to become a most serious matter.

Chairmen who acquaint themselves with the personal elements in greenkeeping soon discover their greenkeeper is spending his own money and time in study and investigation which is of far greater value to the club, which does not pay extra for this added service, than it is to the greenkeeper.

Fifty Grand to Keep Posted

It has been expertly estimated that greenkeepers right through the depression spent \$50,000 a year of their own money for the education provided by greenkeeping short courses at agricultural schools and for attendance at sectional and national meetings. Such devotion to the club and its advancement deserves the chairman's fullest endorsement. Technicalities discussed at many of these meetings are miles over the head of most green-chairmen but of tremendous importance to proper course maintenance.

The educational development during the past ten years has enabled greenkeepers to maintain a reasonable mastery over the scientific problems of grass growing, but the matter of mutually helpful understanding between greenkeepers and green-chairmen has progressed little, if any, during the last decade. Sometimes I have thought that one of the reasons golf courses managed to do so well during the depression is because the interference of well-meaning but ignorant new chairmen was reduced. Business cares during the depression kept many men from assuming green-chairmanship. The old chairmen were kept on the job and these experienced men had learned that men make and maintain golf courses. They took care of their men and their men took care of the grass, which is as it should be, according to what I've seen.

Hampton, Patterson Head New Illinois PGA "Green Section"

A NEW committee in Illinois PGA affairs has been appointed by Alex Cunningham, recently elected president of the organization. The group is called the Green Section committee and will assist younger pros in getting fundamentals of course

maintenance work, as at smaller clubs the jobs are often combination responsibilities and the youngsters need help and guidance.

The new committee also will work with the Midwest Greenkeepers Assn. in promoting mutually helpful relations between pros and greenkeepers and in raising the standards of course maintenance in the state. Harry Hampton of Beverly is chairman of the new group and Jack Patterson of Midlothian, co-chairman.

Aussies Start Lively and Helpful Greenkeeping Quarterly

GREENKEEPERS of the US and GOLF-DOM'S staff happily extend to The Australian Greenkeeper congratulations on its first issue. The publication will be issued quarterly. Address is GPO Box 1218HH, Sydney, NSW. The magazine is about the page size of GOLFDOM and its first issue has 48 pages and cover.

Editorial highspots include pieces on disc harrow in fairway maintenance, brown-patch, potash on golf courses, Queensland turf grasses, weed control, greenkeepers' diary and miscellaneous data. Volume of advertising in the first issue looks healthy, too.

The magazine is off to a good start in working up to the fast pace maintained by "Golf in Australia" and "The Referee," two of the world's best sports journals.

A greenkeeping authority offers this explanation for the small attendance of green-committeemen at the many interesting, practical greenkeeping meetings held by sectional associations. Says the authority:

"Ten years ago many committeemen attended, but the greenkeepers' growing grasp of the technicalities resulted in the programs at the meetings getting too deep for the committeemen."

HOW'S your parking space? Often that's put off and not considered until the members' cars pack the parking area and it's too late to do the required work.

Bolt-Proof Shelters — Several deaths from lightning on golf courses during the latter part of August again brought up the subject of suitable, properly insulated golf course shelters, a matter that has been almost entirely neglected during the depression.