

# Questionnaire Tells Clubs' Policies

By Karl Sutphin

ONE of the most difficult problems for club officials is that of securing data from other clubs, on which to base policies and operating details. Even more difficult is the job of correctly analyzing and applying the data secured. Differences in membership temperament, finances, club facilities, location, competition, operating personnel, and other elements offset value of much of the information that may be secured in reply to questionnaires.

However, the pressure on club officials, their urgent need of guiding facts from the experience of other clubs and ambition to leave nothing undone to help their clubs, account for the hopeful effort made by the Stafford CC, Batavia, N. Y.

The club was confronted with the problem of getting younger members in sufficient number to maintain its activities of previous years.

## Get Answers on 26 Questions

L. H. Schultz, chmn., membership committee, was given the assignment of getting replies to a questionnaire of 26 questions. That's more than most club officers or department heads can—or will—answer. Much of the information desired requires consulting records for some years past.

However, the common interest in so many of the questions drew larger than normal return.

The questions:

1. What classes of membership do you have now? In 1929?
2. What are the initiation fees for each class now? In 1929?
3. What are the annual dues for each class now? In 1929?
4. How are dues paid; that is, annually, quarterly, etc.?
5. How many members in each class did you have in 1938? In 1929?
6. Does your club have slot machines on the premises and if so does the club own them or are they on a percentage basis?
7. Does your club run its own bar or is it a concession?  
If a concession, does the concessionaire pay the club or does the club pay the

concessionaire in addition to the profits he makes?

8. Does the club run its own restaurant or is it a concession?  
If a concession, does the concessionaire pay the club or does the club pay him in addition to his profits?
9. How many months of the year is your club open now? In 1929?
10. What forms of mixed entertainment does the club promote, such as dances, card parties, etc.?
11. How frequently per season?
12. What form of ladies' entertainment is promoted by the club and how frequently per season?
13. Does your club have any bonded debt?
14. Did your club operate at a profit in 1929? In 1936? In 1937? In 1938?
15. If your club operates its own bar and own restaurant, did it make a profit in 1937? in 1938?
16. How many private golf clubs exist within a 15 mile radius of your club?
17. How many public golf clubs exist within a 15 mile radius?
18. What are your charges for green fees?
19. What does your club pay first class caddies?
20. Has your club grown in number of members during the past 3 years?
21. Are you getting many young members?
22. Has club activity been increasing or decreasing in the past 3 years?
23. What facilities do you have besides golfing—such as swimming, horses, etc.?
24. Do you permit members to resign during the season?
25. Do you permit members to change their marital status or age status during the year?
26. What reinstatement fee do you charge, if any, when a resigned member wishes to return the following year?

## List 21 Membership Classes

Twenty-one classes of membership were listed in the responses. They were:

Family resident . . . family non-resident  
. . . male bachelor resident . . . male  
bachelor non-resident . . . female bachelor  
resident . . . female bachelor non-resident

. . . special resident . . . special non-resident . . . senior . . . intermediate 30-34 . . . junior 25-30 . . . junior 19-25 . . . social . . . honorary . . . associate . . . junior family . . . sustaining . . . house . . . transient . . . winter sports . . . stock.

Many of the classifications were added during depression years as attractions for income from sources ordinarily beyond the clubs' scope.

In about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the replies the elimination of initiation fees was revealed. However, the replies, for the most part, were from smaller clubs. The larger clubs reduced initiation fees sharply from the 1929 figure, and in some cases waived initiation fees altogether. However, fees, although in some cases rather nominal, have been restored in almost all cases of the larger clubs.

All clubs replying had reduced dues from the 1929 figure. The reduction averaged 20%. Interval of dues collection most favored is monthly, then quarterly.

Average of 1938 membership of reporting clubs was 278 against 343 average in 1929.

Number of clubs for and against slot-machines was even. Of the clubs permitting slot machines about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of them owned the machines, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  allowed their operation on a percentage basis.

Inasmuch as the majority of the reporting clubs were in smaller cities, despite the quite substantial membership figures, there were 2/5 of them reporting bars and restaurants let out on concession basis; a practice not so popular at the larger clubs.

A tendency toward keeping the clubs open 12 months of the year was reported, more than half the reporting clubs now operating the year around.

Strange to say, although mixed affairs were reported as popular in the house activities, mixed golf affairs were infrequently scheduled during the season by the clubs answering.

Almost unanimously the clubs reported greatly increased activity by the women members.

Profitable operations by clubs were reported as being on the increase, although the answering clubs had not reached 1929 profit showings. Club bar profits increased in 1938 over 1937.

During the past three years a substantial increase in club membership was reported, particularly among the younger people. Club activities increased at  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the reporting clubs. Tennis led as the sports facility supplied most frequently, after golf, at the clubs. Swimming came next.

## "If I Were a Club President"

PETER HAUSEN, competent and beloved veteran manager at the Edgewater GC (Chicago district), quite frankly admits being "one of the old school." Those with acquaintance with artistry in cuisine know that despite all the merits of modernity in some fields, being of "the old school" in food and beverage service is certainly no rap.

Peter, as many club managers know, is a fellow who puts sound thought forth in an easy, light manner. He has no arguments; he seems to get along with everybody. If he doesn't agree he does it gracefully. One great thing that Hausen can contribute to the younger club manager who may be distressed and confused by the positive assertions of uninformed and enthusiastic club officials, is to take it easy. These officials and the manager have one thing in common; both are sincerely working for the good of the club,

first, so there's really nothing to get upset about.

GOLFDOM asked Peter what he'd do if he were president of a club.

Here's what Hausen replied:

"There was, is, and always will be, a lot of disagreement as to what administration methods are best adapted to the welfare of a club. You will agree with me that these methods do vary greatly in most every golf and country club.

"I have now been with Edgewater for 13 years and while one administration may have differed from another in various respects, I can truthfully say that not one president of those who have been at Edgewater's helm during those years, has had anything but the best interests of the club and its members at heart.

"Ways and means to achieve these results may be different, but in the end the objective in view was the same. Even