

More Managerial Headaches

PUBLICATION in July GOLFDOM's Managers' Section of 33 of the common and not generally appreciated problems of the golf club manager has been acclaimed by club officials and managers. Requests for extra copies quickly exhausted that issue. Reprints have been made and in limited number will be supplied on request to golf club managers and officials upon receipt of a 3-cent stamp to cover postage.

GOLFDOM admits to surprise that the list of 33 headaches proved of such keen and extensive interest to club officials. Several officials asked extra copies that they said they intended to send as marked copies to offending members who are chronic and unreasonable kickers.

The president of a highly regarded New York metropolitan district club who, for obvious reasons cannot be identified here, wrote in comment on the article:

"The list of club managers' 'headaches' was responsible for a constructive discussion at our latest Board meeting.

Club Irritability Noticed

"I have noticed an irritability about minor matters at the club that must be checked. It may be war-nerve, today's business pressure, tax worries, or the political disappointments of the country club and station wagon set that are responsible for this irritability. It is certain, however, that the habitual complainers are becoming more of a danger than a nuisance and are senselessly undermining the spirit of the entire organization.

"This situation requires attention and correction. The nagger does not contribute to the constructive handling of club problems. He prevents the development of unity now essential to the continuance of the private club.

"In our own club there are consistent offenders in at least 15 of the 33 complaint paragraphs listed in GOLFDOM. They definitely have interfered with efficient management of our club and the enjoyment of the club by our members.

"It is dubious consolation to us to learn that we are not alone in having to contend with the problem of the unthinking and disturbing member."

Other letters contained suggestions for

additions to the list, which we will print as such suggestions are received.

Additional headaches:

34 Board members who delay decisions on pressing matters. Most urgent right now is the matter of wage increases. Slight increases promptly given without pressure from the employees prevent having to hire inexperienced new help at higher wages than the old employees were getting.

35 The member who comes late to a party, and without having made a reservation, and makes a loud, abusive and threatening beef because the manager can't immediately build an addition to the clubhouse to give the late arrival a "ring-side" table.

36 The lady member who wants a \$1.50 bridge luncheon for eight at 75 cents per, and after arguing with the manager until the man sacrifices club money in making a compromise, squats with the rest of the hens and spends the lunch hour telling how much more its costing to run her house.

37 The member who comes in late with a big party for dinner and complains because the chef doesn't enthusiastically exercise his art in a kitchen that's 110 degrees F. and older than that in the original Acropolis No. 1.

38 Being called on the carpet to explain why the house doesn't make the same fine showing as Club X, when a 10-year-old kid could see that the financial statements of Club X are made by a different system of accounting, and one that treats house expenses 'pretty.'

39 Being kept waiting for the new season's contract until a few weeks before the season opens and it's too late to look around deliberately for a good job.

Sleepy Hollow CC (N. Y. Met. District) issues a folder on "How to Figure Out a Vacation" outlining the vacation attractions of the club, and making a sales talk on clubhouse and golf house rooms.

Golf, riding, tennis, squash, swimming, shooting, scenery, and excellent hotel accommodations and service are among the vacation advantages of Sleepy Hollow as presented in the attractive folder.

40 Taking a persistent rap for operating defects caused by basic defects in the clubhouse architectural plan.

41 How about the "rain check" trick. A member gets his lunch and either pie, ice cream or a pudding comes with it. He is in a hurry to get out so asks the waiter to give him a "rain check"

on the dessert. After he finishes his game he comes to the grill and tells the waiter that he is ready for his dessert although perhaps 6 or 7 hours have elapsed between lunch-time and "rain check" time. If he is not hungry and his wife is with him, he sends the ice cream up to her with his compliments.

Manager's 'Beat' Is Best News Source

AMONG the jobs that often become part of the manager's work, although supposedly to be handled entirely by a committee, is that of getting out the club paper.

The committee starts hopefully and actively enough but soon finds it has a tough job in trying to get club news. When the same names appear often the other members criticize the publication, and few cooperate. The club magazine's editor has a low budget and a sideline job that very quickly can soak up a lot of time he would prefer to enjoy without care at his club.

So the manager, as the one who is in close contact with almost everything that's going on at the club, becomes the club magazine editor's most important helper. The manager learns to keep news notes and to develop a nose for news.

A surprisingly large number of excellent club magazines are put out by golf clubs. In the way they play up club event announcements and results, in their breezy, friendly personal items, and in editorials for the good of the cause, they do a definitely valuable job.

One of the punchiest of club house-organs is a comparatively new one. It's the Salem (Mass.) Country Club News, now in its second year.

An especially interesting thing about this is that it's edited by Robert M. Dorion, manager of the club, with John L. Counsell, the Salem CC greenkeeper, as contributing editor. Tony Manero is the club's pro.

With department heads of the club chiefly responsible for the News it's natural that a clear picture of the club's business operations should be presented. It's deftly done by the News so members get the idea that the club is a pleasant enterprise run on a business basis, rather

than a place where business problems intrude.

A regular feature is presentation of menus at the club, and prices, so a real selling job is done. One of these features described the Children's Menu at Salem. Another smart and subtle selling job on the clubhouse as a No. 1 eating place in the community was done in the News' publication of a two column piece on vitamins.

Jack Counsell extends the club's service to its members by having frequent items on lawn care. This dope is "closer up" than members would get in articles in the home and garden magazines, and as specific information applied to local conditions is highly rated by the Salem CC people.

Tony Manero gives instruction tips that are brief and simple. Tony's policy on this stuff is to give them just enough to make them think and talk and come to him for fuller explanation and demonstration. The plan is working out in good shape, not only in helping lesson sales but in letting members know that the pro can be talked to about one's golf game without being high-pressured.

John "Zack" Ryan, the club's caddie-master, covers all the club's tournament results for the News and handles results of other sports events at the club.

The complete tie-up of the club's operating organization makes this Salem News coverage of club activities thorough.

Not many items concerning members' personal activities appear in the publication due, probably, to the conservative New England attitude toward this type of material in a club magazine. However, the news interest is keen and sharply personalized in the way the stories about club operations are presented as applying to each member's enjoyment of club facilities.