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## PROMOTION MAJOR CLUB PROBLEM IN CHANGING TIMES

By HERB GRAFFIS

Clubs which can extend memberships will not be imperilled by losses that may come from certain groups of hard-to-please oldsters.

ONE of the old, large and snooty country clubs has hired a promotion manager. The club has an excellent house manager, pro and greenkeeper. The house manager and the house chairman have handled an entertainment program, and the publicity connected with such a program, much better than the average first class club but not as well as the clubs that are noted for outstanding parties.

But the club now sees that unless it goes much further than the customary field of party entertainment by country clubs, it not only is dooming itself as a private country club but failing to perform a plainly defined duty in wartime.

### Must Demonstrate Leadership

This distinguished club no longer considers itself apart and above the community. Most of its members for generations past have been regarded as "the best people" of the city. Now they realize they can't live as Americans on their reputations but must demonstrate their leadership. The achievements of fighting young Americans who come from families on the wrong side of the tracks have made members of this proud old club keenly aware that the old days of detachment from the common people of the community have departed.

Now it's certain that the club won't throw its doors to every Mr. and Mrs. Tom, Dick and Harry of the community. Even in the case of uniformed guests there is a pretty careful selection, although enlisted men guests are given the same glad hand as officers.

### Center for War-Work Leaders

But in converting to a wartime basis the club has begun to promote itself as the social center of the community's leaders in war work. It is finding that there are many socially desirable people who are financially qualified for club membership, and who are essential to maintaining the club's activity. It has been discovered by some of the older high-nosed members that the privilege of associating with them is not regarded as one of God's greatest gifts to mankind. That's been a shock to them, but those cases are fairly few and the other older members seem to be quietly enjoying the situation.

The club has benefitted from having its membership extended so it is not imperilled by the threatened resignations of a comparatively few bossy and hard-to-please oldsters. With help shortage and other handicaps of wartime operation it's impossible to please the chronically irritable anyway, so the presence of replace-

ments has been a discreet reminder to the bellyachers that they might as well make the best of things.

In promoting on a wartime basis the club has waived its old rule against outsiders parties. War drive committee dinners and luncheons are solicited earnestly. These affairs bring together a class of people generally qualified to join the club. Many of them never have been within the clubhouse before. They pay for "sampling" the club.

The club is discovering that while taxes and salary ceilings are getting some of their wealthier older members apprehensive about prospects of retaining club membership, there are many in war material industries whose incomes now permit them to join the sort of a club they've aspired to. Inability to spend for many other things makes money available for club initiation fees, dues and house and golf charges.

#### Announcements Stress Fitness

Emphasis has been given to the physical fitness phase of golf in the promotion of the club tournaments by clever announcements. Each party has some wartime angle to it. The war theme is expertly handled so it won't constantly depress members with the idea that it is hopeless to try to get a few minutes' relief from war worries and work. There is a danger of making the member feel that he is ducking a war work responsibility when he doesn't keep at war work 24 hours a day and goes out to his golf club to renew his pep. This is offset by reminding members now and then, in announcements of the events, that soldiers, sailors and marines get relieved from active service so they can restore their keenness.

By making the club regarded as headquarters for the main affairs of the Army and Navy Relief committee affairs, for USO drive meetings, for China and Russian Relief gatherings, and for groups of businessmen assembled to make war plans for their industries, the club's promotion has identified it as an essential to the community's wartime effort. The club instead of being regarded as a hideout and a refuge for those who want to loaf instead of work to win the war, is thought of by residents of a large city as the place where leaders in war work get together.

The promotion work keyed to the prime idea of winning the war has revived a club that social and financial developments of the past decade, and especially since

Dec. 7, 1941, were slowly but certainly killing.

A few of the older members are kicking about the change. The presence of outsiders and newcomers in the sacred precincts annoys them. They resent the sorority and fraternity dances that have livened up the old place and give some assurance that the club will have another generation of old member families on its roster in years to come when victory is won and the United States again can devote itself to the pursuit of happiness.

These fussy escapists who want the world run for them alone are out of luck at the club. They're gradually beginning to see their attitude is far too selfish to be justified during wartime. Whether this very small minority does, or doesn't, agree with the idea of the club being promoted as a civic asset is of no consequence to the rest of the members. The club's right to exist now depends on its service to its community, and its exclusiveness can best be maintained by having as its members those who serve the community best and can pay their share of the club's expenses.

Although results in this particular case are still in the early stage the success of the promotion effort has revealed that to keep private clubs alive people must be given persistent and attractive membership solicitation, even though the solicitation may not be a blunt bid to join. The promotion activities also are showing that pros had better pay considerable attention to extending promotion of golf play or find themselves in a field of rapidly diminishing income. Promotion of lesson sales urgently requires the wise and energetic attention of most pro golfers.

**Arrange 4,000 Benefit Events**—Almost 4,000 Hale America golf tournaments have been arranged for Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day and at other times for benefit of the Red Cross, the USGA has announced. But only about a tenth of the private, fee and public courses of the U. S. have planned such tournaments, the USGA regretfully notes. Clubs that have not advised the USGA of intent to conduct Red Cross tournaments are asked to notify the USGA, 73 E. 57th st., New York.

Two Liberty Tournaments on July 4, 1917 and 1918, and miscellaneous tournaments during the first World War, raised \$210,00 by members' entry fees, USGA records show.