

Small Clubhouse Design for Player Service

By **ROLF C. DREYER, Architect**

THE PRESENT day conception of a golf clubhouse differs in many respects from those of some years ago. The extreme, elaborate building of the pre-1929 era, whether private or public, is a thing of the past. The expense involved in maintaining the club on an efficient, smooth-running basis is the governing factor which in all cases should determine its size and facilities. Therefore, a careful study of the club's purpose and function, as well as its operating budget, should be made before a plan is decided upon.

In many instances, particularly when a small community or a private concern is involved, a rather simple building involving the minimum requirements may suffice. These minimum requirements cannot be eliminated if the clubhouse is to be worthy of its name. Those small, inadequate sheds, containing a pro shop and some toilet rooms, are not clubhouses by any manner or means. Golf is more than the mere play on courses, and the clubhouses must contain areas and facilities which will permit the player full enjoyment and benefit of golf. These essential elements which must be incorporated in any clubhouse are: Dressing Rooms, Toilet Rooms, Showers, Pro Shop, Concession, Lounging Space and Porches. The respective areas of these facilities depend upon whether the club is private, state, or municipal, and of course, upon the possible membership and play.

Perhaps the most important rooms are the dressing rooms. The tendency of players on municipal and state courses to dress and take a shower after the game at the club is growing. The facilities for this should, therefore, be complete. The locker rooms must be light, easily ventilated and sanitary. Outmoded, damp, basement lockers should be avoided and men's locker rooms should be located so that conversation cannot be heard where women congregate. They should contain lockers, and benches for dressing. The toilet room and showers should be adjacent, and both directly connected to the locker room. The toilet room should have an ample amount of fixtures. Hot and cold water should be available at all times. An automatic hot water system should be installed. For safety reasons, the hot water should be thermostatically controlled.

In most cases, the location of the pro shop involves somewhat of a problem. It

should be easily accessible to the players and, if apart from the clubhouse, its location should be as close as practical to traffic paths between clubhouse and 1st and 10th tees. However, in the very small club where the pro has charge of the building or concessions, it is advisable to incorporate the pro shop in the clubhouse itself. It should be centrally located to control all activities.

All clubhouses should have at least one large room, such as a lounge or dining room. It is inexpensive to build—besides serving as a lounge for the regular players, it may also serve as a banquet or meeting hall for many occasions. Tournaments among social clubs or among various business and interest groups are becoming a regular feature and increasingly popular. A substantial revenue may be derived from these tournaments if the club is equipped to cater to these as well as golf activities. A fairly large dining hall is, therefore, a must in any clubhouse. Where the regular lounge is intended to serve as a dining room on these special occasions, it should be so located that it may be entirely separated without interfering with the activities of the regular players.

The concession or kitchen facilities of a small club need not be large. After all, most normal demands will be for refreshments and sandwiches. It should, however, contain facilities to take care of the service on the special occasions mentioned before, either for the use of an outside caterer or for the preparation of special dinners. The location of the concession should be central for convenient service to the dining room, locker rooms and porches.

One of the most enjoyable features of any clubhouse is its porches. They are inexpensive to build, should be of adequate size and well shaded.

These facilities then are the essentials of a clubhouse. Their relative size is determined by the type and size of club. Their relation to one another, however, is another matter that requires considerable thought. The clubhouse should be functional and the various rooms should be correlated. At all times, the designer must bear in mind the purpose of each room and its relation to other rooms in the building. The hall or lounge may be considered the heart of the club. From this the various rooms should be arranged in

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a natural way, easily accessible. For instance, one should be able to reach the toilet rooms without wandering through locker rooms, and showers should be directly connected to the locker rooms.

As for the design and construction of the building itself, the tendency nowadays is toward simplicity and functionalism. Where the clubhouse is essentially for summer use only, it may be built accordingly. A building that is somewhat spread out presents an attractive and open feeling and is also more adaptable for additions. A building should be so designed that any part of it, such as locker rooms and dining rooms may be enlarged with a minimum expenditure.

In designing a larger golf club, the problems remain essentially the same as those of the small club, the main difference being that a fully equipped kitchen, a separate dining room and men's and women's lounges may be provided. The dining room and main lounge should be so correlated that they may serve as one very large room.

The clubhouse should be designed primarily for the enjoyment of golf which is an outdoor summer game, yet with an eye to its utility and convenience for winter sports. Freedom of plan with light, airy areas is essential. A convenient, economically operated plan which can be enlarged without too much expense, will not be outmoded.

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