

Organize and Supervise to Improve Club Operation

By **LIONEL F. CALLOWAY**

Expert management of the country clubs in the moderate-sized or smaller cities is being made an essential by increased visiting of metropolitan district clubs being done by members of the smaller clubs. The smaller club members see higher standards of operation and regardless of much smaller club budgets they want to approach the metropolitan level.

After a wartime absence from the golf business I returned to be surprised at the way in which friends of mine who were officials or non-official members of smaller clubs had raised their demands for club service.

These clubs have done well financially during the war years. Clubhouse and course improvements can be made without getting back into debt as many of them were before the war. But the physical improvements are a wholly inadequate answer to what these club members want. They want to have an atmosphere of operation that will compare favorably with the sort of operation for which the metropolitan district member pays from \$150 to \$250 annual dues. Giving them that is something that calls for a rare class of competent management because members of this type of club are not prepared to pay the big city rates.

Specialists or One Man?

The larger club can hire a specializing house manager of top ability, a highly competent course superintendent and a first class pro. The smaller club has to come as near as possible to having all these men combined in one as the sort of a man required to do the job the members want done would ask—and be worth—a salary that only could be paid by a combination job. The management and supervision needed to meet the members' demands would call for a salary that couldn't be split three ways and attract a house manager, greenkeeper and pro of adequate qualifications.

So the one man who does fill the bill must know enough about all three of the jobs to be able to handle any one of them with a better than fair degree of competency. But, equally as important, he must be able to make the right choice of reliable help in the various departments and keep all operations under steady supervision. The secret of his success will lie in his ability to organize then to check up to see that there is no laxity in operations. The main fault in most moderate-sized and small-sized club

operations is lack of neatness. That is the result of poor organization and inadequate supervision. Despite the physical improvements that many clubs will make in an attempt to bring themselves closer to the first-class metropolitan standard untidiness will defeat the purpose.

The officers and committee members can't maintain the vigilance necessary to assure neat operation. It isn't their job to sacrifice their own private business time or leisure to attend to this all-important detail of club operation. If they were to stay on the job for years they would find that it is neatness which makes work easier for all club employees. I've seen that after a quarter century working at golf clubs. The crux of the problem is, of course, that the members who may be meticulously neat in their homes or offices often are very careless when they get into locker-rooms.

Must Have Neatness, Promptness

So the man who runs a country club must be one who insists on neatness and on promptness. He has to budget his own time thoughtfully. In the early part of the day he is primarily a greenkeeper, seeing to it that his men know just what to do in routine or special work. Then, if there is to be any special lunch at the club he has to go over the plans with his cook and head-waitress. After that he can begin on his lesson appointments.

His buying, his planning, his work on the books and other parts of his job have to be fitted into a long day so nothing will be neglected and the members will have the idea that everything about the club is running smoothly and easily. The combination man has to have eyes in the back of his head as well as a busy pair in front. He has to be a man with the habit of making notes, otherwise his own memory will slip in some little detail that may become magnified if passed up for long.

He must be a business gentleman; courteous, a good but discreet mixer, an excellent judge of people—members and employees—and the sort who commands respect for his ability, industry and fairness. He has to have an easy knack of firmness in order to play fair with all the members and with all the employees. He must realize clearly what the member is entitled to, what the member expects and what is expected of the man who is run-

ning the club for the good of all its members.

Club Operator's Qualifications

Good management of a country club calls for all the customary qualities of judgment and diligence needed in business plus the following capacities:

Genuine interest in furthering the members' enjoyment of a good golf course, a clubhouse operated more on the home order than hotel style, tennis courts, swimming pool and other recreation facilities;

Ability and tact in seeing that well-trained employees are cheerfully on the job with some initiative;

Resourcefulness in planning and directing a well-balanced program of sports and social events for all types of members, throughout the year;

A publicity knack in acquainting members, through bulletins, etc., with what's going on at the club, stirring their interest in club happenings and promoting a lively spirit of unity. This publicity ability also must present the club and its members to the other citizens of the community in a way that helps to make club membership highly desirable.

The man who runs the club must keep an exceedingly close watch on accounts and other records so he'll constantly have a

true picture of the club's financial operations and its prospects.

He must provide the best of everything a club can supply at a cost within the purse range of the members.

In short, the man must have considerable creative ability as well as executive capacity.

The larger club table of organization has the general manager supervising the greenkeeper, steward, housekeeper, pro and caddie-master. The customary major departmental duties are:

GREENKEEPER — Maintenance and construction work on course, grounds, pool and tennis courts. Care of equipment.

STEWARD—Food and bar service; dining rooms and kitchen; men's locker-room.

HOUSEKEEPER — Care and maintenance of clubhouse; hostess, decorations; flowers; laundry; linens; women's locker-room.

PRO—Teaching, pro shop operation, conducting tournaments, playing.

CADDIE-MASTER — Recruiting, training, assignment and supervision of caddies.

That's the large field of work the large club general manager must organize and supervise. To approach the standard of that type of operation the man who runs the smaller club must be very good indeed.

A SCENIC GEM OF MIAMI SHORES



This beautiful 138 yd. eleventh at Miami Shores (Fla.) G&CC is a feature of one of the heaviest played courses in the south. In December, January and February, 14,785 rounds were played here and the turf held up in fine condition. The club has started on a \$150,000 clubhouse remodeling and swimming pool construction program.