

Pro, Greenkeeper, Manager As A Team Make Jobs Better

By LENY CALDERWOOD

Pro, St. Joseph (Mo.) CC

Grub worms, web worms, and angle worms have all been pests of quite importance on greens the country over, but now these troubles are eliminated quickly with a few shots of lead arsenate or some other poison. However, it's against ethics to give this same treatment to the kind of worm that sometimes infests the golf club in the ranks of its "Big Three," the greenkeeper, the manager, and the professional.

In the earlier years of the golf club's history it was not uncommon to find disagreement and the lack of cooperation among the heads of the three departments, in fact, cooperation was not only lacking, but more likely, at least, two of the departments would be close to fighting terms.

Most of these situations were brought about due to jealousy, and it is certainly not a healthy condition for any club. The head of one department wants to gain control, power and greater income for himself by knocking his fellow workman. Sometimes it takes club officials years to find out that there is no cooperation among the men to whom they have practically turned over the operation of the club. When this condition prevails the club isn't going to progress. There has never been a business that is fully successful without cooperation of all departments and employees, and running a golf club is no exception.

Sometime ago I knew a club that didn't seem to function too well; yet it apparently had everything that it took to make a good club. They started out with a big and active membership, they had a nice golf course and a moderate but well arranged clubhouse, and the dues, although not in the big bracket, were high enough to assure good operation. Something didn't click. From the outside it was hard to see why.

Stabs in the Back

But back of closed doors there was a disagreement among the "Big Three," or



This team works together for the St. Joseph (Mo.) CC. L to R: Clarence Radke, greenkeeper; Leny Calderwood, professional; Robert Miller, manager.

possibly in this case two of the "Big Three." It wasn't out in the open; the manager and the professional had little to say about each other. One didn't come out to the members and say to them something like this: "The manager is lousy. He didn't help our tournament any by putting on that terrible meal." That is why these things go on within a club without their recognition among the members, but at the same time that same professional would do everything he could to make it hard for the manager of the club. And the manager would reciprocate in the same way.

A professional can easily injure the progress of a club by continuously being disagreeable openly or inwardly with either the greenkeeper or the manager. The greenkeeper can cause the same situation with the professional, or the manager can make it tough on either one of the other two.

The battle to develop a really successful golf club is a big one, and it takes every bit of cooperation as well as willingness to work, from the pro, the greenkeeper, and the manager, just as it does to win a war. In some way or another every battle takes the complete cooperation of the army, navy, and air corps.

I believe that harmony among the "Big Three" is much more likely to be found in the golf club today. At least that is the opinion that I have formed after visits to many of the clubs around this part of the country. And a good thing it is for the club itself that has, no doubt, got smarter with the added years of experience to engage bigger men to take care of their business.

The two years that I have been employed at the St. Joseph CC, I can cite not one disagreement among the three of us. Veteran greenkeeper, Clarence Radke, who has some 24 years service at the club and is still only middle-aged, is one of the most cooperative fellows that I know. Radke is so cooperative, willing, and dependable that the club has recognized this fact to the extent that he was given almost full operation of the club during the lean years and the time that golf at first gave way to the war years. In the post-war era, however, he has been relieved of many of these responsibilities in order to give more attention to the golf course.

A Real Team-mate

He could have knocked both my position and that of the manager to such an extent that our jobs would have been hard for us, since we both came out of the service direct to our new positions. But instead, Radke did everything to make it easier for us. He helped me get acquainted with both the pro setup at the club as well as giving the members a nice word for me. He asks me for information in regard to our tournament plans and big golf days, he wants to have the course groomed just a little better than its regular neat appearance for these occasions.

In my first few months at the club he tipped me off as to the various members and their likes. It was through these tips that I was enabled to walk right into a new job and know each individual member's desires almost as well as if I had been taking care of him for years.

Just before I left for a vacation to Texas last winter where I planned to visit the Texas Turf Conference because it was being held at Texas A & M where an old friend lived, Clarence bade me good luck on my trip and requested that should I run across any new ideas on turf or the maintenance of the golf course to be sure to bring them back. He is a fellow who doesn't think that he knows so much about anything that he can't learn a little more.

Then I recall the time back last August when our club put on a most successful Missouri Women's State championship that our manager, Bob Miller, for many years before the war connected with management and maintenance of hotels, was out on the starting tee to find out just how

many of the women would want to stay for dinner at the club. On his memo pad I noticed that he had also asked them just what they wanted to eat. This little beforehand thought enabled him to give them just what their appetites desired after a hard hot day of golf.

Miller has cooperated in every way possible with both the greenkeeper and the pro end of the club. He has given our tournaments that final touch with the table that he has set for the crowd.

During the past winter season, I wanted to remodel my shop. I knew just the man to go to. Bob has quite a hobby of working with wood, and has a shop at the club that is tops in equipment for making almost anything (at least, anything I was able to think of) for the shop. He took out time from other duties to don a pair of overalls and set up display shelves, club racks, and other conveniences that will make the shop better for both myself and the members.

When Miller gets going for the summer activities, however, it's difficult for the two of us to discuss our problems. And about the only way that we get a chance to visit during those months is by a little trick that I have devised. Should a rainy day come along when I am not too busy myself, and if I can just rub the other side just enough to get an argument out of him, I can keep him around the shop for quite some time. Of course, many times I have to argue against even my own belief.

At any rate, I believe that the greenkeeper, the manager, and the pro can waste a little time in such discussions that naturally bring closer understanding that will really help them on matters of operating and making the club better in all departments.

All For One

Without complete understanding and unity one of these departments can easily hinder the progress of the other even though it doesn't mean to at all. Bad food and the general lack of service over the club can be a drawback to the pro. Each one of these deficiencies will lessen interest amongst the members and help to kill the play.

Bad operation in the pro end of the club can also be a detriment to the greenkeeper and the manager. No club can boast a healthy situation without having an active golf membership. The pro is the fellow whose duty it is to stimulate the desire for play, and should be competent enough to keep up the player's interest in the game. Without play the greenkeeper is not important, and it's quite hard for the manager to make a success of the dining and grill rooms from the social end alone.

(Continued on page 94)

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can be put into summer golf for the "pub-linker." He'll have the feeling of satisfaction that he's getting his money's worth. He'll come and p(l)ay oftener just because it was fun.

It's been argued that p(l)ay on the 19th hole is not enough to show a profit. For the fun of holding "post-mortems" over the score card and to display a downright friendly attitude coffee and coke ought to sell for a nickel. It gives the customer the feeling that he's not being "gouged" just because he's thirsty and you have the only drink available. Maybe that's a "little thing" to argue about but the guy who coined the phrase "friendship in a cup" had an eye for business. This year's p(l)ayer has a keener eye on his pocket-book than last year's. Looking after "little things" on the publinks will bring him back to p(l)ay and p(l)ay many times oftener than if we try to take him too much on the first hand.

TEAM MAKES JOBS BETTER

(Continued from page 36)

A run-down golf course is certainly not good for the professional and is also bad for the manager's side of the ledger for the same reason bad operation of the golf shop keeps people away from the club. The duffer may not be smart enough about the game when it comes to feeling the touch of the contact of the clubhead with a golf ball, but he usually knows when conditions of tee, green, and fairway are not right. He loses interest in the game when he feels that he has finally hit a good one and it doesn't pay off.

At the St. Joseph CC, I can say without hesitation that the three of us have worked for each other's good just about as much as we have our own. But I am going to have to admit that on one point, I guess, that we have staged some of the biggest arguments that I have ever witnessed around a golf club.

During the off season when our eight hours work is not tough and as serious as the number of much longer hours that we give to our jobs in the summer months, we can't miss that noon hour session of ping-pong. Since the club has provided all of us with our mid-day meal and we usually eat together, the argument as to which one of us can do what to whom starts just as soon as we take our seats at the table. It's always a game of doubles with some of the other employees filling in for a fourth.

To win is the goal, and it's no laughing matter to lose a point over the net because of a boner. Any one of us will draw blood where we can find it, and then argue we are right even if we are wrong.

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