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# Consider the Greenkeeper, Grau Asks Club Officials

**By FRED V. GRAU**

Director, USGA Green Section

Golf club officials are beginning to realize the increasing seriousness of the shortage of competent greenkeepers.

GOLFDOM gets an accurate close-up due to our impartial and experienced close-up on the employment situation.

When there is a pro vacancy at a good club there are from 40 to 100 or more applicants, of whom probably 30 per cent are well qualified men. When there's a manager vacancy there will be from 10 to 25 candidates well qualified by club or hotel records. But when there's a greenkeeper opening at a good club a lot of searching has to be done to find an able man who will work for the salary offered. Generally, the only way to get a competent greenkeeper is by taking him away from another club by offering him more money.

Even then the good man usually is so much in love with his course that he is reluctant to leave the place. If his family situation makes him desperate for more money he goes into another field of work. Despite union restrictions it isn't difficult for the versatile greenkeeper to get a card in a trade where training and production requirements aren't nearly as exacting as in course maintenance.

Now, players on smaller town public and daily fee courses insist on turf standards equal to those of expensive metropolitan district private clubs 15 years ago. Each competent greenkeeper has to make use of all the exceptionally thorough and practical scientific training he's taken during the past 15 years which have seen an amazing transformation and improvement in fine turf development. The greenkeepers are an unselfish lot of trained and loyal specialists but economic conditions have compelled them to take stock of their financial situation and prospects. The picture doesn't look any too bright to them.

The club officials' responsibility at this critical point is bluntly presented in the accompanying Open Letter by Fred V. Grau of the USGA Green section.

The main problem in golf course maintenance right now isn't grass. It's men.

Herb Graffis  
Editor, GOLFDOM

Sirs:

I take the liberty of addressing you in this manner because it is not possible to talk with you face-to-face. Even though I might have that privilege this year, your respective offices may be occupied by someone else next year.

My reason for writing you is to discuss the position of your greenkeeper, or your superintendent, whatever his title may be, in relation to the welfare of your club. He has earned my respect. I have been in his line of work myself. As Director of the USGA Green Section I see more of him