

Why Managers Lose Jobs Is Told by Pro

(For obvious reasons of self-preservation the author doesn't want this article to carry his by-line)

HAVING SPENT the greater part of the past 15 years in promoting, organizing and developing country clubs I have often wondered why somebody has not come to the rescue of the club manager. I have also wondered why someone has not set down some handy rules on "how to keep a club manager long enough to unpack his suitcase".

Although I have chosen the golf pro's path toward financial success with ulcers I also have had the job of being a club manager thrown at me. You might say I was "between managers". I think over this 15 year period I have a pretty good idea on why there is such a high mortality rate of club managers.

In some cases and some clubs this rate of job death includes the pro too. However, from what I have seen regarding the life span of most managers they don't even unpack their suitcase for fear of being run off. One club in the midwest had so many new managers in one season that someone goofed and hired a guy they had fired before they knew it.

I have some pretty damn good ideas on why these nice guys leave so soon but, you can call me a coward but not a fool because I don't want my name attached to such a touchy subject. Too, I like to eat and enjoy the nicer things in life.

Plenty of Bosses

It takes a lot of people to run a country club and they usually do. Just recently I happened to drop in on a pro for a visit and a round of golf. From all appearances his club looked healthy financially, lots of members, Cadillacs in the parking lot, etc. But, after a closer check I found this club to be very unhealthy: Course in bad shape, poor food in the clubhouse, poor pro shop facilities and poor everything.

When we got thru play I asked this pro just what the score was. He was looking for a friend to talk to so this is what he said: "We have a nice club here, 500 members, swimming pool, out of debt, but we are having troubles. You see, out of our 500 members we have 100 golf pros, 300

greenkeepers and 100 club managers. In other words, a lousy situation."

Not far from here we have a new country club about seven years old. It's a beautiful layout. Out of debt. Fine facilities and a big membership. This club in seven years has had: eight managers, five pros and one greenkeeper. The greenkeeper evidently is deaf and can't speak English otherwise he would have taken off too. Just why can't this club keep its top help? Answer, too many bosses who could not make five cents in the golf business.

Some clubs just can't seem to hold a good manager, or a good pro for that matter. These clubs need help.

The many little problems that confront a country club can be solved very simply with a little organization and work. These simple problems are: raising money, getting more members, beautifying the facilities, etc.

The big problems in a country club do not concern financing and building; they concern professional management. Professional management is carried out by the club manager and not the directors or their committee heads. The club manager must only know the policies of the club and in most cases he knows these policies prior to being hired. When club management is left to the directors or their committees there is really no need for a professional manager.

Who Runs Clubhouse?

It often happens in many clubs when a member is elected to the board, he earnestly wants to help the club. If he feels that by an election he becomes an expert on club management he will aid greatly in running off the present manager. If he is to do his job well he must know what the members and the manager need. He will seek out his fellow club members and find out what they are thinking. If he is to be a very popular and successful director, he will sit down and ask the club manager his needs and the club's needs.

The manager knowing his responsibilities will do a great job. If the clubhouse em-



PAR-3 COURSE DELIGHTS AT KEY BISCAIYNE

A 9-hole course of par 3 holes of from 40 to 80 yds. long, and with well trapped undulating greens, at the Key Biscayne Hotel on Key Biscayne Island at Miami, Fla., is one of the most beautiful short courses in the world. It's on the Atlantic shore, shaded by coconut palms and surrounded by colorful hibiscus bushes. It draws many guests to the Mackle brothers' establishment. Mike Mahannah designed the course and built the greens to withstand heavy traffic. Emmett Mitchell is in charge of course maintenance. Salt spray from the sea provided a construction and maintenance problem. Bob Littler, who's at Athens (O.) CC in summer is Key Biscayne pro. He runs weekly tournaments and instructs many who begin golf on this course. Play averages 300 rounds a day. Guests get hole-in-one trophies at the rate of about 3 a week.

ployees come under his authority he is the ruling hand. It seems that the number one reason why club managers quit is the habit of directors going directly to the employees and giving them orders not known to the manager.

This undermining practice is common in all clubs that can't keep a manager. If the director wishes to correct an employee he should let the manager do it. It is amazing to know that I have never seen a manager tell one of the directors how to run his business, yet, a director, in many cases, having been in the banking business for 40 years, will tell the club manager how to run his kitchen.

The best club directors are those that are not too smart but willing to learn. The director needs only to look about his project and he can keep very busy adding to the beauty of his club.

The good club manager has a sense of pride based on many years of experience. He feels that to be managed himself is the worst way to insult him.

I have compiled a list of the real reasons

why club managers have left jobs. These are the basic reasons although they seem very foolish. Here are some:

1. Flies hovering around the front door.
2. Absence of toilet tissue in the ladies' john.
3. Slice of moldy bread.
4. Asked members to leave clubhouse at 4 o'clock in the morning.
5. Cobweb in pantry.
6. Cigarette butts at back door.
7. Club president's wife treated like a common member.

Any club manager could add several hundred more important reasons why they went down the road. Now the club director who notices all these things and does something about it is the guy who makes the club manager go on the weed. These are the small things that small people can see.

Many directors spend many hours at the club seeing that the manager is on the job. This type director is waiting to see the manager goof. He will order a cup of coffee and time the waiter. He will order a drink and test the whiskey content by vol-

ume. He comes up with more ideas on how to run a club than any other man known, yet he couldn't wait tables in a third rate beer joint on Skid Row.

Why Managers Stick

Just what makes a club manager like his job and want to stay around? First of all he wants to manage his club. He can do wonders if his directors or bosses ask him what the score is. The directors that managers love are those who come to a manager and ask him what he or the club needs.

Now I ask you, who knows more about what a club needs than a man who makes his living managing a club? I have never met a club manager whom I disliked or thought was not capable if he was given the chance. If it were possible for the members to fire bosses bossing the manager, country clubs would have few problems.

The director may ask, well just what am I supposed to do now that I have been elected?

The answer is simple; find out what your club needs that will make the members en-

joy their facilities much more.

Does Ike go over and stick his nose in the mail carrier's business? If he did the good old U.S.A. would start going backward. He gets a good man to run the postal department and forgets it. Does a good club president stick his nose in the salad girl's dressing? No, he gets a club manager to do the job and forgets it. Does the manager propose a new clubhouse, new set of greens, new pro shop? No, he leaves this up to the club president and committee heads.

If every club member and director considered his country club as a business that is operated for pleasure, he would have the pleasure and let the manager do the work. Almost all club managers go to school for months or years, serve as assistants to club managers and work many hours to know the art of managing a club. Now, if all club directors underwent the same training program they would be smart enough to tell the manager what to do.

I for one would like to see a "Be Kind to Club Managers Week". These guys take more abuse than a pro on ladies day.

With a good situation the manager will work about 12 or 14 hours a day. He will have a cook who gets loaded and lands in jail. He will arrange a party for 200 and still take care of two members wanting hamburgers in the locker-room. If the average G.I. followed the manager around for one week he would drop flat on his face. Just take the job of a manager and then add the confusion created by 10 member-managers and you have the picture of "why club managers go crazy". Let's take our hats off to the unsung heroes, the club managers.

SELLS MORE GOLF



The Golf Foundation of Britain, patterned after the National Golf Foundation of the U. S., is doing an excellent job of junior promotion in England and Scotland. Daily Mail, London, sponsored a "Beat Ben Hogan" contest which yielded \$5,250 for The Golf Foundation. The 15,000 entrants paid equivalent of 35 cents each. Of the 15,000 there were 1,500 playing their home courses at their handicaps who beat Hogan's 72 at Colonial CC, Ft. Worth, Texas, the same day.

Leading British amateurs and professionals and golf equipment manufacturers share in the work and financing of The Golf Foundation, which is ably managed by C. D. Gray, sec. The Golf Foundation acquainted the British golf public with its work and tactfully solicited stronger financial support by presenting an exhibit of its results in this tent alongside the practice putting green during the 1953 Ryder Cup matches at Wentworth.

Shows U-3 Roots Deep After 106 Dry Days



Turf experts at Northern California Turfgrass conference watch Dr. Robert M. Hagan take soil sample that shows U-3 Bermuda roots growing 6 ft. deep after 106 days and nights without water.