

Promotion Is Vital in Staging Club Events

To get the right kind of "audience participation" for parties, celebrations, etc., you need not only a big buildup but an early one **By JACK HASKETT**

Some golf club committees have the talent for ad libbing celebrations, but most will find it easier to prepare a written plan. For relatively simple special events, such as an awards presentation ceremony, there might be a simple listing of what is scheduled to happen at certain times. For major events, such as a full scale open house, a three or four page "blueprint" will probably be necessary. Regardless of size, each celebration schedule should include the following points:

1. To whom is the special event directed? A celebration for members will be more of a family affair, and probably more informal, than a similar event for an outside group. If the entire family is invited women will be more interested in some aspects of a celebration than their husbands, and this should be planned for.

Be Sure To Budget

2. Where is the money coming from? The best things in life aren't necessarily free. It's usually better to set up a special celebration budget — with a specific dollar amount allocated — than to use funds from the regular promotion or publicity budget. Otherwise, a celebration may cost much more than anticipated. Mostly direct expenses will be included, but overhead has to be considered.

3. What do you expect to gain? Do you want to bolster member goodwill, boost pro shop sales, or just generally increase awareness of the club in the community? Give your special event a specific target and plan accordingly. It's always easier

to achieve a goal if you know what you're shooting at.

4. Write it down. You'll find the celebration will roll along much more merrily if plans are on paper. If there are several people on the special event committee it's imperative they know what is to be done — and when.

What to Celebrate

A large percentage of organized golf clubs have been established since 1945. If your club has managed to withstand the pressures of modern golf business for a decade or longer maybe it calls for a celebration. Don't feel discouraged, if you're just a youngster on the scene. Many clubs have effectively sponsored first, second, or third birthday celebrations. Tying in with a national "week" — National Golf Week, for example, is a natural. In this, you have the added benefit of national advertising and publicity to reinforce the local effort. But if you don't want to be a bandwagon jumper develop your own week.

Make It Memorable

There is no point in having a celebration if those who attend don't leave with a "good taste" in their mouths. Fortunately, this is relatively easy to accomplish.

People get tired and bored easily, so keep the celebration short and sweet. It's best to confine the actual event to one day or less, although promotion for it may extend over several weeks. Your publicity job is definitely made easier if you enlist the services of a celebrity, either within

or outside the club.

A celebration will be remembered a lot longer if you provide your visitors with some special memento of the event. This doesn't have to be elaborate, but neither should it be a cheap give-away. Pins, badges, bracelets all have proven worthwhile as special event remembrances. Here's another place where planning pays off: most mementos require several weeks for production, so order them in plenty of time for the big day.

Use Club Statements

Additional benefits can be gained if you publicize an event fully. For example, small labels or seals can be affixed to stationery and members' statements for several months in advance of a party.

A celebration is an ideal time at which to reward long term employees. This indirectly shows members and visitors that your club is a good place to work if John Brown has stayed there five or ten years.

Incidentally, even if your special event is not primarily for employees, it's important that you bring them into the act fully, for your club operation is really nothing more than the composite of their individual talents.

Contest May Help

Additional publicity mileage and general goodwill can be generated if some kind of a contest is sponsored. This contest can concern your club only or the community, and can take any of a dozen different forms. For example, for community events you could have entrants estimate the number of golf balls sold in the pro shop in a year, or the number of meals served by the club kitchen.

The contest question itself is not too important. What you are trying to do is build "audience participation". Some golf clubs prefer to announce the contest winner at the actual celebration; others find they can lengthen publicity coverage by announcing the winner at a later date.

At all celebrations, but especially at anniversaries, don't dwell wholly on the past. Remember to tell members and visitors about your plans for the future. Almost everyone likes to be told what someone else is planning. With an organization as intimately connected with the com-



Joe Black, retiring PGA tournament supervisor, holds a gold replica of the Haig & Haig Challenge Cup presented to him at a banquet in Sebring, Fla., preceding the recent Mixed Foursome Championship. Flanking Black (l to r) are Harold L. "Sunny" Renfield and Randolph Dunsire (Haig & Haig reps), Jack Tuthill, new PGA tournament supervisor, and Daniel Marc Bernheim, PGA tournament director.

munity as a golf club almost everyone is interested in knowing if changes are to be made.

Preliminary Announcements

Preliminary announcements covering celebrations should be released as soon as possible. Six to ten weeks in advance is not too long for local newspapers and radio and television stations to have news of a coming event at the club. Announcements on your own bulletin boards, letterheads, and other printed forms should be started several months before the celebration.

Announcements of any contests should follow hard on the heels of the initial announcement of an event. Then, information on the contest should be released at somewhat regular intervals right up to contest closing.

A club manager shouldn't hesitate to ask suppliers for advertising cooperation. Many are willing to go along because they reap benefits from club celebrations.

Celebration day material is released as soon after an event as possible. Daily newspapers actually should have news releases a day or so in advance so that they can schedule coverage of the event immediately after it takes place.

Contest winners announcements should

(Continued on page 106)

WINTER INJURY and SNOW MOLD

...have one thing in common

THEY ARE MORE SEVERE IN
AREAS OF POOR DRAINAGE

AQUA-GRO

... moves excess water out,
prevents overly wet areas
that encourage snow mold
and winter injury

•
make

AQUA-GRO

*a part of
your fall program*

NOW!

•
AQUATROLS CORPORATION of AMERICA
217 ATLANTIC AVE., CAMDEN, N. J. 08104

1965 USGA Competitions

June 17-19	National Open, Bellerive CC, St. Louis
July 1- 3	Women's Open, Atlantic City CC, Northfield, N. J.
12-17	Amateur Public Links, North Park GC, Pittsburgh
Aug. 3- 7	Junior Amateur, Wilmington (Del.) CC, South Course
6- 7	Americas Cup, St. Charles CC, Winnipeg, Man.
16-21	Girls' Junior, Hiwan GC, Evergreen, Colo.
23-28	Women's Amateur, Lakewood CC, Denver
Sept 3- 4	Baltimore (Md.) CC, Five Farms Course
13-18	National Amateur, Southern Hills, Tulsa
Oct. 4- 9	Senior Amateur, Fox Chapel GC, Pittsburgh
13-15	Senior Women's Amateur, Exmoor CC, Highland Park, Ill.

Dr. Ralph Engel covered New Jersey and Dr. Elwyn Deal, Maryland. Dr. Stephen Bachledler spoke on "What Every Supt. Should Know About Plant Diseases." Dr. Joseph Duich of Penn State brought the supts. up to date on weed control. Dr. Fred Grau gave a talk on fertilization.

Dr. Raymond P. Korbobo of Rutgers Univ. Dept. of Horticulture talked on landscaping a country club. Robert Shields, Woodmont supt., and David W. Moote, national GSCA president, spoke on personal aspects of course management.

Club Celebrations

(Continued from page 82)

be released to newspapers and radio and T.V. stations as soon as decisions are made.

What Is Gained

Golf clubs across the country have proved time and again that celebrations are well worth the necessary time and money investments. Effectively sponsored celebrations can:

1. Improve relations with members.
2. Help build community goodwill.
3. Increase use of both course and pro shop.
4. Give you a good indication of where a club stands with regard to members, the local community, and civic leaders.