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A strong vote for harmony

By W. I. Alward, Gen. Mgr.
Binghamton CC, Johnson City, N. Y.

We live in a fast-changing world. I recently listened to a speaker at a club managers' meeting ask how wide is the Atlantic ocean? To Columbus it was 70 days, to Lindberg it was 33 hours and to an astronaut today it is about 10 minutes. Everything is relative.

My associates—myself, the golf pro, the superintendent of the golf course, our chefs, the list is endless in our clubs—all (or mostly all) feel the need for some protection. We want contracts, pensions, better pay. We look at those in industry (who are in effect our members) and feel I'm as well educated, or I work as



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hard, or in many cases at least longer hours than they do. Where does this leave me? If I'm a pro, a manager, a golf course superintendent, dependent upon the whim (almost) of a committee chairman, a director, or in some cases a member, I can be put out of work—and fast.

A very frightening thought, and yet with all this facing us, we tend in many cases, to bicker amongst ourselves. The manager and the golf pro don't get along, the pro and the superintendent don't speak, or any combination of these faults. To my way of thinking this is the surest way to termination for all three.

For all intents and purposes, the manager is a business man and would-be pacifier. The superintendent is a professional in the business of "growing grass." (Please fellows, I know this is only a small part of your job—don't shoot.) The golf professional is just that—plus being a school teacher, a haberdasher

continued on next page

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STRONG VOTE

continued from preceding page

salesman, also a pacifier, and a business man, (but usually in his own business, not some one else's as the manager is). Why then do these three key, very important people to any club operation not remain close friends?

I think you can all find an individual reason, but as far as I am personally concerned none of your reasons can have value if you take a good look at them.

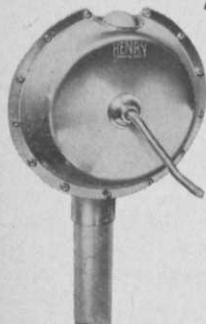
The manager may be jealous of the pro because there may be a financial difference in their yearly income—in most cases in favor of the pro. In most cases this is rightfully so. For the pro has a large investment in his business—in stock, time and payroll.

The superintendent does not want to answer to the manager for his accomplishments or mistakes, because he thinks, what does he know about growing grass? In most cases he is right, the manager knows nothing about growing grass.

The manager says, why should I take the responsibility of the pro shop or the golf course? They (the club) don't pay me for that. So we plod along and say to each other, manager to manager, pro to pro and superintendent to superintendent, let's look out for ourselves.

Great, but what is your real job? As I see it, all of our jobs are the members. If we stand together, we can better serve our main purpose, "the club member."

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We can also provide a better financial statement for our members, in which case we can *demand more* for ourselves.

A very strong word "demand" but if we work together, our three associations together would have an opportunity to better our personal conditions, better the conditions for our club members and prove to all that golf is fun, golf is good for everyone.

Too many managers feel their job ends with the paint on the clubhouse outside, and not enough realize that without that golf course we would be in another business, or in a social or city club. Please, fellows, forgive me if I miss your yacht club or military club—or whatever, but I am a Country Club Manager. I love my job, but for the life of me I cannot see why all of you can't see what we are missing, and how much further we could *progress*.

To progress means to move forward—and forward brings to my mind "time," and I am reminded again of a recent speaker who said: "When our grandfathers missed the stagecoach, they said, 'Oh well, there will be another one along next week,'" or when our fathers missed a train they said, 'I can wait until tomorrow for another one,' but today if we miss one panel in the revolving door it's a major catastrophe."

We are only on earth a short time. Why, at least in our business, can't we stand together? ●

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