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# Another super speaks out . . .

To the Editor:

A couple of years ago, I received a letter from Herb Graffis, who was at that time Editor of your publication. Mr. Graffis asked me for an article under the caption, "With Charity to All and Malice Toward None," describing how an experienced superintendent may look at a job that was advertised as below; he believed that I could do a "most helpful job for club officials." I've had it in mind since then, but couldn't feel it. I started it last winter, and, finally, here is the expression of feeling I've been trying to work up.

## WANTED: GREENKEEPER FOR 18 HOLE COURSE. Write Box —

How weak is this ad! Are club officials so ashamed of their need for a college level man to manage valuable property that they will run a blind ad? Have they maturely analyzed their reason for replacing the present man or if he is at fault? The poor condition of the course may be due to shortage of funds when purchasing ground or shortsightedness during construction. Are they advertising for a man or mouse — a beggar, or a good turf manager?

The title "Greenkeeper" is a low form of progressive golf course management, dates the user, and shows that he is ignorant of modern turfgrass management and the forward movement. Four year college graduate courses now yield "Superintendents," certainly worthy of a little prestige in return for what they must know and do.

It certainly is indiscreet of businessmen — club officials — to have a trifling or shallow approach when seeking and interviewing a man who will manage a golf course. A successful golf superintendent probably must know more about his business than the average businessman (club member) must know

The turf manager likes his way of making a living, and probably could hold the job of many members, though his salary may not be up to the average of the members. Now would that be so shaming to the members? The superintendent is as much a businessman as is the person contributing toward his salary.

Progress and demands of players have been more rapid than recognition of good turf managers. The yearly income of these men has lagged, but their courses have improved more than their salaries.

A superintendent is as much alone in his work as is a small businessman who also spends about fifty thousand dollars a year to gross an income of ten to fifteen thousand for his risk of failure. And yet, such a man is viewed (by the officials upon interview) as "this fellow looks pretty good, and he's five hundred cheaper than any of the others. If he doesn't work out, he'll at least serve our purpose until we find a good man."

Greater understanding and helping to solve *your* problems, Mr. Club Official, will put you on *his* side. Befriend your superintendent, work *with* him rather than him working for you. A superintendent will manage your course without your direct help, but facing major problems together and accepting limitations of your property is "with charity to all and malice toward none."

The following points are suggested for hiring applicants seeking work: Is there a man on the job who can positively handle the job? Will you pay a thoroughly qualified man his worth at once? Is the job a good one in competition with neighboring clubs? Will he show what he knows by being interviewed by recognized consultants? Do local superintendents commend his ability? If you cannot hire a local man, then go outside, but give him a good chance to refuse the job if he will not be reasonably comfortable with your club.

A sincere explanation of the handicaps (all courses have them) will discourage an experienced man if they are impossible to overcome. You may find he is the fellow to make you realize them before he takes the job. When you are ready to hire after the interview, it would be worth the time and expense to spend one day of a weekend with "your man" walking with him around his present course before either of you commits yourself. Remember, both of you want a tension-free relationship.

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