

Superintendents' long green

Have golf course managers really improved their financial position during the past twenty years?

Strong opinions were expressed as to the present image and financial status of the golf course superintendent in preceding pages. The editors, therefore, decided to assemble financial information that would shed additional light on the situation of the superintendent compared to other trades and professions.

The post-World War II period of 1945 through 1965 was chosen to show an income comparison between superintendents, on one hand, and incomes for electricians, plumbers, truck drivers, milkmen and doctors (general practitioners only) on the other hand. The fantastic boom in the interest in golf, and in the industry itself, makes this the logical period to use.

Some difficulty, however, was encountered in gathering satisfactory statistics. Figures were, in some cases not available for the years under examination, and some were lacking certain details.

The median income figures for doctors are only available from 1955 on, according to Medical Economics, Inc., Oradell, New Jersey, and actual hours worked prior to 1955 are unavailable.

Information pertaining to income for electricians, plumbers, truck drivers and milkmen was supplied by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in Washington, D. C. These were given out as median hourly figures which naturally necessitated the computation of the annual median incomes based on a 52-week period.

These figures do not include any overtime payment. For example: Truck drivers worked 45.9 hours per week @ \$1.007 per hour in 1945 in order to earn the median annual salary of \$2,412.

There were no figures available for the national median income of the superintendent. Therefore, in cooperation with

Ben Chlevin, executive director of the GCSAA, the editors contacted eminent superintendents in every major area in the United States to establish a national median for a yearly salary for 1945, 1955 and 1965.

With reference to the wage comparison chart, the 1965 median figure of \$12,500 for the superintendent might seem a good increase over \$5,500 in 1945. However, in comparing this to the incomes of other professions and trades, one has to consider the hours a golf course superintendent puts in compared to the others.

For example, the electricians salary is predicated on a slightly less than forty-hour week. If they worked as many hours as the superintendent they could more than double their salary.

To begin to estimate the number of working hours a day for the golf course superintendent would be ridiculous and almost impossible. If anything, he works 24 to 48 hours a day!

In contrast, during the past twenty years in Chicago, the milk truck drivers' wages have increased from \$1.02 per hour to \$3.88 per hour, while at the same time, he is working fourteen hours less.

During this same period in New York, 1945 to 1965, the milk truck drivers' rates have gone from \$1.27 per hour to \$3.50 while working eight hours less.

Even the general practitioner, whose hours are notoriously long, as with the superintendent, has improved his position in recent years. In 1965, he worked an average of sixty-eight hours per week, and the 1966 figures reveal a cut of five hours to sixty-three hours per week.

As regards to income, the general practitioner's lot is not an unhappy one—for 1955 the median income of a general

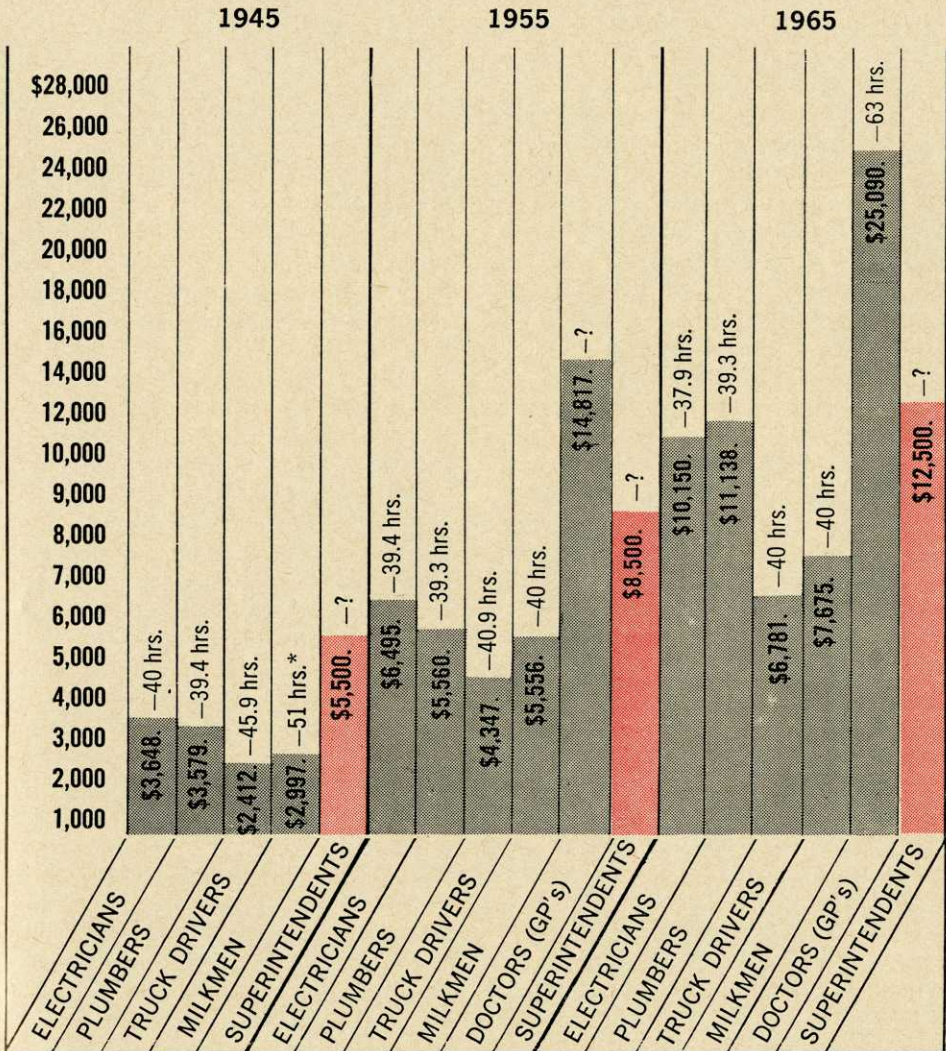
practitioner was \$14,817. Today he has pushed it just over the \$25,000 mark.

GOLFDOM realizes the figures for the superintendent shown are only approximate. Naturally, it was impossible to expect the individual superintendent to figure out such variables as straight salary,

salary plus free housing, meals in clubhouse, to say nothing of other fringe benefits.

An extensive survey on this whole question is now in the works and will be published before the year is out. One thing is certain, it is long overdue. •

INCOME COMPARISON CHART



Sources: Wages for electricians, milkmen, plumbers and truck drivers were obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Wages for general practitioners were obtained from Medical Economics, Inc. (Figures for previous years are averages not medians.) Statistics for superintendent's wages are based on an independent survey made by the editors of this publication.
 Note: Yearly salaries for electricians, milkmen, plumb-

ers and truck drivers are projections of average weekly salaries made by the editors and are not figures released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Figures appearing above each bar indicate average weekly hours for that year.

* This figure is a median figure based on a 54 hour week in Chicago and a 48 hour week in New York City, as is the salary figure.