

Together we stand, divided...

The superintendent, professional and manager working together results in an efficient, member-satisfied club.

By G. V. MARLATT, CCM
Manager, Northmoor CC, Highland Park, Ill.

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

Some one once said: "Let me talk with the employees, and I will know what kind of boss they have." So too, it could be said, "Let me talk with the golf professional, the golf course superintendent, and the club manager, and I can tell what kind of a club you belong to."

A famed song of years gone by was "We Three", in which it referred to "my echo, my shadow, and me." We three; the golf course superintendent, the golf professional, and the club manager cannot adopt this same identity for it is the careful blending of the combined talents, capabilities, education and personalities of all three individuals which can make a club what it is, or, in some cases, isn't.

The mere hiring of three individuals, affixing the necessary titles, and introducing them to each other will not always result in a smooth running, efficient, member-satisfied club. It immediately becomes necessary for these three personalities to hire, train, and supervise the people necessary to operate that division of the club they directly control. All of these persons must then be blended into a well managed, efficiently operated, and financially sound institution.

After this union of "individuals" is accomplished, they must work, think, live, argue and produce together just as in a marriage. But like some marriages—as with Adam and Eve in the Utopian atmosphere of Eden—things do not always go right. Conflicts do emerge, rebellion can be present, and unity can become non-existent. The reason for this is simply that in both cases we are dealing with human beings.

I am fortunate to have worked almost 20 years with some of the finest golf course superintendents and golf professionals in the field, and I must say that these problems seldom existed or were present only for a short time in my past.

In most instances I have had the pleasure of working in the air of mutual understanding, toward common goals, in a trouble-free atmosphere. Perhaps this may have been without effort on their part, but I, as a manager must admit that I have had to "work at it." To say that conflicts never arose, problems did not develop, or differences of opinion did not exist would be to lie. But never did I meet a man in any of these positions whom *I could not, or did not work with.*

For what it is worth, let me relate some of the things I have found which help to create an atmosphere of willingness to get along. This with the expressed hope that if such a condition exists at your club it might be helped.

Know Your Job—This does not mean food and beverage, grounds and greens, or sports and pastimes; it is hoped that you knew these things before you were hired. So too, before a man is hired, he should have a well defined contract or agreement stating his area of responsibility, duties, privileges, restrictions, benefits and remuneration. Then, all of these other than salary can be contained in an operations manual for all to see. Knowing, and understanding what your job is in relation to the entire club's operation can be the first step toward creating harmony in any club.

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GOLFDOM

TOGETHER WE STAND

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Treat the Other Fellow as You Like to be Treated Yourself—This is not the "Golden Rule," for if I accidentally step on your toes, it does not mean you retaliate the first opportunity you get. It does not mean total agreement or subservience on anyone's part. Nor can it mean that any individual is *always* right.

It should mean that, if conflicts emerge, you can, and will, sit down and discuss it. It also means there are two, and sometimes three, sides to all disagreements or you would not be disagreeing. It might mean that you have to be willing, and able, to say "I was wrong," if you were wrong. Further it means that you must have a knowledge and understanding of the problems of others, as you hold no monopolies in this department.

Rising costs are much a factor in golf balls as they are in top soil or wild rice. Good help is just as hard to secure in

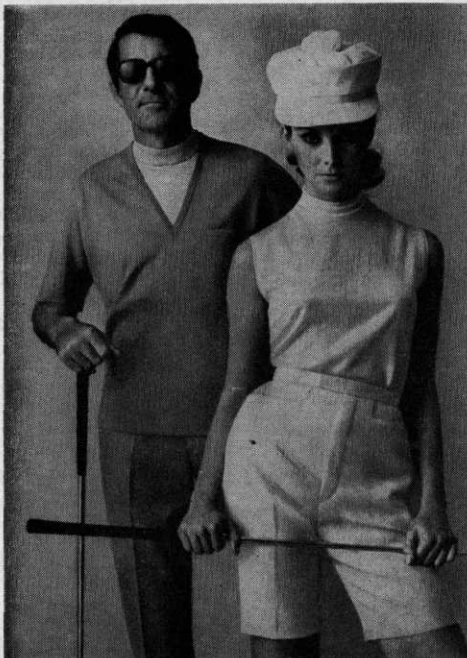
the area of greens mowers as it is in securing second cooks or assistant pros. Accidents and inefficiency are not limited to club houses, pro shops, or tool sheds. Budgets are made which contain sand, scorecards, and bath towels; and recognition for the needs of others, for the successful operation of the club, is as necessary to the preparation of a budget as staying within its confines.

It has been my experience that board and members are more interested in how well the *club* did, budgetwise, than in who was "over" and who was "under" budget. For in the final analysis, if these persons are satisfied, all can benefit by dealing with happier members and fellow workers.

Share and Share Alike—While it is true that a screwdriver or hammer can be used in practically every department, what if each department had a tractor, a battery charger, or a rug shampooer? The pooling of labor, equipment, and ideas should be

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come a common practice if costs are to be kept within reason, and cooperation is to exist.

What is good for the clubhouse is good for the rest of the club if we are talking about hours, wages, benefits, privileges, meals and working conditions. Sickness insurance and pension plans are of much interest to waitresses as they are to shop men or mechanics. If a manager suggests bonuses for his staff, why should we not seek suggestions from the grounds department and professional as well if the persons involved are club employees? If assistant professionals and shop personnel are permitted to play golf after work what effect does this have on employees who are restricted to "Mondays only?" If "un-skilled" labor is hired in one area of the club at one wage, why should "un-skilled" labor in another area of the club be paid differently? Yes, you can share in

the benefits of the club, but you must share in the *problems* as well if you are to seek cooperation.

The sharing of information is another factor I would like to mention, for this is most vital in securing cooperation from others. Weekly meetings can and should be scheduled to bring the three principals together; preferably at lunch or over a cup of coffee, to outline what is coming up in *all* areas of the club. Advance planning, and discussion of possible problems will result in a better understanding by all concerned, creating a "smooth-running" organization, even on abnormal days, to both employees and members alike.

Little things can play a prominent part in over-all understanding and cooperation amongst professionals, superintendents and managers. One suggestion is for the three to "talk out" any differences of the past week at their lunch.

If all three agree on a given problem,

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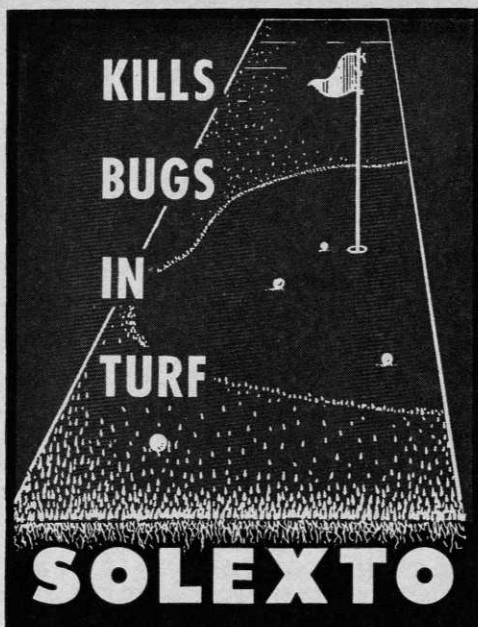
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send your possible solution to the Board as a "three-fold" suggestion. This will not only help quicken its adoption, but serve as a means of showing *all* three of you are concerned, you feel you might have the answer and you are working on on it *together*.

Visit the other fellow's office once in a while. Find out what he is working on and what the problems within his area of responsibility are.

Maybe an inventory system or stock control in the storeroom will help just as much in the golf shop. Superintendents have found from managers that informal luncheon meetings with other clubs will bring about a healthy exchange of information. Golf professionals playing in tournaments may have the solution to your crowded parking lot on weekends from something they have seen where they played. Managers may know of a new "twist" to a two-ball foursome, and a superintendent may have had an unusual sandwich at a club he visited.

However, each is hesitant to talk about it in your area, but he will discuss it with you in his area, for fear he might offend. Many of our members and committees meet and discuss things during a round of golf. Pros can sell themselves during a "playing lesson" so why not "sell your ideas" to the manager and superintendent as you utilize your own "ground rules."

Finally, if all else fails, then be a little *tolerant* of the other guy. Recognize the influencing factors of age, experience, nationality, personality and pressures.

Like the marriage we mentioned before, sometimes you have to learn to *like* burned toast, stockings floating in the wash basin, and curlers poking you in the eye as you start to go to sleep.

Marriage needs "give and take," and so do the relations between the superintendent, professional and manager. But if you are willing to "work at it," harmony and cooperation can become a living reality, at your club. ●