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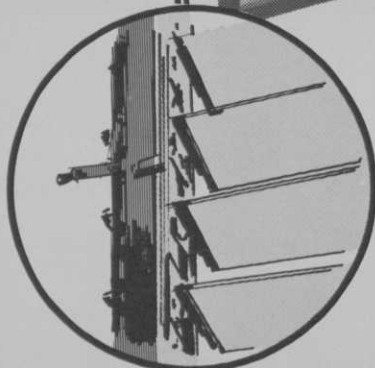
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Idea file

Four ways to step up pro shop business

Promoting trips in other areas of the country and going with your members was one idea brought out at a merchandising workshop held earlier this year by the Professional Golfers' Association of America. Another suggestion was to reduce a set of golf clubs \$1 each day, beginning at 20 percent off. It was reported that the set was almost always bought before it reached the pro's cost.

A third idea was to install a driving net and indoor putting green out of Astro-turf in the bag room during winter to stimulate traffic. Another pro suggested ordering lightweight clubs with a slight hook and extra loft, saying older women liked the clubs.

Is your cheese flambé a legal liability?

Is your club legally liable if a flaming shish kabob ignites a patron's clothing and injures him? Probably not, but law professor Anthony G. Marshall, Esq., feels foodservice operators should know more about the law if similar accidents would occur.

Marshall, associate dean for the School of Hotel, Food and Travel Services at Florida International University, says the operator is not legally responsible for an injury or accident if it was not intended, not foreseen, and could not be prevented by the exercise of reasonable precautions.

If the operator, however, is negligent in the "duty of care" or fails to conform to business standards required by law, a customer is entitled to damages, he said.

How to complain about paperwork

President Carter and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce want to hear complaints concerning what many businessmen feel is an excess amount of paperwork they must do for the federal government.

There are two ways to inform these officials about your gripes. Members of the national chamber of commerce are urged to send in examples of their own burdensome experiences. The letters should specify what you consider unreasonable, costly, and just a plain waste of time. Address these letters to "Paperwork Burden," U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1615 H Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20062.

Business firms with serious problems may phone the Commission on Federal Paperwork's toll-free number. It is 800/424-9882.

Stakes unnecessary for new 5-foot trees

A newly-planted tree, 5 feet or taller, should not be aided with stakes unless the tree is "top-heavy" and likely to topple without support, according to a five-man research team.

"A young tree standing alone with its top free to move usually becomes a strong tree better able to withstand the elements," said the group, which consisted of two University of California professors, two county farm advisors and a horticulturist.

Pay workers more, agronomist insists

Clubs which pay their employees the \$2.30 minimum hourly wage should realize they will not perform competently unless they receive an amount comparable to area industrial workers, claims agronomist Holman M. Green.

He also suggests to employers that providing sufficient motivation for their labor force is essential to productivity.

Personal

“Whole life” insurance covers until death

This differs from “term life” insurance which has a limit on the period you are protected, says family resource management specialist Mrs. Lynn White.

“Whole life” insurance costs more initially, she says, but it builds savings called “cash value” as long as premiums are always paid on time.

Follow these six steps for a happier vacation

Know your spending limits; look into off-season rates; and pack clothing, equipment, and other necessary items — these are always excellent money-saving ideas.

Travel experts also recommend three other considerations to make your trip more enjoyable.

Decide on a vacation goal, such as adventure, travel, or cultural enrichment; write the chamber of commerce or tourist bureau of the city you plan to visit several weeks before the trip; and allow time for spur-of-the-moment activities. Too much planning sometimes means not enough time just to relax.

Watch for sales ploys of backyard pools

Retailers sometimes advertise a pool for a very low price, but encourage the purchase of a more expensive model once you get to the store. The “bait and switch” method sometimes means spending far more than you had planned.

A salesman may also offer you a discount price on a “display” pool he claims was shown to other customers, but often no one saw the pool and you are being charged the regular price. Find out the price difference between the “display” model and the regular pool.

Finally, watch for promised refunds from a salesman if you give him the names of others who might be interested in buying a pool. If you go along with the idea, find out how much the refund will be.

Caulking saves energy, reduces heating bills

Winter isn't too far off, and sealing cracks around doors and windows can cut cool air losses 15 to 37 percent, according to housing and home furnishings specialist Glenda Moore.

She advises persons to locate air leaks in their homes before buying any caulking compounds. Critical exterior areas are the window frames, sashes, door frames, chimneys, and joints between siding and the roof.

Meat can be poisoned by the homemaker

It is estimated that many of the 2 to 10 million annual food poisoning cases in the United States occur in the handling, preparation, and storage of meat and poultry, says Frances Reasonover, of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service at Texas A&M University.

Harmful bacteria can grow on cooked meat and poultry left at room temperature for more than two hours. Bacteria can also be transferred from raw meat to poultry when preparing these two foods, and Ms. Reasonover says washing your hands immediately after handling the meat will prevent contamination.

Inside foodservice

compiled by
Herman Zaccarelli,
foodservice editor



large, integrated foodservice organization, except in one notable way: the scale of operations in foodservice is vastly greater, embracing a volume of fresh and processed food items and food-related products that is beyond the imagination of the average home food preparer.

This magnifies the importance of competent planning and management. If club foodservice people aren't looking ahead and anticipating change, sooner or later they will pay the price. How soundly they understand the intricacies of the national food dollar — both its complex components and its likely trend — goes far toward determining their success and their customers' ultimate satisfaction.

And if there is more to the food dollar than meets the casual eye — more, that is, than the mere cost of the wheat in the bread or the milk in the dairyman's pail — there is likewise more to the foodservice dollar than just the food. A similar assortment of cost components levies a substantial toll. Taxes, interest, energy, transportation, and labor expenses all add up enormously.

For example, considerably more than half of total operating costs and expenses are allocated to items other than food. If we bear in mind the information revealed in the USDA's cost-components report, this fact about our own food dollar will come as no surprise. The plain truth is that often nowadays the ancillary costs of doing business are the major costs of business, and for an obvious reason: inflation does not pick and choose its spots. It strikes hard at every facet of operations, bar none. Little wonder, then, that it has food business people gnashing their teeth.

How to not handle problems

- Look embarrassed when a difficult problem is brought up. Hint that it is in bad taste, or too elementary for mature consideration.
- Say that the problem cannot be separated from other problems. Therefore, no problem can be solved until all problems are solved.
- Rationalize the status quo; there is much to be said for it.
- Point out that those who see the problem do so because they are unhappy — rather than vice versa.
- Carry the problem into other areas; show that it exists everywhere. Hence, everyone will have to live with it.

Club foodservice costs

Hidden between the lines of any food cost report are two facts about food economics well worth remembering. First, the cost breakdown on any single foodstuff is not a year-to-year constant. A weather refersal might sharply alter the farmer's share of the food dollar from one production season to the next. Or a hefty wage boost in some stage of a food item's journey from farm to consumer might hike the item's end-cost at the very time that its basic raw material experiences a price decline. As a case in point, we have the recent price history of bread; the labor component of bread's cost has been nearly double the farm-commodity component.

Just as the price complexion of a single food item can change swiftly, due to abrupt variations among its several cost components, so too can the overall price makeup of the entire marketbasket of food. One year sugar prices soar, the next year they plunge. First pork is a luxury and beef a bargain; then the tables turn. In hundreds of ways the patterns of gyration and change are repeated constantly.

Same story for club foodservice

Complex and unpredictable. In a nutshell, that's how the food economy looks to the individual food consumer. It's no different for a

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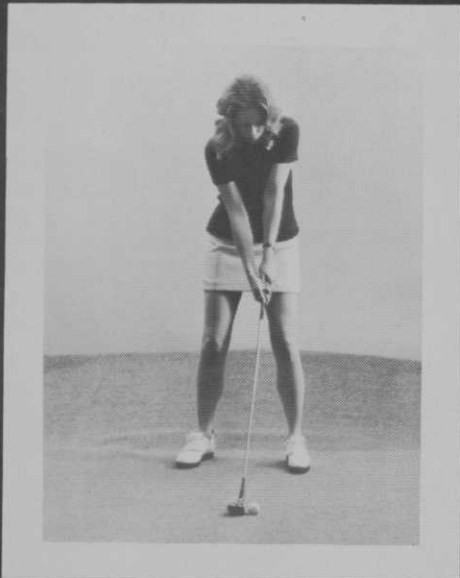
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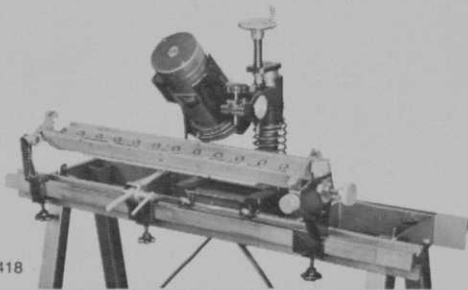
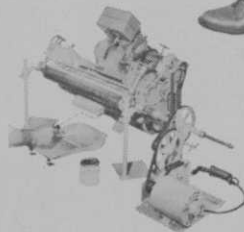
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The old pro

Wonders at architects' blindspot

Very few courses I've ever heard about or seen have the practice lesson tee, the practice green, the first tee, the pro shop, and the clubhouse coordinated in location.

That's the case of restricted collective usefulness whether the installations are at private, public, daily fee, or resort courses.

At resort courses, so I've noticed, the practice and lesson tees are too remote from the living quarters of the vacationers who have the time for practice and instruction they don't have at home. Usually these resort tees are not convenient to the pro shop, either.

I had hoped that when prominent playing professionals became collaborators with golf architectural specialists, the first tee, practice and lesson tees, the practice green, pro shop, and clubhouse might thoughtfully be arranged together for most usefulness to the players, the pro department, and the club management. This certainly has not been the case.

The dim record is that the first lesson and practice tees were located by Donald Ross about 1914. Ross designed about 500 U.S. golf courses. As a veteran professional, Ross saw that the demand for golf instruction had outgrown the playing lesson. The instruction areas alongside fairways near the pro shop weren't convenient, nor safe, so Ross devised the lesson and practice tee.

The practice putting green had been any tee near the first tee at the earlier Scotch courses. All that needed to be done was digging out a few holes in a soil that was mainly sand. The regulation 4¼ inch diameter hole was a comparatively recent development in golf history.

The practice sanded bunker and approach greens are the only noticeable improvements in the practice or "warm-up" area in modern golf.

The practice and instruction areas usually are architectural and maintenance afterthoughts. Not much attention or imagination is given to the lesson and practice area, so it often is the slums of a golf course. The place should be located for practice or private lessons, handy for refreshments, a drink or a sandwich — so the golfer who hasn't time for a round could get relaxation, exercise, practice and learning after work and stay at the club for dinner with his wife and children.

Practice balls would be supplied on an annual charge as they already are at some clubs. The whole place should follow the simple but colorful high-class note of the lesson tee which Tommy Armour made world famed at Boca Raton. There the striped lawn umbrella over the table and chairs added to the quality of the atmosphere.

Today, however, there is a curious and costly lack of imagination exhibited by the neglect of golf practice areas.

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A golf superintendent

The love of greenkeeping

by Paul N. Voykin

I may be mistaken, but I think I see the golf course superintendent's profession turning from its true direction. I am speaking of the recent trend of green superintendents slowly encroaching on the field of managership and away from our true profession of greenkeeping. This situation, I believe, has developed from the managers becoming general managers and taking charge of the whole clubhouse-and-grounds operation. As a result of their yet unproven venture, we have become panicky and think that by acquiring new titles and certificates, by attending bookkeeping and finance seminars, and urgently seeking further clubhouse property responsibilities, the situation will change.

I don't think so. A Golf Course Superintendent is a Golf Course Superintendent, and a Manager is a Manager, and the only way this fact will change is if you wish to change your profession completely. If that's what you want, go ahead, but do it full turn, please. Do not play games — you're only fooling yourself.

In my case, there is no conflict. I know what I want to be: a good greenkeeper and nothing else. I'll be happy with that title, because I know something else — call it a basic managerial premise, if you wish. That is, unless the golf course superintendent is in complete charge of all and total bookkeeping, and unless all money passes through his office, he can never be top dog or in full control at the club — at least not in the eyes of the board members. This fact is as sure and true as the fact that the golf professional will always be the glamour man at the country club, no matter how many double knits you own or how well you groom the grass.

Clouding up our true identity by seeking out extra jobs and taking more responsibility for a little more money has nothing to do with our real profession and skill of growing and manicuring grass. This is futile hypocrisy.

General managership is not our business. The managers who have taken over completely and are now total general managers have sold down the river their true responsibility to the club. They have taken on too many responsibilities and have gone into fields that they know nothing about. Let's not play their ambitious game. As in the past, top clubs will learn that it's not going to work, and there really is no money saved.

Let me be absolutely blunt. Become a manager or stay a golf course superintendent, but whatever, be true to yourself. You can't be superb at both jobs. Declare your hand. Don't get into a mixed-up ballgame unless you want to change jobs every few years, as some general managers are doing. The wise ones work with us, cooperate with us, communicate and coordinate with us, and they are smart enough to keep out of our areas

of responsibility — something they know nothing about. That's the way it should be.

I would like to say something else. I am not, nor is anybody else, impressed by greenkeepers calling themselves property managers, golf engineers, turf managers, and other nonsensical names. Golf or green superintendents — yes, greenkeepers — lovely. "Grass growers" or "grass farmers" is fine with me. I know what I am and I make good money at it. I don't need to seek extra "janitorial" jobs around the clubhouse to tarnish my true professional image. My direct responsibility is the golf course and that load is heavy enough for me. And please don't give me that old business about shirking my duty as a breadwinner, or not being able to take on extra responsibility, or not trying to uplift our profession. I take on more responsibility and I am more involved with exciting things than I know what to do with — for my family and for the image of my profession. And I know many of you are the same. Long ago I could have become manager, but that's not my forte. I am a GREENKEEPER, and in this field of endeavor I strive for perfection.

There is something else I must tell you that is in me (and unless you have a touch of the same, you might as well become a manager or go into something else). I would miss the soft warm rains that fall on the turf that I grow. I would miss the white snow that covers the golf course in late fall for the first time, melts, and then softly comes again. I would truly miss all the challenges of nature that go with my profession. The hot sun of summer heat and the salty sweat of humidity on my brow. I would miss the pleasure of admiring turf manicured and maintained under both good and adverse conditions and knowing that I had a hand in keeping the verdant picture that way. But, of course, there would be other things also soothing the frustrations of working with nature. I would miss her many gifts to us greenkeepers, the trees changing in the seasons and the flowering shrubs in spring. I would miss the daisies and other wild flowers hiding from our mowers next to the majestic elms, and I would miss the wood thrush calling to its mate in early morning. I know I would miss the honest faces of commercial friends calling on me and old greenkeepers advising me. But most of all I would miss getting up each early morning and playing the endless chess game of man against nature or, perhaps more truthfully, trying to work with her and relishing the achievement. And, oh, the satisfaction and the pleasure that come once in a while each season when, just for a short time, I have won the battle.

Paul Voykin is superintendent at Briarwood Country Club, Deerfield, Ill. Past president of the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents, he is also the author of *Ask the Lawn Expert*, published by Macmillan Publishing Co.