

sions to be drawn.

I believe that the club wants to know and accounting practice may help prove:

(1) That the superintendent is a conscientious, efficient, up-to-date employee who is at all times keeping up with his fellow green superintendents as to knowledge and practice.

(2) That the money is being spent at its ultimate value.

The club relies on the superintendent to keep up with the latest, most efficient, modern methods and a smart superintendent will edify his chairman, committee and members as to what is going on in the turf field.

Word of high quality course maintenance spreads through a district and immediately sets standards for other clubs. Members of clubs want to know why their course is not as good as others. Alibis and illogical reasons will not fill the bill today. If the club is not spending sufficient funds the members should

know indirectly through the green superintendent that if sufficient funds were spent maintenance would improve.

Pattern to Follow

In conclusion, I think that a club must follow the following pattern:

(1) Establish a long range program of the things that they deem desirable for a better course.

(2) Establish standards of maintenance for the current year.

(3) Determine how much it would cost to maintain the established standard.

(4) Break up the proposed future plan into stages that could be accomplished each year with the money available.

(5) The superintendent and committee establish bookkeeping procedures which would give them the information they desire as to how the money was spent and how the labor was utilized.

Superintendent-Green Committee Chairman-Membership: Working Together

J. PORTER HENRY

Member, Algonquin Golf Club, Webster Groves, Mo.

The purpose of this meeting indicates that the USGA Green Section is vitally concerned with the ever increasing cost of golf. In times of great prosperity this problem is not too serious, but it becomes acute and troublesome when business recessions overtake us. When I first took over the green chairman's job at Algonquin, in St. Louis, in 1936, our green budget was \$12,000. Today it is \$51,000, and we are doing no more than we did then. Our dues went from \$85 to \$360.

In spite of this substantial increase in course maintenance, when we talk about the high cost of golf generally we must not fail to distinguish between the cost of golf specifically and the cost of country club maintenance.

While the country club has a distinct place in the field of golf, I would like to see more clubs devoted to golf exclusively. Thousands of fine Americans who love the game cannot afford the country club, and are forced to use the public courses, which do not furnish the opportunity for the extensive companionship

provided by the private club.

A club without hotel or entertainment facilities can be built for less than half of the cost and can operate for a little more than half the dues.

The green chairman must remember that his department, which concerns itself with golf, is in keen competition with the country club or social department. When business slackens off and the need for economy seems paramount, many times the country club members of the board are apt to start their economy with the green budget, which always proves uneconomical in the long run.

The green chairman must support his superintendent for a sound maintenance program, and he must remember that in the average club more people are members because of golf than for the social activities, although the social devotees, because of greater contacts, become better known than the average golfer and consequently are elected to the boards.

It seems to me that the first requisite of good cooperation between green chairman, superintendent and locker room is

a green chairman interested enough in his job to hold on until he learns his lesson sufficiently to be of help; and a membership and board sufficiently aware of the importance of the green chairman's job to keep him in office long enough to enable him to serve a useful purpose. The office of green chairman cannot be a perfunctory one. He has much to learn, and it takes time to learn it.

A green chairman can be an asset to a club or a liability. If he thinks he knows too much about grass culture and maintenance, based upon a mere superficial acquaintance with the subject, and insists upon putting his own ideas to work against the advice of his superintendent, the Lord pity the golf course and the superintendent. If, on the other hand, he knows nothing about the subject, and is therefore unable to appreciate the problems of the superintendent, he is worthless as a liaison officer between the superintendent and the locker room. Likewise, if the green chairman hasn't the courage to risk the displeasure of the members when the situation requires, he is failing in an important aspect of his job. Many times a temporary inconvenience to members is repaid a hundred fold in the long run. Such temporary situations invariably arouse the ire of a few members, but that ire must never be permitted to interfere with the program. Nor must it be assumed that a vociferous few represent the majority of the members.

After many years of experience it is apparent to me that our progress comes largely through trial and error. In summing up our progress, we learn not what are the ideal things to do—because we reach no ideals—but primarily what not to do, because of our many experiments which are so often unsatisfactory. We are constrained to draw the conclusion similar to that of the bachelor who married late in life, and thus gained familiarity with the vicissitude of both single and matrimonial life, and in a contemplative moment concluded, whether you marry or not, you'll regret it.

There are times when some radical steps must be taken when problems arise, and on these occasions the green chairman is wise to keep his board, as well as his membership, informed. If he is a good publicity agent he forestalls

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criticism and dissatisfaction, if not he invites both.

We adopted an expedient of procuring a sympathetic attitude on the part of the membership by acquainting them to some extent with grass problems. With the aid of the entertainment committee we had a dinner meeting devoted to grass. Many of our members live in private homes and are interested in their lawns. We felt that they could benefit by our experience. The program started by the green chairman giving a rather detailed explanation of the grass plant dealing with the function of the root, the functions of the leaves, with soil conditions, with fertilizers, which showed them why a short cut was injurious and why a long cut could be adopted without difficulty in their lawns. I took up the question of weed control and explained some of our practices in this respect. I took advantage of the occasion to give reasons for occasional closing of the course. Then I threw the meeting open to a question period at which time let me hasten to add I very discreetly turned the meeting over to the superintendent. They spent nearly an hour on questions.

A prolific source of annoyance to the locker room as well as the chairman is the question of closing the course temporarily when weather conditions demand.

In our district when the long hard rains saturate the greens in hot weather, and when the hot sun may appear at any time, we have found that a great deal of damage results from play. When these circumstances arise we close the course. This happens seldom. After consulting with the superintendent I personally assume the responsibility of the actual

closing. Those who have planned their games for the day start their fussing, although I have found that the vast majority are always behind the green chairman in decisions of this kind.

Acting from a genuine motive—to do everything to build better turf for the members' enjoyment—the superintendent and green chairman must pursue their

efforts willing to be replaced rather than to let possible criticism induce them to avoid a necessary, if annoying, practice.

It must not be inferred from the above observation that constructive criticism and suggestions should not be welcomed. Indeed they should be invited. I have profited by many constructive suggestions over the years.

Question and Answer Session

MODERATOR: William H. Bengeyfield, USGA Green Section Western Director

PANEL MEMBERS: Mr. Williams, Mr. Boyd, Mr. Eckstein, Mr. Henry,
Mr. Charles G. Chapman, member of Country Club of Detroit,
Grosse Pointe Farms, Mich.
Mr. Herb Graffis, Journalist & Publisher, Chicago, Ill.
Mr. James M. Latham, Jr., USGA Green Section Southeastern
Agronomist

MR. BENGHEYFIELD: Let's start the questions by asking one of Mr. Williams. How often should long range planning be reviewed?

MR. WILLIAMS: I think it should be reviewed annually. New committee members should have a chance to understand, study, and re-evaluate the plan. Cost changes represent a factor that will call for re evaluation of a program.

MEMBER: Why is it that many clubs place the cost of swimming pools, tennis courts, clubhouses and things of that nature under golf maintenance. Will Mr. Eckstein please comment?

MR. ECKSTEIN: Each club handles these things a little differently. The only satisfactory way of handling such matters is to set up a separate budget account for each item of this kind. Actually, most clubs charge some costs to other budget items. I noticed we were buying sand when there was no money in the sand account; it was charged against the drainage and sewerage account.

MEMBER: Bob Williams has made it a practice to hire young men who have come to our golf course and worked under him and have advanced to superintendents. This is Bob's idea and we are delighted to go along with it. We are going to have a lot of young men on golf courses around the area.

MR. BENGHEYFIELD: There are clubs who are doing something about training young men. Apparently they don't mind when these young men reach the stage where they can handle a superintendent's job.

MEMBER: Does the USGA help young men who have graduated from agricultural colleges to get into golf course jobs? Do you have a committee for that?

DR. FERGUSON: I don't believe there is a special committee but students rarely have difficulty getting placed. Green Section agronomists are able to help graduates get into jobs for additional training.

MR. BROWN, Secretary, Golf Course Superintendents' Association: The Golf Course Superintendents' Association is quite concerned about the training of people as well as the cost of operation. Part of our function is a clearing house for employment, and we have continual requests from clubs and superintendents for young men who are interested in going into the profession. We welcome such inquiries from young men, as we do welcome inquiries from clubs seeking to hire such individuals.

MEMBER: I am from the Olympia Fields Country Club in the Chicago District, and it is a great opportunity to take young men and train them as I have done. My thought has been that it would be a good idea if we could provide scholarships—a lot of clubs pay into scholarships for cadets.

MR. WILLIAMS: The Golf Superintendents' Association now sponsors, I think, three scholarships. In answer to the same question, at Beverly we have recognized this problem and we are doing what small part we can with our limited funds to help, train, and school some of these young boys who want training.