



Better Turf for Better Golf

TURF MANAGEMENT

from the USGA Green Section

HOW TO MEET THE RISING COSTS OF GOLF COURSE MAINTENANCE

PART II

The following pages contain information presented during the afternoon session of the USGA Green Section Educational Meeting held at the Drake Hotel in Chicago on January 24, 1958.

This part of the program dealt with the theme: ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES WHICH MAY HELP TO COUNTERACT INCREASING MAINTENANCE COSTS.

Planning (Long Range)

ROBERT M. WILLIAMS

Golf Course Superintendent, Beverly Country Club, Chicago, Ill.

The theme of our meeting today concerns the cost of golf course maintenance. Before we get into the subject of long range planning, I believe it would be apropos to preface my report by placing the cost of golf course maintenance in the proper perspective by illustrating comparative costs of club operations and the trend of increased costs.

We frequently hear the golf club member speak of the high cost of golf. Wondering just what this cost was, I proceeded to analyze our club's 1957 annual financial statement to find out. Some interesting facts were developed and while the figures will vary from one club to another, I'm sure the percentages run quite true to form. For instance, our 315 regular members and some 60 associates spent a total of \$650,000 at the club during the year, including all expenses and charges. The total direct charges to grounds maintenance was \$60,000 or 9%. The total expense for salaries and labor

for entire club amounted to \$317,000 or 49%. (See Table I and Table II)

TABLE I
TOTAL EXPENSES TO MEMBERSHIP
(ALL INCLUSIVE)

Gross Income	\$450,000
Special Assessment	43,000
Caddie Fees	58,500
Golf Merchandise, Lessons, etc.	50,000
Dining Room Service Charge	19,000
Bar Service Charge	8,000
Transfer Fees	16,800
Xmas Contributions	3,000
Gratuities (extra on checks)	2,000
TOTAL	\$650,300
Total Direct Grounds Expense—\$60,000	(9.2%)

TABLE II
SALARIES AND WAGES, INCLUDING
CADDY FEES

Clubhouse and Pool:		
Restaurant (plus serv. chg.)	\$79,000	(24.9%)
Administration	36,000	(11.3%)
Bar	25,900	(8.2%)
Lockers	12,500	(3.9%)
Housekeeping	12,500	(3.9%)
Pool, Snack Bar, Bonus, Bldg.	22,500	(7.1%)
	\$188,400	(59.3%)
Golf and Caddy	86,500	(27.3%)
Grounds	42,500	(14.4%)
TOTAL	\$317,400	

The trend toward increased costs may be readily explained by the higher cost paid for labor in recent years. At the same time, we should note that less labor is being used than was the case a few years ago. Efficiency and mechanization have to some extent offset the trend toward higher costs.

Golf course superintendents are charged with the responsibility for creating and maintaining a standard of conditions which will be satisfactory to the membership. In his attempt to accomplish this mission, the superintendent encounters a number of factors which are variable and some over which he may have little or no control. The degree of success attained will depend to a large extent upon the superintendent's ability to control and/or counteract these factors. Let us enumerate some of these items: Budget, weather, geographic location, soil type, grounds committees, technical research, architectural design, player traffic, membership tolerance, membership desires, and organization. Our meeting today deals with several of these factors so that the Green Chairman and superintendents may better understand them and affect better golfing conditions. Specifically, today's program covers talks on architectural design, budgeting, technical research, committee functions, and organization.

Now long range planning is an essential part of the factor designated as organization and also the topic that we are primarily interested in at the moment. Just what is long range planning and how should one go about it? Long range planning requires the defining of objectives and desires and the development of recommendations for their accomplish-

ment. This demands specific "Blueprints for action" to carry out the recommendations and careful and accurate budgeting to accomplish the desired results. It goes without saying that complete records must be maintained with regard to progress toward objectives as well as the cost factors involved.

Budgeting for any long range plan requires a forecast with respect to the probable overall cost in order that the superintendent and the committee can present to their board the potential magnitude of the financing problem. Obviously, financial requirements in many cases will dictate the rate of progress which can be sought. Adequate records will enable such forecasts to be kept up to date in the light of experience and, of course, this means that it will be necessary constantly to re-evaluate the long range plan so that it can be amended as needed.

At our club, we have set up a long range plan for separate areas of the course such as Greens, tees, fairways, traps, and landscape. Each area has a defined objective, a specific recommendation and an up-to-date account of the progress, year by year. The first action of the grounds committee each year is to approve or amend our long range program. In this way we have established continuity and developed a better understanding of the situation by the membership as well as for the superintendent.

Editor's Note: Mr. Williams discussed various factors which affect the standard of maintenance and he explained details of the Long Range Plan in effect at the Beverly Country Club.

Labor Management and Daily Planning

TAYLOR BOYD

Golf Course Superintendent, Camargo Club, Madeira, Ohio

Labor management and daily planning are a must with the present day high cost of operating a country club.

Let's define labor management. It is a kindness flavored with consideration, financial help in case of need, and a fair share of the reasons for doing certain work. It is explaining to a man why he cuts greens and rakes sand traps while another man cuts fairways and roughs. It is very carefully explaining what will

happen to grass when burned by fertilizer or chemicals before it happens. It is seeking his opinion of the weather forecast, how long to water a green, whether the brakes need adjusting on a truck—just anything so that he knows you respect his opinion and know he exists as a part of your working force.

The above things can be true only if the club, the chairman, and particularly the superintendent, are dedicated to the