

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**

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**L**abor 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

proposition that the price of high grade supervision is insignificant in comparison with the cost of its absence. A good supervisor or leader of men should be of high moral character. He should never do anything he would not tolerate from his men.

The average golf maintenance laborer has an I. Q. of about 85 and has the mental training of an eighth grader. Taking for granted that the crew are children mentally they will respond to kindness, firmness, and good leadership for the most part. If you have an employee who is surly under good treatment, you'd better discharge him because he will be a troublemaker. There is another type or two that should be discharged when found in a crew. The accident prone person and the man who breaks or wrecks any tool or piece of machinery he uses are types that can be costly and dangerous.

We don't tolerate absenteeism because it is a morale breaker. Actually for four or five years the only men that didn't show for work were sick and called early at my home to tell me they were sick. I have had many men over the years who would not come to work regularly. When this happened the second or third time the man was replaced. You are better off without that type for your own good plus the effect on the other men. I try to get men 40 to 60 years old. The present average is 55 years.

It is my opinion that older men are better, men with farm background are better, married men are better, men who aren't in debt are better, because men who can't handle their own money are not going to handle club problems very well either.

#### **Greensmen's Get-Together**

We have at our club about once or twice a week what we jokingly call a Board of Directors' meeting with the entire crew and myself present. Many things come up for discussion. Ways and times to do certain work or any work for that matter. I pick the times for these meetings, and I pick a day when the weather is good. I have learned that men who work outside the year round are very sensitive to weather conditions, and as a result are more responsive and accept new ideas more readily when in a good frame of mind. Crazy, maybe, but try it.

Weather affects men more than it does grass—they are more sensitive—but they won't admit it.

I have learned many short cuts for doing things at these meetings. In fact, I've learned some very valuable things from men I thought had nothing to offer. Get the non-talkers to talk at these meetings—you may be surprised at what might happen.

Camargo presents a rather complicated maintenance problem with a golf course on 350 acres of hilly, wooded land, with private roads through it, a badminton building, clay, grass, and all weather tennis courts, pool, skeet and trap shooting, ice skating, horses—30-40 head, with the accompanying trails and hoof marks on the course.

This type of operation requires several men to do the work at an economical time before play starts so as not to interfere with play, but more important, so that players won't stop the men and waste man-hours. Each foursome passing each man takes six minutes time, so for ten men on the course during play, simple arithmetic shows that work during play is too expensive.

The answer to this is that we have too many men and too much equipment for 18 holes, but after everything is ready at the club, we then work on members' estates. We do everything that a member needs done. Our profit on the fertilizer sold to members alone pays for all the fertilizer we use at the club. Not all men go to members' estates. The men who cut greens stay on the course (during golf playing season) to do work that can be economically done during play.

There are many advantages to this program: 1, we have the best golf crew in Cincinnati; 2, we have the best mechanical department around; 3, all work is done before the members start to play; 4, all supplies are purchased at quite a saving because of quantity buying; 5, we keep a continuously trained crew, year after year; 6, we stock more equipment than we need so we don't suffer from a breakdown; 7, it is cheaper in the long run, because of trained personnel and proper and good equipment to do a particular job; 8, we can give a better price to the member on supplies because it isn't necessary that our "mark-up" be as high as that of the commercial retailer.

As an example, I would like to cite one member who got a competitive bid last spring on maintenance of his estate. The commercial man wanted \$45.00 for the work we do for \$17.50, and yet we make money on that operation.

Because of some of the above mentioned things, we were able to reduce our overall grounds department expense about \$5,000 for 1957.

#### Location of Equipment

There are other ways whereby savings can be affected. As we said, our course is spread out. The maintenance building is on one edge of the course so that the farthest parts are nearly a mile from headquarters. We learned that the men who cut greens spent too much time transporting equipment. This was corrected by erecting small buildings just large enough to hold the necessary equipment for that particular section. The greensman, who stays on the course, also stays in his section or group of holes all day. This method makes a man responsible for specific work that is repetitious and therefore is done better and more easily.

There is one item I'm sure will save labor, that is the proper location of trees and shrubs on a course where high speed mowing is necessary. We have a tree—worse yet, a maple tree—between the practice green and the first tee. They are only eighteen feet apart, but the maple is there just the same. It cost Camargo Club over \$100 last year for labor in root-pruning, extra watering, fertilizing, picking up seeds off the green, sodding part of the tee, and then raking leaves (sometimes twice a day) for two or three weeks. We have another area that once required seven minutes to mow with a tractor and mowers. Shrubs were improperly planted and now it takes a

man two hours per mowing. Every club in the country has many instances like this and yet the superintendent is supposed to conserve labor. I like trees as well as anyone but in their proper place.

#### Care of Staff

Now to get back to strictly labor management. Men do get hurt on a golf course and it is most important to give them quick and adequate care—even to the extent of calling a doctor sometimes when it might not be necessary. Your efforts will give the man confidence in your concern for his well being. If the man is seriously hurt it will help to have his family notified quickly. Our club pays the man his wages if hurt in the process of performing his regular duties.

Another thing that pays off is the Christmas bonus with a Christmas party. Vacations also help build morale, and in my opinion, if some means may be found profitably to keep good men the year round, the overall cost is less per unit of work done on the course.

Money is important to everyone, but it is my firm belief that to a laborer it is not the most important. Two years ago a man quit Camargo after 18 years service and went to another club at 30c more an hour. He had my blessing. He came back in six months and has been very happy since. He learned that kindness, a nice Christmas party and bonus, and year round work, outlined in advance, were more important than more money.

The most important part of any labor management program is for the club directors to establish a policy and then support the green committee chairman. The chairman should support the superintendent who, in turn, should use every known method to get all possible work out of each man without abusing him.

## *Budgeting and Accounting*

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member Ravisloe Country Club, Homewood, Ill.

**Y**ou have already heard a fine presentation on future planning and we must assume that clubs with strict budgets and accounting controls have already made their future plans.

Each club must place confidence in its green superintendent and allow him the full rein he needs to facilitate any pro-

gram of turf maintenance. The superintendent should act as liaison between this department, his chairman, the officers, directors and members of the club. Close cooperation is of the utmost importance and the principals involved should have the utmost confidence in each other. No reservations.