



Better Turf for Better Golf

TURF MANAGEMENT

from the USGA Green Section

THE GOLF COURSE WORKER — TRAINING AND DIRECTION

The USGA Green Section conducted its fifth annual Educational Program at the Biltmore Hotel, New York City, on January 27. The Chairman was William C. Chapin, Chairman of the USGA Green Section Committee.

Ten papers dealing with as many phases of managing golf course personnel were presented throughout the day. Excerpts from four of the morning session papers are printed on the following pages. Edwin Hoyt, Northeastern Chairman of the USGA Green Section Committee, served as moderator of the morning session.

The Scientific Approach To Management

By DAVID LILLY

Member, USGA Green Section Committee, and Chairman, Green Committee, Somerset Country Club, St. Paul, Minn.

The central problems facing golf courses today are ever increasing costs on the one hand, and more intensive usage on the other. The latter compounds the former. Figures show that, on the average, 70 per cent of the total golf course maintenance budget is spent on salaries and wages.

In view of this large expense item, let us ask this question: Does the superintendent spend enough time and effort training himself in the area of labor management? I am afraid not in all cases; yet, I think you will agree with me that it will be only through improving efficiency in management that our golf courses, parks, and school grounds will be able to maintain their quality of service without substantial increases in their budgets.

Management is the art of getting things done through people. The professional manager, like the physician, combines

science and intuitive judgment in the practice of his profession. The use of science in management as we know it today need not, and must not, be confined to the management of industrial plants. "It won't work here!" and "We're different!" is an admission of failure to be progressive, and to admit that yours, or any other organization, is not being run in the most efficient manner. Certainly, individual cases are unique, and solutions, of course, vary from organization to organization, but **sound management principles are not unique**, and their application should **not** be limited to the factory!

Historically, the profession of management is very old. The sciences supporting the profession, however, date back only to the last decades of the nineteenth century. While considerable misunderstanding will always exist concerning the place of science in management, we can readily

understand how ineffectual the medical profession would be without the benefit of a scientific approach to their problems.

In its simplest terms, a scientific method may be any method that applies a logic of effective thinking, based on applicable science, to the solution of a particular set of problems. Such a method is applicable in an "exact" science, as in the case of the physical sciences, or in an "inexact" science as in the social sciences. Professional management in solving business problems merely combines the logic of effective thinking with the facts gathered by the scientific approach. It differs from traditional management in the manner in which decisions are made, i.e., decisions made under professional management are based on facts developed by a studied approach, as contrasted to predicating decisions primarily on opinions, prejudices and unsound rules of thumb.

Management, as a function in an organization, plans, coordinates, motivates and controls the efforts of others so that the entire organization moves toward specific objectives. It follows then, in the case of a golf course that management is

a function of executive leadership in golf course operations. The managerial functions (of the superintendent) involve planning, coordinating and controlling the activities of others in accomplishing the organization's objectives, within the framework of the policies set up by the club.

If one were to summarize, in as few words as possible, the nature of the management function, perhaps the best reply would be "decision making." Decision making itself is simply the selection of one alternative from a group of two or more alternatives. Among this group can be found the alternative of maintaining "status quo." This possibility should not be underrated, for this, in some cases, may be the best solution. The number of alternatives available, of course, is limited only by the imagination and resourcefulness of the analyst—the manager.

Note: The foregoing paragraphs are excerpts. The full text of Mr. Lilly's paper appeared in the August 1960 issue of USGA Journal.

Importance of the Superintendent in Training and Direction of Workers

By DR. GENE C. NUTTER

Member, USGA Green Section Committee, and Executive Director, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, Jacksonville Beach, Fla.

A watch is one of the most marvelous and useful instruments of mankind. It commands a position of pivotal importance in this unique age when time is considered our fourth dimension. In a way, this delicately integrated, complexly mechanical organized system acts as the hub of our world—and yet how much we take this essential instrument for granted.

On the other hand, this same marvelous mechanism, when disorganized, disassembled, torn apart and no longer meshed, is of no value to society. All of its jewels, balance wheels and working gears have no value per se. It is the organization of these various and specialized parts which give value to the watch.

So it is with the role of the superintendent in golf course operations. The most beautifully designed architecture,

the most extravagant clubhouse, the most verdant grounds, the biggest name professional or the most famous membership will not long enjoy these advantages unless they have also employed a professional golf course superintendent to insure the useful longevity of their facilities—and their golfing pleasure. The golf course superintendent, like the watch, is often taken for granted. But, also like the watch, he is the real hub of a golf course facility.

Social activities can thrive in town clubs, hotels and restaurants. Yachting clubs can enjoy their activities on the natural waterway of our fortunate land. But gentlemen, a golf course, despite public viewpoint, is not a natural asset. A putting green e.g. is the most advanced and intensive agriculture production known. Only a well trained qualified