Associations, Clubs, Individuals
Worked to Defeat Unfair Assessment

How California Golfers Won Fight to Ease Tax Burden

By THOMAS McMAHON

In last November's elections, California voters rallied behind our golf associations and clubs to vote in favor of Proposition 6 by a slightly larger than 3 to 2 margin. The measure, as described in previous issues of GOLFDOM, called for taxing courses as recreation and not business sites. If it had been defeated, assessors would have been empowered to go on taxing golf out of existence in our state.

Even though we were successful in our fight to have an existing and onerous tax modified, we feel that courses in other states, if it hasn't already happened, are threatened by the same burden under which we labored for so many years. Local and state tax machinery is becoming more ravenous each year and assessors and collectors are constantly on the lookout not only for new revenue producing sources, but ways in which existing rates can be increased. To combat this, we want to alert people outside of California to the grave danger of unfair taxation, and tell them something of the step by step procedure that we undertook in having our golf course taxes modified.

Associations Worked Together

Both the Southern and Northern California golf assns., with the aid of influential persons in the state, collaborated to bring the proposed course tax relief bill to the attention of the state legislature so that both houses could vote to place it on the ballot. This was done and incorporated in Proposition 6 by a two-thirds vote of the two houses.

Actually, the law that is contained in the proposition relates only to non-profit courses (i.e. private courses) and states that they shall be taxed on the basis of "recreation sites and not at their highest and most profitable use." In effect, this does not give tax relief to courses operated for profit. But in view of the mandate of the November vote, we feel that justice will be done where all types of courses are involved.

When the legislature voted to put Proposition 6 on the ballot, the two golf associations alerted club presidents throughout the state to the need for immediately starting a campaign to get a (Continued on page 60)
NEW AutoMAC charger
prolongs golf car
battery life.

Keep golf cars running more profitably with the new improved
AutoMAC. It’s the two-rate charger that prolongs battery life
because it is built to conform to the battery manufacturers’ own
requirements for proper charging.

AutoMAC’s new non-mechanical, fully transistorized terminal
voltage relay switches from high rate to the correct finishing rate,
then shuts off automatically when the charge is completed. This
fully automatic operation saves your time and protects batteries
from overcharging.

In addition, the AutoMAC’s new, non-aging silicone rectifiers
insure longer charger life with higher efficiency.

For complete information on how to increase battery life through
more efficient charging, write for Model 400 and 500 literature today.

Motor Appliance Corporation
5737 West Park Ave. • St. Louis 10, Mo. • MI 7-1138

California Tax Fight
(Continued from page 46)

favorable vote from the electorate for the legislation. Decisions as to how funds
should be raised and who was to conduct local campaigns were, of course, left up
to the clubs.

Two Separate Campaigns

We ran two separate campaigns. Pat
Bishop and Co. handled the overall cam-
paign promotion for the Northern Cali-
ifornia group and Baus and Ross was in
charge of ours in the southern part of the
state.

In addition to enlisting the help of all
clubs in the two state golf assns., support
of public and semi-private clubs was
sought along with that of the PGA sec-
tions in the northern and southern parts of
the state. A great deal of financial as well
as doorbell ringing support came from
these sources. Golf writers and others in
various publicity fields also were asked
for, and generously gave, their backing.

One of the outstanding promotions of
the campaign was the staging of the Propo-
osition 6 Golf Classic in which profes-
sionals, well known amateurs, motion pic-
ture and other celebrities took part. Bob
Hope was general chmn. of the Classic
and took every opportunity, whether it
was through TV, personal appearances,
etc., to plug for passage of the tax amend-
ment. The publicity leading up to the
playing of the Classic, as well as the many
accounts of the tournament itself, played
a big part in bringing the tax plight of the
courses to the attention of the public. We
recommend it to any organization that
ever becomes engaged in a tax battle
similar to the one waged in California.

Flood of Literature

Probably the real backbone of the cam-
paign was the flood of literature that was
circulated in addition to the many tele-
phone calls that were made and the tele-
grams that were sent out. It is impossible
to estimate just how far reaching these
various media were in influencing voters,
but from the standpoint of volume and
weight they were overpowering. In addi-
tion to these, probably a million letters
went out from heads of various industrial
and commercial firms, professional people
and women’s organization. Another item
that certainly must have favorably influ-
enced many voters was the mailing of
“Dear Friends” postcards that went out
in bales.

Looking back on the campaign which
was so ably conducted under the general
chairmanship of Edward K. Zuckerman,
then pres. of the Southern California GA,
it is remarkable that so many people could find the time and were willing to work so hard to help amend a law that obviously was unfair. It is good to know that where tax encroachments are made, golfers have enough gumption to band together and correct them.

Michigan Assn. Donates $1,000 to Turf Research Group

The Golf Association of Michigan has donated $1,000 to the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation, Inc., to further the work of the latter organization in turf research. The check was presented by Charles G. Chapman, GAM green chmn., and Robert E. Howell, assn. treas, to Clarence Wolfrom, supt. at Maple Lane GC, and Ward Cornwell, Detroit GC, who represent the Foundation.

The Foundation, which maintains turf plots at Michigan State University, and works closely with the agronomy school there, is diverting most of its money and efforts to the study of the poa annua problem. It also is preoccupied with the effects of close cutting on bluegrass, fescue and other strains used on fairways.