

When Nine Holes Are Better Than Eighteen

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INVARIABLY, land available for golf courses is farm land, and usually it is in an impoverished state. The new club is usually in a hurry to have the course in playable condition, and no thought seems to be given to the future. In a few years, however, the members are dissatisfied with their course. The reason is what I have previously stated, lack of preparation, and lack of fertilization.

It is a certainty, if a course is to be kept in condition, it will cost a great deal more money than the average golf club spends. If a new club is not financially able to build and maintain an eighteen-hole course, it would be well for it to start with nine holes, which would give the members ample golf. In fact the yardage can be changed by having two tees for each hole, thus giving them eighteen holes of golf, until the membership is large enough to complete the eighteen layout. In this way the necessary funds to build the course could be used more practically.

Eighteen Holes on a Nine-Hole Appropriation

The greenkeeper is usually the goat if he fails to produce a golf course on a maintenance budget of \$9,000 to \$12,000 per year, when the budget is anywhere from \$18,000 to \$25,000 per year on the course these clubs are trying to imitate. It would be better to spend the \$9,000 on a good nine-hole course, and have something worth while, than to try and maintain an eighteen-hole

course for the same amount of money, and only have a cow pasture.

Then again, there are clubs that have spent considerable money for construction and maintenance for a few years, and then a new chairman takes hold, whose keynote is economy. He feels too much money has been spent, therefore he starts his flurry of economy by cutting down the number of men, the amount of fertilizer, etc. The result is weedy greens, impoverished fairways—the first long step in the deterioration of the course. But the greenkeeper is the man who comes under the lash of the whip.

The Membership and the Greenkeeper

I wonder when golf clubs will recognize the greenkeeper as the man who holds the key to their membership? He is working hard for his club, sometimes under adverse conditions. Give the greenkeeper a fair show, and he will produce. Anything pertaining to improvements which run into money, it is wise to talk over with him, as his judgment is generally more sound and less expensive than that of the "expert" who is so often called in by club officials.



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Building Up Run-Down Fairways

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AFTER playing our course a few years, and trying to develop good fairways, we found that our fairways needed something else beside re-seeding. We had grass but it needed nourishment. It looked weak. So a year ago this fall we covered all our fairways with barnyard manure and it certainly made a difference. I started putting it on in November and worked through the winter off and on, as weather permitted. I applied it with an ordinary farm spreader. We are going to put some on the tees, and also go over the hills again this winter.

The rains wash the nourishment off the hills into the low places and the consequences are that the low valleys always look better than the hills. We find this is the cheapest way to establish turf and by this method there should be turf for years to come.

I might add that after this manure has been frozen during the winter and the spring rains have brought out the frost it can be raked with wood rakes till it is all evenly spread, and all lumps are fallen apart as fine as top dressing. Of course it must be left to dry before rolling in spring.

After the ground is dry enough to roll and the manure is also dry, a spring tooth harrow will loosen it up again. It will pack if there are any hard rains after it has been raked, but by harrowing it first and then rolling it won't pack as much as it would if rolled without harrowing. I might say from my experience that going over it after it is rolled with a spring tooth harrow which is pulled by a Roseman tractor, (being not too heavy and having wide enough wheels) helps the grass to get a start instead of being smothered which might be the case in some spots where it is still soft.