

Pacific Coast Gossip

By ARTHUR LANGTON

THE opening of nine new greens on the course of the old San Gabriel Country club was the signal for the start of a tremendous amount of play which will be continued throughout the remainder of the winter or tourist season.

At the time of writing there has been no rain of any importance for the current season, although any day now may see the precipitation a considerable amount. In the case of such an event there will be as always on similar occasions general rejoicing among the greenkeepers of the Pacific-Southwest, who have seen hardly a cloud since last March.

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However, if rain does come in the copious quantities promised by California oceanographers, a great many southern California greenkeepers will be forced to wage a desperate battle to save all or part of their golf courses from the consequent raging torrents which will run through them. This is because a great many of the golf courses of this territory have incorporated in their construction a familiar unit of the local topography, the arroyo or dry wash.

In the summer dry months these arroyos consist merely of channels of sand and gravel which constitute a splendid hazard and an almost impregnable barrier to the golfer unfortunate enough to play into one. But when the rains come these washes undergo a sudden and startling metamorphosis. If anyone has any doubt as to what a "dark brown flood" really signifies, he should visit California and view many excellent examples. The loose earth of tees, fairways, and greens is swept remorselessly aside by a tumbling mass of water, sand, boulders and mud. There are many acres that have been devastated in this manner, and more than one fine golf course has suffered the consequences.

The Pasadena Country Club once dug a reservoir near to an arroyo. The annual floods came and filled that reservoir to brim with huge boulders so that it took the better part of ten thousand dollars to repair the damage. Several clubs have had to resort to building concrete flumes to stem the tide.

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For the next few months on the Pacific coast golfing interest will center around Los Angeles and San Diego, not forgetting of course the Hawaiian Islands and Agua Caliente in Mexico. At all of these places one or more of the famous mid-winter tournaments will be played. It has been definitely decided that the Los Angeles Open will be played over the course of the Wilshire Country club, thus giving Bob Greenfield, the local guardian of the green, a lot of work to do.

There is a proposition now afoot which, if it goes through, will save the greenkeepers on the Los Angeles courses a lot of suspense. This proposition is to make the

venue of the L. A. Open a three-cornered, predetermined affair in which Wilshire, Riviera and Los Angeles Country club will rotate in having the play year by year. In this way the respective greenkeepers will know years ahead of time what to expect.

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Mr. William Stewart of Hillcrest Golf club, Los Angeles, has aroused considerable interest in the cause of substituting in a large measure organic fertilizers for some of the more powerful of the inorganic types. Mr. Stewart's argument is backed by his experience in which he says he is required to fertilize less often with organic fertilizers than he is with the more familiar chemicals.

As soon as the promised local experiment station gets under way it may be demonstrated conclusively that the countless forms of life in soil should receive more attention than they have in the past.

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Speaking of experiments, something that Pacific greenkeepers have been desiring but hardly daring to hope for, is cooperation with some great university or other scientific institution. Present indications point to this desire being satisfied in the very near future; that is, if a tentative arrangement with the botany department of the University of Southern California is productive of mutually beneficial results.

Although no definite arrangements have been formulated as yet, there seems to be no reason why a hitch in the contemplated program should occur. The greenkeepers have a lot that they want investigated and the professors and graduates of the university are forever on the lookout for some new field of endeavor.

This being the case, greenkeepers can supply the college scientists with sufficient material to keep them going for some time. The question of brown patch, the use of lime, the time to water, organic versus inorganic fertilizers, and so on *ad infinitum*, are all matters that might be enlightened to the greenkeeper if taken to the apparatus and highly specialized knowledge available at Science Hall of the University of Southern California.

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