

Under the Lights

BY SEAN TULLY, MEADOW CLUB

It can be hard at times doing research, digging through old newspaper and magazine articles until the words start to blur. Then you come across something that makes you shake your head and change the way you have looked at things. The simple task of painting the inside of the hole just above the hole liner has become a common practice at a lot of our courses. Frank Chirkinian who worked at CBS, and covered the Masters, is given credit for having white paint applied above the hole liner to better show the hole location to the audience at home. There is one problem with this story, the use of paint to make the holes more visible had already been used on putting greens as early as 1917! Not only were golfers working on their

game at indoor facilities they were also practicing at night under electric and gas lights! Holes were cut no more than ten feet from the lights and the holes were painted white to make them more easily visible for the practicing golfer. As one can see from the photograph golfers have always had a desire to get better, no matter the normal limitations of daylight.

In the August 1924 issue of Golf Illustrated, an article looks at some recent experiments that used electric lights at night to stimulate grass growth on a golf course. After a number of greenhouse tests showed promising results overhead lights were used to grow in a putting green at the Jumping Brook Golf and Country Club in New Jersey. In the same experiment they were able to grow grass up to 4 inches in height under the light, versus 1 inch without an overhead light, in just 18 days. One of the take away points that the Green Chairman for the club and author of said article was that the lights, "enable Nature to work for us."



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