

# GOLF COURSE GROWTH

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In early years owners of golf courses recruited both labor and equipment needs from commercial agriculture. Greenskeepers, as the men hired to care for the turf were first called, were selected for whatever work experience they were able to bring to the job. The necessity of such a hiring practice is readily apparent because this was the only reservoir of employable knowledge available at that time to cope with the unique cultural demands for turf production. The man with experience in agricultural fields was employed with the hope that he could apply his knowledge to the unusual production situations found on golf courses. His own ingenuity, initiative, learning desires, and spirit of challenge were mere fringe benefits he brought to the job. These attributes, however, eventually stood him in good stead, for as the number of golf courses increased, those same attributes helped those men in charge of turf maintenance to grow with the infant turf industry. As growth in stature and job recognition took place, fledgling indicators of professionalism appeared.

To combat the increasingly more sophisticated turf problems, the greenskeepers sought new knowledge. Discussions and an exchange of experiences became commonplace. It was inevitable that the formation of an association should follow. The organization provided a common meeting ground for the advancement of knowledge and a basis for their professionalism. They were helped by research programs developed at universities and colleges throughout the country. The educators also developed turf courses to train interested students to help meet the need for qualified manpower.

## Manufacturers' help

The emerging superintendent was further helped by the equipment manufacturer, product producer, and those

in position to provide needed services. Always in search of new markets, the men in the world of business turned to help the growing number of developers willing to risk money to convert urban acreages into recreational golf courses.

Gradually, advancements in turf maintenance and management wrought lasting technological, as well as personnel, changes for the golf course sector of the turf industry. The golf course superintendent of today has more demands placed upon him than dreamed imaginable fifteen years ago. His role in the turf grass industry has led all avenues of growth.

## Explosion in the 60s

Beginning in 1754, with the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews (Scotland), golf courses have, through the years, persistently increased in number. Gradually growing through the early years; they increased steadily through the 20s; declined slightly during the 30s and 40s; bounced back in the 50s; and *exploded* in the 60s. Today there are more than 10,000 golf courses in North America but the number of players has almost *tripled* during the 60s placing further pressures on existing facilities.

## Possible problems

Current projections for the industry indicate continued growth. A University of California special report on golf courses compared 234 courses in California in actual play in 1955 to 665 in actual play in 1968. In addition, there were more than 50 courses on the drawing board to be completed by 1970. The Southern Golf Association in Los Angeles reported 157 clubs for 1970, up from 80 in 1961. (*No public links were included in the report.*) Such figures indicate to those interested in the management and maintenance  
(*contd. on p. 16*)

The weather was excellent and the course was in wonderful condition, thanks to Jack Moore and his staff. Also many thanks to the Steward and Stewardess for the way they looked after us with solid and liquid refreshment. It is many years since we played there and the course has been extended in length and layout. One gentleman I would like to thank is Mr Neil Prior, of Sutton & Son, for the wonderful work he did for me with the cards, etc. I felt I could go and play the game with no worry about the work I had left for him to do inside. Thank you, Mr Prior.

#### Prize Winners

The following were the prize winners:—

1st prize and President's Shield was won by A. Price of Carmarthen Golf Club with a nett aggregate of 103 for 28 holes.

2nd prize, a Ronson Lighter, given by Pattison & Co. Ltd., was won by E. J. Thompson with a nett 103½.

3rd prize, a bottle of whisky, given by R. S. Bird, Vice-President, was won by J. Rees, with a nett 106, won on the last 9 holes.

4th prize, a bottle of gin, won by S. Tucker with a nett 106.

Many thanks to our able trade firms, golf clubs and people who have helped to make our meeting such a success — again many thanks to you all.

(contd. from p. 8)

of golf course turf the potential development of serious problems.

#### Challenge to superintendents!

The superintendent will, as in the past, be expected to meet the new challenges on his horizon. Again, he will be aided by research, education and the men providing services, equipment and products. Tools now at the disposal of the golf course superintendent will become even more sophisticated. It will be up to the superintendent to master these tools, recognize increasingly complicated production problems, supervise the operation of engineering marvels of equipment, provide in-service training for employees, and plan and organize functional work programs. He remains the key to turn the technical advances in his field into industrial progress. All phases of future turf industry growth will provide the opportunities for professional advancement. How well he

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can perform the complicated and demanding tasks placed upon him will determine whether he will sink or swim in the area of golf course maintenance.

*With acknowledgements to  
the "Golf Superintendent"*

#### California Greenery

In the United States, *California ranks first in total number of golf courses.* The state's 663rd course was recently opened for play at Carmel. That was the same course honoured as the 10,000th in the country. New York—with 641 courses—is running a close second, followed by Pennsylvania with 567, Illinois with 464, and Michigan with 460.

But while California has the most courses, the Pacific coast area also has the highest ratio of players per course with 36,982. Other areas of the United States shape up like this: South, 21,801; North-east, 20,190; South-west, 18,733; Mid-west, 14,721; and Mountain, 14,092.