

Midwest Association Notes

Editor's Note: This is another article in the continuing series that appeared in the early editions of The Bulletin of the United States Golf Association Green Section. This month's article appeared in Vol. 5, No. 3, April 1937. It is interesting reading on the rate of pay at that time.

A special committee, composed of C.Z. Tregillus, Chairman, Peter Stewart and Harold Clemeans, reported on golf course labor conditions. Following are extracts from their report:

"It appears to be the consensus of opinion of the clubs reporting (the committee sent questionnaires to each member of the Association asking for informa-

tion based on 1936 operations) that a raise in wages for 1937 is logical and consistent with the advancing rise in the cost of living. Most of the clubs advanced their rate of pay in 1936, and propose another raise for this coming year as a fair way of dealing with their employees.

"It has been suggested from one source that golf clubs pay their help on a monthly basis. There is much to commend this plan, and the experience of clubs using this system is that it makes for a better feeling on the part of the men, and yet it does not increase the budget appreciably. There is always a certain amount of inside work to be done on rainy days, and only in prolonged wet spells are the men caught up with their chores.

"The indications for 1937 wage scales have not been definitely disclosed as yet except that a number of clubs in the north district have announced a base scale of \$5.00 per full day. In most cases this is for an eight-hour day though in others a nine-hour day is planned. The merits of an eight or nine are divided. On courses where the work is scattered and the men have to make long trips from the golf sheds to their work on the course, a nine-hour day nets little more than eight hours labor while on the more compact and more centralized layouts, there is not the time consumed in getting to and from the various sections of the course. This is a matter difficult to standardize with fairness to all.

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"It is not a common practice to give extra time for overtime on Saturday afternoon or evening work. As a rule the men are glad to earn money that comes from additional time. If clubs were required to pay time-and-a-half or double time for overtime work, it is doubtful if much overtime would be put in as at the extra rate it would not be justified except in rather rare instances. On the other hand, when men are asked to come back in the evening or at times when they have to make a special trip at their own expense for a short spell of work, it seems only fair that their transportation expense should be made up in some way, such as adding enough time to cover this item. Sunday work is generally recognized as justly warranting an extra pay and this is usually accomplished by allowing a third or a half-day's time for mowing greens and general tidying up.


"While at the outside this committee had the intention of making definite recommendations on wage scale rates for the coming season, a close study of the conditions as they exist does not justify so ambitious and sweeping a standardization. It finds that clubs operate under a wide variety of conditions and in a variety of situations. Some are located in residential sections while others are isolated in farming areas, some workmen live within a block or two of the course while others have to drive many miles, some districts are affected in the wage scale by the rates paid to the organized labor trades while others are outside this influence. These and many other factors have their effect in determining the wage scale that individual clubs can offer their employees. It is not out of place to mention at this point that in general, clubs work on a definite budget, and there is so much allotted for course maintenance which can be spent in two ways—many men doing hand work fair to expert

mechanics, accomplishing the same end with power driven machinery. This brings up another vital point and that is this, that if golf labor is to be classified, we must recognize that the mechanic-greensman should not be rated with the hand mower greensman. If the golf clubs should establish wage rates for the district, consideration should be given those clubs who carry a number of men who do not run power machinery, as these men are not entitled to as high rates. Many greenkeepers like to have each man versatile in all operations, but on almost every course there are old hands who are unable to handle the newer equipment. For these a lower rate should be established by those clubs who would wish to take advantage of it."

Fortunately, the date of the last Midwest meeting coincided with Dr. Monteith's stop-over at Chicago, en route on an 18-day western trip.

In Dr. Monteith's talk at the meeting, he touched upon the Green Section's work and pointed out the need for further research. At the conclusion of his talk, he was peppered with questions, mostly in connection with the recent work on weed control.


In discussing the Midwest Turf Garden at Lasker's Estate, Monteith stated that the Section could furnish very little aid, and that probably the work there would have to be entirely discontinued.

A ray of hope for the revival of the garden lies in the plan of the Chicago District Golf Association to raise subscriptions to continue this work. It is sincerely hoped that something definite can be worked out to continue the Midwest Garden as it serves the need of additional research work in the Midwest section. 

Brett Hultquist -N- Mill Creek G.C.

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Hultquist family to escape up to their cottage on Lake Montello in Wisconsin. Brett, good luck in finding a replacement for Jason, and if you can't make it up to your cottage as much, I'll be more than happy to fill in.

Given the unpredictable weather in April, we have to hope we won't lose our home opener. So take me out to the golf course, take me out to Mill Creek. I'm not sure about the availability of peanuts and crackerjack, but just remember, if your team doesn't win, now that's a shame. 

Director's Column

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providing feature articles, Super 'n' Site profiles, and human-interest articles that help keep our magazine OUR magazine, and among the best in the profession. During the GCSAA convention in Orlando, I was amazed at the number of newsletter editors from across the nation who knew Fred and thanked him for allowing them to reprint articles from *On Course* in their own newsletters. The willingness to share information is one of the strengths of this association; *On Course* represents us well in this mission.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions and assistance of the members of the Editorial Committee: John Gurke, Jim McNair, Ray Schmitz, Dr. Randy Kane, Dan Anderson, Mike Mumper, Paul Yerkes, Pat Norton, Luke Cella, Larry Tomaszewski and David Braasch (I told you it was a big group). Without your participation, the magazine wouldn't be where it is today. Hold on guys, it's going to be an interesting ride. You know how stern Fred could be when it came to deadlines? Well, don't mess with Cathy—she goes right for the ice pick. 