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Chronology of Olympia Fields C.C....

(continued from page 20)

certain recommendations and advice. In doing so, I realize full well that each committee learns by its own mistakes and that the advice from one committee to another is usually of more benefit to the giver than to the recipient. However, our recommendations, are:

(1) Do not neglect or lower the standard of maintenance of our golf courses. Fight with the Finance Committee, fight with the Treasurer, fight with the board of Governors, but secure an adequate appropriation for the proper maintenance of the courses. The members will support you.

(2) Keep abreast of the developments in the art of greens and course maintenance. Keep in close touch with the Greens Section of the U.S. Golf Association, and particularly the subsection recently established in the Chicago District. Remember that

every year progress is being made in methods of treating turf diseases, development of more efficient fertilizers and the propagation of new strains of grasses. Avail yourselves of all the latest knowledge in golf course maintenance.

(3) Watch your greens with never-ceasing vigilance. They are the final test of a golf course. Watch the development, perhaps doing some experimenting of your own, of velvet bent. If you can find some reasonably economical manner of propagating velvet bent and can give the members a few velvet bent greens, they will rise up and call you blessed.

(4) Continue to beautify the courses. Plant each fall at least a few trees and some shrubbery. Continue the policy of screening with shrubbery unsightly places around the courses and breaking up with trees and shrubs the open areas.

(5) Adopt and stick to a program of

fairway fertilizing. We cannot continue year after year taking everything out of the soil and putting nothing back in. Unless fertilized, in the course of time, the fairways will seriously deteriorate. They have done so at other clubs. Once lost, it takes years of time and much money to restore them.

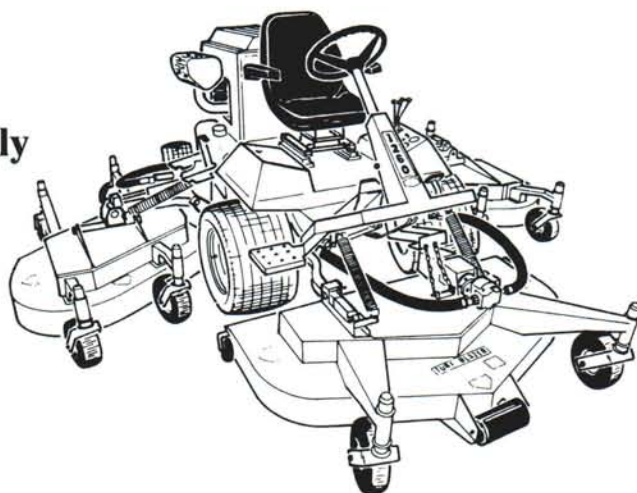
(6) When the finances of the club permit it, extend the fairway watering system to at least one other course.

(7) Insist on an adequate budget, and then for your conscience's sake try to keep within your budget. To do so will serve no purpose except your own satisfaction. After the close of the fiscal year, the auditors and the treasurer will find some way by "inventory adjustments," or the inclusion in your account of extraneous items, of making you appear to have gone over your budget. Treasurers and auditors have always done so and probably always will do so. But you yourself

(continued on page 24)

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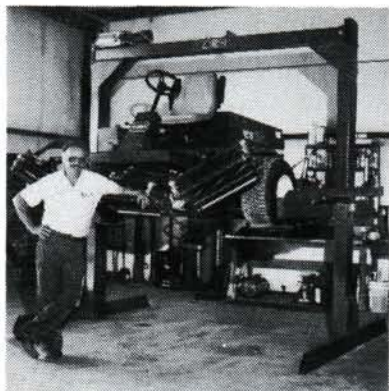
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Chronology of Olympia Fields C....

(continued from page 22)

will have the satisfaction of knowing you have at least kept close to your budget.

Finally, on behalf of the committee, we wish to thank the members for their co-operation, their patient indulgence with our mistakes and their frequent kindly expressed appreciation of our efforts.

The Depression Years

1930

The 1930 growing season was marked by a severe heat and drought. Many Chicago clubs suffered extensive turf loss. Washington bentgrass greens held up better than mixed grass greens. At Olympia, 42 of the 72 greens were bentgrass and 30 were mixed grasses. Seven greens had been badly affected and needed to be rebuilt or resodded. The problem appeared after excessive moisture

was followed by excessive heat. Charles Bartlet publicized the problem in an August 4 article in the Chicago Tribune. He quoted John Megregor, greenkeeper at Chicago Golf Club and first vice-president of the National Association of Greenkeepers: "*Poa annua* was hit hard on the greens because of its shallow roots and also because of close cutting." Nineteen-thirty was the driest season on record and was the year many considered the beginning of the Dust Bowl. In November 1930, construction began on an 80-ft. toboggan slide and a skating rink to inaugurate a winter sports program. By December 1930, there had been 1,300 bank closures nationwide since the stock market crashed.

1931

Grounds expenditures for the year totaled \$67,815. Nineteen thirty-one was considered the hottest on record and was another poor year

for Chicago greenkeepers.

1932

September 30, Superintendent Fred Kruger's house burned down.

1933

January 30, Adolph Hitler became chancellor of Germany. In March, FDR launched the New Deal. In June, irrigation was installed on the fairways of course No.1 by the Olympia grounds crew. Steel pipes were buried down the center of the fairway with snap valves every 100 ft. so that no more than 50 ft. of hose would be needed for coverage. Trenches were hand dug about 1 ft. deep. Members were concerned about hitting a ball onto the snap valves. A club mathematician figured chances were 1 in 90,000, or once every 3,333 rounds of this happening. In August, MacDonald Smith won the Western Open, held on the No.4 course, with a 280. In December, Prohibition ended.

(continued on page 28)

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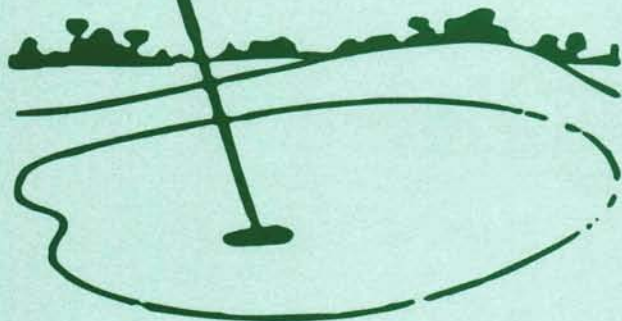
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DATES TO REMEMBER

March 10 — MAGCS monthly meeting at Poplar Creek C.C.

March 31 — Annual Gin Tournament, Hackney's Restaurant, Wheeling, at noon.

April 21 — MAGCS monthly meeting at Mount Prospect G.C.

May 19 — Joint Association meeting at Cantigny G. C.

May 30 - June 1 — Ameritech Open at Kemper Lakes G.C.

June 2 — MAGCS monthly meeting at Rolling Green C.C.

June 23-29 — 1997 U.S. Senior Open at Olympia Fields C.C.

July 7 — MAGCS monthly meeting at Orchard Valley G.C.

August 14 — MAGCS monthly meeting at Bartlett Hills G.C.

August 24 — MAGCS Family Outing at Kane County Cougars Baseball

Bruce Williams has resigned from Bob O'Link G.C. and will be the new superintendent at the Los Angeles C.C. on April 1. Bruce, we will miss you here in the Midwest, but best of luck to you and your family.

Mission Hills C.C. is looking for a spray technician. Please call John Otis at 847-498-3212.

Peter Ryan is looking for an assistant's position. His phone number is 630-851-6914. Editor has resume on file if anyone would like to have it faxed to them.

For Sale: Toro hydraulic 690, 670 and 650 sprinkler bodies complete with gear drives. VT II central and VT II control clocks, also miscellaneous irrigation parts. Every item is clean and sorted. 1989 Neary bedknife grinder, model 200, great shape, asking \$750. Call Mike Vercautren at Butterfield C.C., 630-323-2734.

Atwood G.C. in Rockford has installed a new irrigation system, and they have the following parts for sale: Rainbird 808 and 707 heads, Rainbird and Buckner 66 riser valves and Rainbird 66 keys. Call John Cooper at 815-623-2213 for quantities and prices.

Joilet C.C. is looking for an assistant superintendent. Please send resume to Mark Kowaliczko, 1009 Spencer Road, Joliet, IL 60433.

Dayton Ridge G.C. in Ottawa, IL, is looking for a mechanic with experience in small engine repair, Call Todd Verbout at 815-434-0145.

Michael Sprouse, superintendent at Randall Oaks G.C., has convinced his park district and the pro at his club that spikless golf shoes are the way to go. The pro

has directed his shoe suppliers to send only spikless golf shoes in the future. The customers are told if they don't like them after a round of golf, metal spikes will be installed free of charge.

For Sale: Cushman engine with exhaust. \$600 or best offer. Call Mike or Mel at Inverness G.C., 847-358-7030.

Wanted: Allis Chalmers golf cart, any condition. Call Verlyn at 847-835-0215.

Joe Meyer is the new superintendent at Gregg's Landing in Vernon Hills. Joe is the assistant to Jim Evans at Tumberry C.C. (Joe starts April 1). Congratulations, Joe.

Congratulations to Karen and Brian Thompson on the birth of their second son. Colin was born on December 23, 1996.

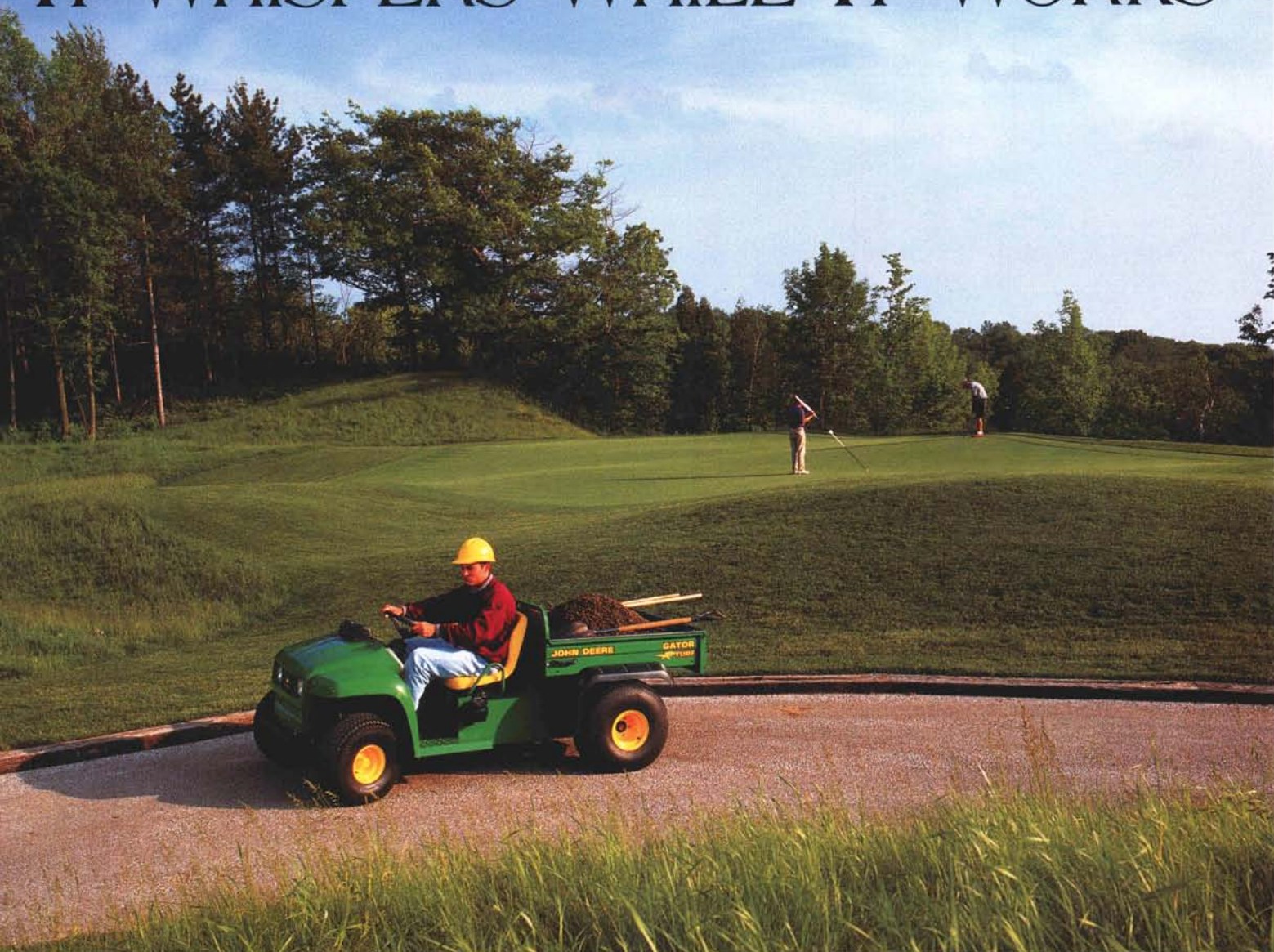
Assistant needed: Contact Kerry Blatteau at Oak Brook Hills Resort, 3500 Midwest Road, Oak Brook, IL 60522 or call 630-323-7633. Position available April 1, 1997.

Two positions available March 1, 1997: Assistant and a mechanic. Full time benefits. Contact Patrick McDonagh, RedTail Golf Club (formerly Lakewood G.C.) 815-459-1589.

Welcome back to Pat McDonagh, the new superintendent at the former Lakewood G.C., now renamed the RedTail G.C. Pat worked for Scott Nissley a few years ago and then took a superintendents job in Pennsylvania for a couple of years.

Job opening for a golf course mechanic at Nordic Hills Golf Course in Itasca, IL. Anybody interested should call Vince Dodge at 630-773-2750, ext. 2138.

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1934

The grounds budget was reduced to \$46,000. Each member was asked to donate \$20 to install fairway irrigation on No.2 and No.3 courses. About 80% of the 745 members participated. The new systems were installed in the fall at a cost of \$15,000. Thirty-three thousand feet of welded steel pipe were installed by the grounds crew. Nineteen thirty-four was another dry year during the worst of the Dust Bowl. The Bird and Forestry Committee, active since 1917, was abolished with responsibilities going to the Grounds Department.

1935

A membership drive was started offering \$150 initiation fee and no dues for a year. Grubs became a problem on fairways. Professor Lunch, entomologist from University of Illinois recommended plowing up and

mechanically killing the grubs in area of two fairways on No.3 course. Seven-gang fairway units were modified to nine-gang units to save money. Greens were now mowed with three-gang mowers. The USGA Greens Sections may be abandoned due to lack of money as clubs fail to renew their memberships. The caddies threatened, but then canceled, a strike. A popular form of entertainment for the waiting caddies was boxing. A regulation ring was installed and boxing gloves were provided.

1938

The club reorganized about \$500,000 worth of debt left over from the "Greater Olympia Plan" for the construction of the clubhouse. Superintendent Fred Kruger won first prize at the National Greenkeepers Association Convention in Cincinnati for a 3-D model reproduction of the 13th hole of the North Course. The model was formed on a 3x3 ft.

board with a scale of 4 ft. = 1 in. with greens, traps, tees, trees, etc. After many years of debate, the club installed a swimming pool for \$25,000.

1939

DDT was discovered by a Swiss scientist.

1940

Fred Kruger died in August. A memorial tree was planted in his honor. (The location of the tree is not known.)

1941

John Boettger was hired as grounds superintendent. (Boettger would later move to Idlewild Country Club, Joliet Country Club and then the Park Forest municipal course.) Boettger worked for Fred Kruger for twenty years. He was assisted by Melvin Warnecke who went on

(continued on page 30)

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Chronology of Olympia Fields C.C.... (continued from page 28)

to be a superintendent of some fame in the Atlanta area. Warnecke was a fifteen-year grounds employee and may have been married to Fred Kruger's daughter. The grounds budget was \$48,000, and the crew numbered 48 men. Fairways were cut every other day, with the sicklebar mower used for roughs. One tractor was equipped with headlights for night spraying. Eight power mowers and seven hand mowers were used for cutting greens and tees. Fungicide treatments were applied bi-weekly. Arsenate of lead was used for grub control.

December 7, 1941

Pearl Harbor was attacked; the United States was at war!

The War Years

1942

The first controlled nuclear reaction occurred in a laboratory under the grandstands at Amos Alanzo Stagg Field at the University of Chicago.

1943

Olympia Fields Country Club was in poor financial conditions. The club could not pay off its reorganized debt. Membership was down due to the war. Many people considered playing golf unpatriotic. There was a golf ball shortage due to the rationing of rubber. Old golf balls were collected and remanufactured. The USGA began an advertising campaign to promote golf as a patriotic activity to keep people physically fit...as long as a horse-drawn vehicle or public transportation was used to get to the golf course. Pierce Vandercook, Pete Vandercook's father, became a member of the Olympia Fields Country Club Green Committee. Of the original 500 charter members, only 21 were left after 33 years. Club officials decided to sell off about half of the club's property, leaving two courses. The fourth course, now the North Course,

remained intact. The No.1 course (South) was modified using some of the holes of No.2 and No.3 courses.

1944

The club was in the process of reorganizing. The original plan for rerouting the South Course was altered. Holes 1 and 18 of the No.2 course became 8 and 9 of the South Course. Holes 5 and 6 of the No.1 course were abandoned; and No.7, a short par 4, became a 200 yard par 3. Number 1 and 18 of the No.3 course became the practice range. Members raised \$300,000 to save the club.

June 6, 1944

D-Day. The Allies landed at Normandy. ■

Director's Column

(continued from page 4)

due to the terrific support, we had an expanded menu. Thanks again to the vendors who made this possible.

In closing, I hope everyone has enjoyed the "off season" and prepared themselves for the upcoming golf year. I know being a more active member of the MAGCS has made my job more rewarding, and I encourage anyone interested to become more involved. A few Ed Braunsky jokes is a small price to pay for all that the MAGCS has to offer. ■

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