



When you go into Old Elm's clubhouse this is the pleasing sight that greets you. The idea has lots of details that other clubs could imitate to good advantage.

Five Hundred Million Dollars!

—is Value of Country's Golf Clubs, Returns
from GOLFDOM'S Survey Show

BASED on 23 per cent returns from GOLFDOM'S entire list of United States golf clubs, estimates on the amount invested and spent annually at the country's golf clubs now are available.

GOLFDOM has good reason to believe that the figures presented herewith are the most accurate ever compiled for the golf field. The averages are figured on a conservative basis in every instance and we are reasonably certain that the totals are in excess of the figures we give, for responses from the larger clubs were 8 per cent fewer than the general average of responses. This is to be expected as the amount of secretarial work handled at the larger clubs is so heavy that requests for statistical information don't get the at-

tention the statisticians would like to see granted. However, from the 1926 annual statements of 30 of the largest clubs in the United States we have ample indications that our estimates are conservative. The statement of Olympia Fields Country club (in the Chicago District) gives the club's fixed assets as of October 31, 1927, \$1,709,973.06. This is one of the representative cases of the larger clubs that are not figures in this survey, and which would increase the figures substantially on the 18-hole clubs.

Results Summarized

Averages for 18-hole and for 9-hole clubs, as determined from the figures supplied GOLFDOM, follow:

18-Hole Club Averages

Number of members	318
Annual income	\$ 43,934
Annual maintenance expense ...	\$ 15,319
Annual course equipment expenditure	\$ 1,753
Annual house operating expense ..	\$ 15,027
Annual pro shop income	\$ 7,377
Value of club land and clubhouse	\$240,295

9-Hole Club Averages

Number of members	115
Annual income	\$ 6,092
Annual maintenance expense ...	\$ 2,923
Annual course equipment expenditure	\$ 530
Annual house operating expense ..	\$ 1,969
Annual pro shop income	\$ 1,725
Value of club land and clubhouse	\$ 49,100

GOLFDOM'S list of golf clubs is undoubtedly the most complete and most accurate ever compiled. It shows 1,501 18-hole clubs in the United States and 3,298 9-hole clubs. On this basis, the golf clubs of the country have invested in their club ground and clubhouses \$522,614,595. The actual figures undoubtedly will run considerably in excess for the older clubs in the larger cities have property of astonishing value. Again taking the Olympia Fields County club as an example; there was reported an offer, some months ago, of \$4,000 an acre for this club's property, consisting of 720 acres. This would make a total of \$2,880,000 for the club's property alone, and on it the club has a clubhouse that cost \$1,250,000 furnished, a \$70,000 building for the employees and countless other capital improvements that make the club's fixed asset figure in its statement a conservative one. Edgewater Golf club (Chicago district) has property that is very conservatively figured at \$10,000 an acre. The case at Detroit of a golf club's land value being made fabulously valuable by the growth of the city, is another citation to indicate the conservatism of GOLFDOM'S figures.

With respect to the smaller clubs, remarkably few were on leased land, contrary to our expectations. The fact that golf experienced its greatest growth during the last decade and benefited from the established metropolitan standards reaching out to the lively smaller towns and cities, may account for what is, to us, an impressive showing of the 9-hole clubs in fixed assets. Capital investment at some

of the representative 9-hole clubs is: Stafford, N. Y., \$115,000; Marietta, Ga., \$50,000; Shelbyville, Ind., \$50,000; Decatur, Ill., \$75,000; Berea, O., \$60,000; Beloit, Wis., \$50,000; Sandusky, O., \$75,000; Brook, Ind., \$50,000; Tyrone, Pa., \$60,000; Waukesha, Wis., \$45,000; Oneida, N. Y., \$50,000; DeKalb, Ill., \$100,000; Kittanning, Pa., \$92,000.

It seems probable that the capital investment in smaller town golf clubs is due for an increase per club as one of the marked trends is toward a first class course serving several neighboring small towns rather than indifferently constructed and maintained courses in each of the towns.

Maintenance Expense

There is a wide variation in annual maintenance expense of all golf courses. On some of the 18-hole courses of the better character records picked at random from the returns show \$35,000, \$20,000, \$18,000, \$19,000, \$15,000, \$10,000, \$12,000, \$26,000, \$9,000, \$32,000. California annual maintenance figures run higher, as a general rule, than the figures for clubs in other parts of the country, due to the fairway watering charges. In some cases we happened to know the situations at the clubs reporting and suspect that the figures in these instances were high because of several new greens having been installed.

The item of labor plays the biggest part in determining annual maintenance expense. In the larger centers where course labor of the proper kind is difficult to get and expensive, the maintenance figures are necessarily higher. We figure that labor and watering expenses take approximately 74 per cent of the annual maintenance money of the average metropolitan district 18-hole course.

The widest sort of variation is present in the annual maintenance expense of the 9-hole courses. One of the reporting 9-hole clubs showed an annual maintenance expense of \$125, while there were 181 9-hole clubs reporting annual maintenance expenses ranging from \$6,500 to \$12,000.

Club Income

Club income per member figures with 18-hole courses, \$138.14 a year, and with the 9-hole clubs a few cents less than \$53 annually. Considering that 20 per cent would be a reasonable estimate of member accounts that are active only to a very limited extent, these figures show with some degree of accuracy the annual cost of golf

per player, without taking into consideration the cost of golf clothes and other items not purchased through the club.

Pro Income

Members who have the idea that their professionals are making magnificent incomes, would be amazed to see the figures on pro shop incomes which are considerably below the popular ideas and give an indication of the buying support the pros should have from their clubs. Very few of the figures are what might be termed "fancy." One club with one 18-hole course reports a \$35,000 gross annual business from its pro shop. At the smaller clubs there is a very wide range with apparently no base figure.

House Operating Figure

In the figures on house operating expenses we got a couple of surprises. In the first place we have heard so many complaints from green-chairmen and greenkeepers about money being budgeted lavishly to the house committee and stinted to the green committee that we got the

idea that such a situation prevailed generally. The figures show that the annual maintenance expense for 18-hole courses exceeds the house operating expense \$292, and for 9-hole courses \$954 a year.

Playground Group Issues Municipal Golf Book

MUNICIPAL Golf: Construction and Administration, a 47 page handbook, has been issued by the Playground and Recreation Association of America, 315 Fourth avenue, New York. The price of the booklet is 50 cents.

The booklet is intended as a general guide to private groups or municipal bodies interested in supplying public golf.

Among the topics discussed are—selecting the site, problems of layout, suggestions for construction, seeding and watering the course, club houses, problems of administration, methods of financing, operating costs, reservations and a brief bibliography.



Use Local Materials When Landscaping

FROM the standpoint of appearance and economy, benches, shelters, bridges and other landscaping features about the course should be constructed of local material. Limbs of trees fallen or cut down to make way for improvements should be saved and utilized whenever possible.

Here, for example, is a bridge where white birch has been used for the bridge railing. How much better this looks than if ordinary painted 2 x 4 rails had been used. The rustic flower box in the center background is another appropriate type of landscape feature.