

Preparing for the Season's Opening

By **BOB DUGUID**

Greenkeeper, Evanston (Ill.) Golf Club

IF THE most is to be made of the season's work it is not a bad idea to make an eleventh hour check-up to see if any of the winter's work has been neglected.

There should be completed, prior to the opening, a very thorough overhauling of the course equipment. Replacements and repairs should be made so there will be no slowing up of the activities from the time the season starts. Getting the force on the job a little earlier gives one time to make sure that everything is ship-shape. I have found that it is profitable to have on my force men who are able to do good jobs of overhauling the motorized equipment of the course, the mowers and other maintenance equipment, during the winter months. In a great many cases motor equipment can be put in perfect running order without sending motors or other parts to automobile repair shops. It is no great task to take a tractor engine apart, grind the valves, renew the piston rings, tighten the bearings and make minor adjustments, and if maintenance costs are to be kept down, this work is imperative before the season opens. Then your equipment is in shape to run through the season with only ordinary servicing.

Such servicing may bring out some machinery fault not noticeable on the surface but which might cause vexatious and costly delays during the working period on the course. You have to have confidence in your equipment if your work is to be done right.

The mowers require very careful inspection. Worm gears should be replaced and reels sharpened. I use an electrically operated sharpener which, although apparently costly, gives ample satisfaction for the outlay by practically paying for itself in one season, leaving its future use as clear profit.

Tee boxes, flagpoles, benches, ball washers, markers and similar equipment should

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be examined for needed replacements and repairs, as it always happens that several of these items do not survive the winter in proper shape for continued service.

Rotary screens, compost distributors, pumps, hole cutters and all other such items would not suffer from this policing-up operation. Paint should be liberally used in getting equipment ready for the season's service.

While this is going on, some attention might be given to a general tidy appearance about barns and sheds, as waste matter accumulates in unsightly masses around these places.

All tools should be set in places where they will be accessible, and instructions issued that each should be returned to its proper place after use.

A list of all material which will be needed for the season should be prepared. This includes mowers, seeds, fertilizers, hose, sprinklers, sprayers, worm eradicators, etc. If your supplies and equipment are ordered through the green-chairman this list should be turned over to him at once so that everything will be on hand when wanted.

Whenever possible sand should be hauled directly to the traps while the ground is hard as this will avoid a great deal of expense incurred when the sand is delivered to a central point and then re-handled by your own workmen.

Trees and shrubs should have been pruned during the winter, and if you have a power sprayer the dormant spray should have been put on at that time, and all dead limbs cut out. See to it that all your frames are in readiness for your spring flowers.

These various items have another value which should not be passed over in the winter work in preparation for the opening; besides giving definitely constructive work to the greenkeeper and his winter staff, it gives to the responsible club officers a confidence in their workmen which helps to increase the pleasure in belonging to a smoothly running organization and the satisfaction that comes to any business organization from utilizing efficiently all available labor supply. This preparatory work also has the virtue of ironing out, prior to the season's opening, any possible friction among the members of the force, getting the working personnel aligned for most effective results and assuring the harmony necessary to the business-like operation of any club.

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