

I Was Green-Chairman and Got Along O. K., Because—

By SPENCER M. DUTY

JUST why should a man who is trying to better the course be made "a goat?" My observation as a green-chairman indicates that happily in these enlightened days there is not the "martyrdom" that used to be considered part of the green-chairman's job.

Now, while during my term of office we tore up the fair ways during June and July, put in some 32,000 feet of tile, rebuilt greens with all the trouble of playing on temporary greens, and built some new holes while we were rebuilding others, still I can not say that I was a martyr or that I was the subject of very much abuse.

Most of the time the work was of a great amount of friendly interest on the part of the members and they went out of their way to thank me for my efforts. My experience was that members kick more about caddies and starting time. If a member cannot get a caddy he lets out a yell, if a tournament is being held and he cannot start off at once he has a kick which he will forget all about in a short time.

When most men play golf they become boys again and they want to have a boy's right to kick. Of course if they miss a putt it is the fault of the green. I wish I could putt well enough to lay it onto the green when I miss and hope to get away with it.

Tell Your Problems

Once in a great while some member starts to kick and in time will affect others. As a rule it is without any reason and just because he has gotten into the habit. When we are sure who it was as a rule we went after him and without exception it would result in changing him to a booster. A little information as to our problems, what we were trying to do and why, made all the difference in the world.

With what I have heard of the troubles of green-chairmen I wonder if I have just been lucky. Without doubt I have been in two respects; first the character of our

members, we have few natural kickers; second and the most important, our pro, Jack Way, who has charge of the course, is rightly popular with the members who have great confidence in his judgment and ability.

Perhaps in another way, not by my desire, I have been lucky. I am a very poor player which fact I am sorry to say is quite generally known by our members. I have noticed that the medium and poor players are free to ask for information and seem to appreciate being "in the know."

While it has generally been assumed that the green-chairman should be a good player I have wondered if the good player does not let himself in for a lot of trouble that the poorer player escapes. Just because a man can not play well himself is no reason why he should not understand the game, golf course construction and maintenance. It is a simple matter for the poor player to prove to the good player that he has not the first idea what makes a good course. Let him carefully read "The Links," by Robert Hunter, Jr., and he can run the good player who thinks he knows it all clear off the map and have him yelling for mercy. Add to that, the book by Geo. Thomas, Jr., GOLFDOM, the Green Section Bulletin and the Greenkeepers Magazine, and all the other articles that appear, and when the good player starts in on the poor player who is green-chairman with the idea of giving him a lesson, it is just another case of turning him upside down. After a little while you can go around looking for them.

This all makes a hit with the great majority of the members who become sure that the good player is not going to be allowed to spoil the course for them. This seems to be a very real fear on the part of the average member; he is afraid of the good player and his suggestions. There is a basis for this feeling, follow the suggestions of the good player and frequently the course will be spoiled for everybody himself included. Most of the members hardly expect that their suggestions will be followed, what they want is to have

them treated with respect and some explanation as to why they will not work.

I really do not see why the chairman of a green-committee should have a rough time. Personally I had a lot of fun while holding the job, with a small amount of trouble. Both Jack Way and I tried in all our changes to keep the rights of all classes of players in mind. There seems to be no doubt but that this attitude on our part has been recognized and appreciated by our members.

A Brief on Renovating Poor Turf

*By E. E. EVAUL

BEFORE reseeding or resodding turf that is thin or bare, find out the reason for such conditions and correct them. In trying to locate the reason or reasons for failure of your turf, the following list of "Turf Trouble Hints" may be of some aid.

1. Is the surface and sub-surface drainage adequate?
2. Is the soil texture as good as it should be?
3. Is there enough organic matter in the soil?
4. Is the water-holding capacity too high or too low?
5. Is the soil reaction too low?
6. Is the soil too compact as a result of rolling?
7. Is the grass that I am growing adapted to my soil and climate?
8. Is there enough plant food for normal growth?
9. Is the fertilizer, insecticide, or fungicide application too heavy for this time of year?
10. Is the poor condition of the turf due to grub injury?
11. Is the disease condition checked and under control?
12. Is my condition due to the presence or removal of weeds?

After the trouble has been located by means of the above trouble hints, some "Rules for Rejuvenation" should be of value. They may be stated briefly as follows:

1. Correct any poorly drained areas, either by regrading or tilling.

*At Rutgers University greenkeeping short course.

2. Correct soil texture and water-holding capacity.

- (1) Organic matter and clay will be found useful on sandy soils.
- (2) Organic matter and sand will be found useful on clayey soils.

3. Level and roll the area to be reseeded or resodded.

4. Scarify this area in all directions.

- (1) This will work out old grass and weeds, and also loosen up the soil.
- (2) A spike roller is a handy tool for this operation.

5. Mix the right seed for your conditions with screened topsoil or like material and then reseed, rake and roll lightly.

6. If sod is used in place of seed, cut sod in convenient size strips of equal thickness.

- (1) Lay as soon as possible after cutting.
- (2) Tamp the sod well.
- (3) Top-dress in order to fill up all cracks.
- (4) Make allowance for settling.

7. Water reseeded or re-sodded area thoroughly.

- (1) A light water soon evaporates and leaves a cracked and crusty surface.

8. After grass is up a few days or has started to grow, a light application of a nitrogenous fertilizer applied in solution will hasten growth.

9. Follow best maintenance practices.

- (1) Regular mowing and top-dressing.
- (2) Removal of clippings when disease is present.
- (3) Water and fertilizer when needed.

10. Establish a sod nursery.

- (1) Area for greens, fairways, and tees.
- (2) Every course should have one.

A. J. Wilder, Young Greenkeeper, Ends Life at Rochester, N. Y.

ALBERT J. WILDER, greenkeeper at Oak Hill C. C., Rochester, N. Y., was found dead from poison, self-administered, on his course May 14. Wilder was 28 years old and a fine lad with a bright career apparently ahead of him. He had a fine record at Kirtland, where he broke into greenkeeping, and at Fenimore where he later located up to the first of this year.