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GOLFDOM

The Business Journal of Golf
236 North Clark St., Chicago

Larger and Lighter Ball Official Jan. 1, 1931

JUST after a lot of the self-designated "wise ones" had settled upon retention of the present 1.62-1.62 golf ball, the real authorities announced, through the official spokesman, Herbert Jacques, chairman of the implements and ball committee of the U. S. G. A., that subsequent to January 1, 1931, the new "larger and lighter" ball must be used in all tournaments under the jurisdiction of the association.

The new ball is to be not less than 1.68 inches in diameter and not heavier than 1.55 ounces.

Although the announcement of the new ball was unexpected by the ball manufacturers when it was made, May 10, the makers were by no means unprepared as they have been doing considerable research work with the new ball ever since its probable specifications became known. Tests of the new ball are said by several of the leading manufacturers to show that it has no appreciable difference in length, and for this reason will not influence course architecture in the matter of reducing length and in the consequent possible reduction of maintenance expense. To what extent the new ball may effect the trapping of courses, with the prevailing winds taken into consideration, is still a matter of conjecture. The difference in length is stated to be only two yards in every hundred of the average drive. The new ball sits up nicely on the turf, and because of this may permit more leeway in fairway maintenance. Its tests also reveal that it holds well on the green in approaching, and is all a ball could be in putting characteristics.

With two full seasons left to dispose of balls now in stock, the distribution and selling difficulties attendant upon a change in the ball are left for time to iron out for the ball manufacturer and pro, and it is expected that the decks will be cleared for the gala entry of the new official sphere when it makes its debut with the new year, 1931. It is impossible to hazard even a good guess at the manufacturers' expenditure the adoption of the new standard involves. One manufacturer stated that the sum might be as high as \$500,000, although he took pains to make it plain that this was only a guess. The dies for golf balls are costly, and the probable changes in manufacturing methods are not going to be put through without considerable expense.