



The new 146 yard No. 13 green at Inverness; a stiffly trapped and attractively adorned specimen of the changes made since the 1920 Open was held here.

## *Right Men, Then Good Machinery, Are Rocky's Success Secrets*

Concluding the reflections of  
**WILLIAM J. ROCKEFELLER**

*Veteran Greenkeeper at Inverness C. C.*

As told to Ashley N. Chandler

**W**HAT are the fundamental practices by which we have produced the conditions existing at Inverness?

This is the course upon which the Open Championship of 1920 was held, when big "Ted" Ray, of Oxhey, England captured the cup and took it 3,000 miles away to his island home. It is of prime importance that the superior playing conditions existing in 1920 be equal to or even better in 1931 for the Open Championship is coming to Inverness again. The very best of Great Britain will be there too; therefore, our expert golfers must turn them back this time and have no alibi that could remotely be charged to course conditions. There were none in 1920 and we take pride in predicting there will be none in 1931.

We state, with justifiable pride, that, for

example, no better putting surfaces exist anywhere than the Inverness greens today. Everything at Inverness is a development through the years. This is equally true of our bent grass greens. Their quality of velvety and upstanding fineness is an Inverness product born and developed through the years from hardy stock sown 30 years ago—the Rhode Island bent, crossed with the very best of more recently developed strains. So, in answering the question about "what practices," I really need to mention the fact that I have had the responsibility of bringing up Inverness' course. Because of this fact, this statement is the only way of explaining why I know how it has come about, and so I repeat, with even stronger emphasis, Inverness represents a development and not

one of those so-called "miracle courses" the greens of which were born over night, reared upon rich food and so lacking in every hardy quality that they become the victims of every ill that closely cut grass is heir too.

### Men and Machine Combination

The human quality enters into green-keeping as well as everything else. It must be efficient. That is a first requisite. Then comes first class machinery, kept in first class condition.

While I always have promising youngsters in training who really mean to make greenkeeping their profession in life, I always have brigaded them with men having years of experience and who really know what it is all about. I will speak more of this later but wish now to turn to machinery.

I was much interested in noticing in a recent GOLFDOM that four different manufacturers were advertising the type (method) of fairway mower that I have used for many years at Inverness. I am under the impression that I really invented it as I had the first outfit of that kind in use anywhere, that I know of. I had to hand-make the entire "hook-up" frame for the separately bought mower units, that had hitherto been pulled around by horses. We bought one of the first caterpillar tractors that came out, blocked the flanges with wood and proceeded to pull those mowers up and down and sidewise on the slopes at Inverness.

Our club today owns a very efficient up-to-the-minute equipment for fairway mowing, wherewith we are mowing our championship course in one day! What make? We are not out to boost one manufacturer's business so that question must stand unanswered by us.

Doubtless the salesman is already broadcasting the sale. Well that's their legitimate business and privilege. We are getting satisfactory results with the mower outfit and that's all we are interested in. If it wasn't "making good on the job" we wouldn't have it around for a day.

In this matter of having good tools to work with and everything else effecting first class upkeep, the green-committee of Inverness and particularly its able chairman has, as a rule, through the years, gone along with me in a very fine way. At the time of the 1920 Open it was Mr. Edward J. Marshall who was chairman—a very able man in everything he undertakes. The chairman is now Mr. Frank E. Weber,

a charter member of Inverness who is giving his duties the same brand of devoted service and outstanding ability.

### Shelter the Machinery

Turning again to machinery, we always shelter and keep all of it in the best operating condition. It really should not be necessary to mention or stress this fact but it is quite astounding to notice upon some golf courses such valuable machinery standing out in all weathers. Things like this will not happen where a greens-force is properly trained and held responsible for certain machinery and tools or for the hose used in sprinkling the greens.

We have our course upkeep buildings so located at Inverness as to reduce delays to a minimum in getting "on location" with all equipment. Let me return again to the individual responsibility system with all of my men.

I wish to especially emphasize that these men must know their jobs and "what it is all about," or they won't even know enough to properly rake a bunker.

We don't believe in deep-ridging the sand in the pits. Very shallow ridges, in which the ball is not buried, but comes to a perfectly playable stop in a narrow groove, is sufficient for the game. We condemn severely trenching the sand so that only a player with very powerful wrists can flog a ball out. That is a form of golf martyrdom.

As with the greens, these bunker conditions are a definite individual responsibility at Inverness. As there are more than one hundred of these sand pits at Inverness, keeping them in proper condition is a big chore all by itself and must, of course, be systematically followed up.

### Systematic Fairway Feeding

The fairway turf at Inverness is of the best quality, in all normal years. How do we keep it so? At all needful periods, through the many years, we have systematically top-dressed all our fairways with compost from our own beds. At the time this article is written (early in October) we are doing this work. However good the fairways, they must withstand an immense amount of play. To keep that deep velvety turf condition, systematic top-dressing is essential to offset the wear and tear of a strenuous season.

We feed our putting greens when they are hungry which isn't too often—aeration, with good bank sand, oxygenizes. It has never been our policy at Inverness to have a long rough. We aim to have

# Greenkeepers Name Speakers for Columbus Meeting, Feb. 4-6

IF the list of speakers and subjects to be discussed is any indication, clubs sending their greenkeepers to attend the forthcoming National Association's convention in Columbus, February 4, 5 and 6, will reap a rich harvest.

There will be three business sessions on successive mornings during the convention with three or four speakers featured at each session. Responsibility for choosing these speakers was placed in the capable hands of President John Morley, Secretary John Quail and First Vice-President John MacGregor and their efforts have resulted in as fine a line-up of experts as has ever favored the convention.

The program, as secured by GOLFDOM from MacGregor on his return from the Executive committee meeting in New York, November 17, 18 and 19, is as follows:

"Golf Course Architecture and Construction," by Tom Winton, well known greenkeeper and golf course architect of Tuckahoe, New York. Especially in view of the scheduled reconstruction work Winston's remarks will carry practical help for greenkeepers. As one who has had to maintain courses he has built he is qualified to

speak authoritatively on the joint problems of construction and maintenance.

"Poisons in the Soil," by Prof. J. W. White of Penn State College.

"Sports Turf," by Alfred E. Lundstrum, supt., Crescent Athletic Club, Huntington, L. I. The speaker will talk on all types of sports turf, including tennis, polo, baseball, etc., in addition to golf. Al, as a veteran greenkeeper, and as the one responsible for what are said to be the world's best grass tennis courts, is a happy choice of program material.

"Why Minerals in Fertilizers?" by R. H. J. DeLoach, who is director of agricultural research for Armour Fertilizer Works, Chicago.

"Golf Course Bookkeeping," by E. W. Doty, treasurer of the Cleveland District Golf Association. Ed Doty is the field's premier enthusiast on making figures tell the story.

"Irrigation," by Joe P. Mayo, well known greenkeeper of Pebble Beach G. C., Del Monte, Cal., and closely associated with the development of fairway watering.

"Drainage," by Edward Dearie, greenkeeper of Ridgemoor C. C., Chicago. Dearie, whose articles appear frequently in GOLFDOM, is one of the leading course builders of the Middle-West and a highly successful greenkeeper.

"Growth of the Golf Plant," by Dr. Howard P. Sprague, agronomist of the New Jersey Agricultural College.

"Practical Greenkeeping," by Joseph Williamson, greenkeeper at Scioto C. C., Columbus, O. Williamson is also chairman of the Entertainment committee for the greenkeepers' convention.

Prof. Lawrence Dickenson of Mass. Agric. College is on the speakers' list, but the subject of his speech has not been announced at press time. Probable additional speakers are Martin A. Davey, president of the Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, Ohio, whose address will doubtless have to do with the care of trees; T. E. Odland, agronomist at the Kingston (N. J.) Agricultural Experiment Station; and Ganson Depew, vice-chairman of the U. S. G. A. Green Section.

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## Rocky's Road to Results.

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each fairway and green so scientifically trapped that "Wandering Willie" shots are in them and not lost in tall grass. Our Inverness members would never stand for that grief. We would regard the maintaining of long grass as a hazard, a confession of weakness in the course itself and only serving to promote anguish of spirit.

Our tees are very large and finely kept by close cutting and frequent sprinkling. On some holes, such as Number Four, there are three. This policy affords the fullest opportunity possible for an unworn spot, from which to drive. We know that the expert players of the world who visit Inverness in 1931 will delight in driving from these roomy, velvety, but firm footing, tees.