

GUIDING STARS

They See Green-

By HENRY C. THOMPSON

[Green-Chairman, Oriental C. C., Nashville, Tenn.]

A GREEN-CHAIRMAN'S major duty is keeping the players satisfied. Complete success in this is beyond human ability, though a bit of judicial lying by the green-chairman and the pro will be able to keep in a fair humor the club "grouch" who usually goes around in 100 to 120 and actually counts 90. All clubs have several such gentlemen. Next is giving the real golfer, who rarely if ever makes a complaint, the best possible putting greens and fairways and at the same time keeping within the budget allowed by the finance committee. And, brother, this committee is a "pain" to all green-chairmen, as your newly elected will soon find out.

I have been chairman of greens at the Oriental Country club for some four or five years and during that period have learned a good many valuable things, some by sad experience.

Our club is operated on a budget basis, each committee being allowed so much per month. We know what our weekly pay-roll will be, also what improvements we wish to make on greens and fairways, this information being gathered from players and our associate committee members. The cost of this work we ascertain, then take total pay-roll together with replacement of worn equipment, with cost of improvements, and add 20 per cent for emergency and the green-chairman has his budget. Then fight it out with Mr. Finance Chairman—and don't give up.

Has Club P. A.

Our club found that by appointing a purchasing agent, one of our board, we get the most for our money. The chairman of each committee notifies this gentleman of his needs and he does the rest. Believe me, when the purchase is not satisfactory his life is anything but pleasant for a time, though am happy to say that in our case this gentleman's hair is not entirely white.

Six experienced green-chairmen give the outline of the policies and practices that have worked successfully at their clubs. New green-chairmen will find these pointers highly valuable in helping them establish effective platforms. Greenkeepers, too, get a helpful close-

The green-chairman, with a good greenkeeper, has a very pleasant job and in my opinion, by following the greenkeeper's suggestions, where he knows his business, will seldom make a mistake.

By R. D. STEVENS

Green-Chairman Wildwood G. C., Middletown, O.

THE head of a committee in charge of a golf course has a thankless job. I have been chairman of the green-committee for five years and I know just about what green-chairmen are up against.

In selecting a green-chairman you should select a man who is interested and is willing to put forth a lot of effort. I visit the course every day of golf season and put in from one to five hours at each visit. Green-chairman should have full charge of the maintenance of the course and the keeper should take orders from no one other than the chairman. You should have an official meeting once a month during the season. Any changes or complaints should be taken up at these meetings and the chairman should have same executed accordingly. When you get a good chairman, keep him; do not change him each year, because it takes about two years for a green-chairman to learn a golf course. Do not put more than one on the committee with him. If he is the right kind of a man, do not put anyone on with him. After you have selected the right kind of a chairman, get a greenkeeper who is willing to work, knows how to handle men, equipment, and knows soil and what it needs. Let the greenkeeper hire the number of men it takes to keep

Tell New Men How Chairman's Job

up on the attitude and operations of good chairmen. The men who contribute to this symposium are Henry C. Thompson, R. D. Stevens, Joseph S. Young, James Baird, I. L. Graves, A. K. Bentley and an eastern green-chairman who prefers to remain anonymous.

the course in shape. (We run our 18 hole course with five men and a keeper in season, and two men and a keeper off season.)

After you have the right chairman and keeper it is their duty to work together and keep the course in the very best condition. Each course is different and some are harder to take care of than others, therefore each course governs its own conditions.

If the greenkeeper needs anything that has to be purchased, he takes it up with the chairman, who authorizes him to purchase same unless it is a major item which is presented at a regular meeting and is passed on by the board.

Of course it is hard to satisfy the entire membership, but we try. If a member has a complaint or suggestion to make he takes it up with an official and, in turn, he brings same up at a regular meeting.

Regarding finances, at our club the green-chairman has nothing to do with that at all. We make up a budget at the first of the year and we are not allowed to exceed our budget.

By JOSEPH S. YOUNG, Chairman,
Green-Committee, Lehigh C. C., Allentown, Pa.

ALTHOUGH I have been interested in golf since I learned to play the game at the age of twelve, I was not faced with the responsibility of holding down a position as chairman of a green-committee until five years ago. Up to that time I had had a chance to play most of the courses in and around the New York, Philadelphia and Boston districts, and I thought that I

knew, or should know, something about course maintenance. It was not until I started to organize a greens crew and began to map out the practical work on a golf course that I realized that greenkeeping and golfing are two entirely distinct professions.

Greenkeeping is a highly specialized profession. It requires at least a passing knowledge of chemistry, pathology, dendrology, horticulture and agriculture. Some of our universities are just beginning to realize that this particular field of study is of tremendous economic importance. It would be very interesting if someone could tabulate the overall percentage of investment in golf courses throughout the country as against the overall investment in certain classes of farm lands. Whatever the total capital outlay may be, certainly it is safe to assume that there are in the United States many millions of dollars tied up in the purchase of golf lands and the construction of golf courses. Such investment warrants more and more research into the infinite problems of greenkeeping.

Fortunately for those of us who cannot afford the time to attend some of the courses of instruction that are already being given at several universities, there are a few, entirely too few, manuals on the general subject of golf course maintenance. Although these books are written in such general terms as rarely to be of service in meeting a specific local problem, nevertheless they do provide the fundamentals which serve in many cases as most helpful guides. In addition, the bulletins of the U. S. G. A. Green Section usually contain invaluable information on subjects of particular interest at the moment.

My first suggestion to a newly appointed member of a green committee is, therefore, "Learn something about the general principles of course maintenance." If you once get the background you can the more readily discuss matters intelligently with your greenkeeper and you can the more effectively control your course expenditures.

Having absorbed some of the fundamentals, the next step is the application of this general information to your own specific problems. Hardly ever will identical methods of turf treatment in one locality bring about identical results in another part of the country. Even as between neighboring courses there often is a marked disparity in the results that can be obtained by the same type of treatment. The alkaline clays of eastern Pennsylvania, for instance, are quite different chemically and physically from the sandy loams of Long Island. Certain varieties of grasses of necessity grow better in one soil than in another. Some soil is too acid to encourage healthy turf; other soil far too alkaline.

My second suggestion, therefore, is "Don't think that because a certain type of treatment is successful in one district that it therefore must bring about satisfactory results elsewhere." Unless you are convinced that some new kind or method of treatment is fundamentally sound, experiment a bit with it before adopting it on your course.

My third and last suggestion is, "Work with your greenkeeper." Your greenkeeper, if you are fortunate enough to have an able one, knows infinitely more about the practical side of course maintenance than you do. In time you are bound to absorb a good deal of information merely by contact, but at the start he is the one who knows the job.

Treat your greenkeeper as you would a trusted lieutenant in your own business. He is not a gardener—he is a highly trained professional. Don't interfere too much with the work on the course. Map out some system of organization and develop a schedule of work and then stick to it. If it becomes necessary to criticize, never do so before any of your greens crew. Protect your greenkeeper from all unnecessary interference by overly zealous golfers and place him under your direct and sole jurisdiction.

For the fellows on the green-committee, at least, golf course maintenance is partly a business and partly a game. The business side of it requires sound financial judgment and considerable executive ability. The burden of administrative and financial responsibility, however, is more than outweighed by the pleasure that comes from the study of natural problems and the satisfaction that is derived from watching the gradual evolution of a golf course. I know of no more delightful occupation than

greenkeeping in its professional sense and I heartily recommend the study and pursuit of it to all newly elected members of green-committees.

By I. L. GRAVES

Green-Chairman, Cherokee C. C., Knoxville, Tenn.

AFTER ten years as green chairman of the Cherokee Country Club at Knoxville, Tennessee, I feel justified in making the following observations, some of which are vain repetitions to green-chairman of experience.

First. The green-chairman of the golf club must be prepared to smilingly meet harsh criticism from his fellow club members, many of whom have not the slightest conception of what the chairman is trying to work out or the fundamentals thereof. If a fellow can't face this necessity philosophically and cheerfully he had better lay off the job.

Second. The average individual on first taking over the job of green-chairman is a "babe in the woods" as to what is expected of him and how he will accomplish it, for the very excellent reason that efficiency in this position necessitates a certain amount of technical experience, which very few lay members of a golf club possess. Consequently, a newly appointed chairman must realize at the very beginning that he has lots to learn and must set about his job with a spirit of humility in this particular.

Get a Good Greenkeeper

Third. The first move of a green-chairman should be to insist that his budget shall carry a sum sufficient to pay for a competent greenkeeper in whose selection the green-chairman should consult every experienced source of information, meaning by this, U. S. G. A. Green Section, other golf clubs to whom references are made by applicants, and any other probable source of reliable information as to the applicant's knowledge and efficiency.

Fourth. Having chosen a greenkeeper, rely largely upon his expert knowledge and advice, and interfere with his plans only where an obvious mistake is about to be made. By this latter suggestion I mean that a green-chairman, presumably being fully acquainted with the personnel of the club administration and its membership, will be able to steer the greenkeeper away from unnecessary and unprofitable arguments with "doubting Thomases" whose



This home of the Kildeer Country club (Chicago district) was built in two sections; the locker-room section at the right being the first constructed.

ignorance is in inverse ratio to their desire to be heard. A green-chairman also is supposed to be acquainted with climatic conditions in his location and may be able to warn a greenkeeper (especially one who is just taking hold against unusual conditions or climate in the locality. But in most matters relating to turf culture, employment and handling of labor, selection and maintenance of course equipment, and other technical activities, the greenkeeper should not be interfered with and should be placed upon his individual mettle.

Fifth. The green-chairman should insist that the club administration budget the golf expense and name a fixed sum for annual upkeep which he, in turn, should feel a sacred duty to observe. This will involve frequent consultations with the greenkeeper, studying course needs with respect to equipment, and carefully checking pay roll requirements to avoid waste which so easily can occur in this phase of course maintenance.

Sixth. The green-chairman should insist upon the club administration becoming a member of the Green Section of U. S. G. A. to secure benefit of the constant study of turf culture and development being made by that useful organization, and that they should subscribe to all publications carrying the results of observations by greenkeepers and green-chairmen of turf development in various parts of the country. All of these publications should come to the green-chairman as well as to the greenkeeper and should be religiously read and studied by both of these individuals—individually and jointly.

The Liason Officer

Seventh. Finally, the green-chairman, having transformed himself into a diplo-

mat, should specifically invite criticisms and suggestions from his fellow club members, reserving absolutely and without qualification his right to accept or reject all such intended aids. As indicated above, many of these criticisms and suggestions will have a sharp edge and will be difficult to bear but it is the writer's experience that out of the multitude of minds and their expression there is always some wisdom to be achieved. Furthermore, an autocrat in any walk of life rarely ever enjoys the fellowship and co-operation of his associates, and the green-chairman who expects his fellow members to replace the turf, to assist in caddy control, to report injuries to the golf course from any cause—in other words, to offer the fullest co-operation—must convince them of his own good nature. One of the best methods in this pursuit is to make real companions of his fellow members rather than a group of indifferent—if not actually resentful—"subjects."

By JAMES BAIRD

Green-Chairman, Scarsdale Golf Club, Hartsdale, N.Y.

OUR grounds-keeper, Rocco Lemonjellei, has served the club for about twenty-nine years, and naturally I would consider him to be an experienced greenkeeper. In the opinion of the members of our club there is no better one, though Lemonjellei never desires any publicity and is not widely known. His greens and course generally are kept in a condition, that is, in the opinion of the members of the club, not excelled elsewhere.

We set up a budget each year to finance

(Continued on page 67)

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Chairmen Give Green- Keeping Policies

(Continued from page 17)

the work of the grounds organization and we try to keep fairly close to our budget. Our organization consists of only eleven workmen additional to the greenskeeper and I believe we follow the usual custom of having certain individual men take care of their own greens and tees throughout the season, with separate men for the tractors to do the fairway work. Practically all of our tees are cut by tractors and as we build new tees we endeavor to have them constructed natural to the surrounding terrain so they can be cut with tractors without any great difficulty.

We water and dress our tees just as we do our green though, of course, we do not do as much watering and the cutting is not so close.

In regard to our policies in the matter of purchases and other expenses, would say that for quite a few years our club was run on a basis of expending about \$15,000 a year as the budget for the grounds. We have now increased our budget to about \$25,000 a year and, in my opinion, the

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members are better satisfied with the results on a \$25,000 expenditure than they were on the \$15,000 expenditure. As a matter of fact, I am very sure that they are much better satisfied. We go on the theory that the members are willing to pay if they get results and we spend a considerable sum each year in fertilizing and dressing our fairways and in cleaning up rough spots throughout the course. It has been my experience that money spent in clearing up rough spots is an excellent investment as it results in allowing the course to be taken care of by tractors instead of by hand work. We strive all the time to eliminate the amount of hand work to be done.

I think we go pretty much on the custom of English and French government. That is, if at any time they do not like the

management they can throw us out. As a matter of fact, we get very few complaints and, needless to say, if suggestions are made that give promise of bettering any conditions we take steps to carry out the suggestions. If they are impracticable we try to explain why the suggestions cannot be carried out.

As a general proposition, I think the best suggestion that I could make to green-chairmen would be to give the greenkeeper full support provided he is a capable man and support a program that will allow him sufficient funds to properly feed the course and take care of it to a high standard. I feel confident that the general inclination of golf membership these days demands a well kept golf course, and they are willing to pay accordingly if the results are forthcoming.



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"DROP A LINE"

By A. K. BENTLY

Green-Chairman, Ozaukee C. C., Milwaukee, Wis.

ONE of the first things for any golf club or any other organization is to adopt the budget system and live up to it. There may come emergencies that will necessitate spending money other than that provided by the budget. These should be very rare.

One of the best things that a chairman can do is to select a good greenkeeper. One who understands the handling of men and who is willing to learn—when you find a greenkeeper that knows it all you are lost. The same applies to the chairman of any committee.

We have found at Ozaukee club that the best committee is a committee of three, two of which are seldom present. The chairman then takes the initiative and gets results.

We had our course laid out and planned by very competent golf architects and experts. These plans were carried out up to a point where we thought it best to stop. When our club was organized we had a great many members who had never played golf and the committees functioning at that time decided that it would not do to make the course too hard by trapping and bunkering all at one time. As a consequence our course has been ideal for the average golfer and each year we have added hazards according to the original plans with different trappings and bunkers.

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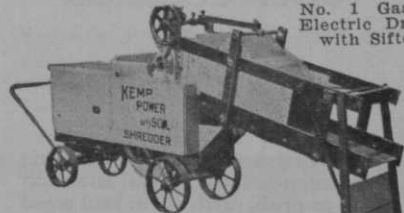
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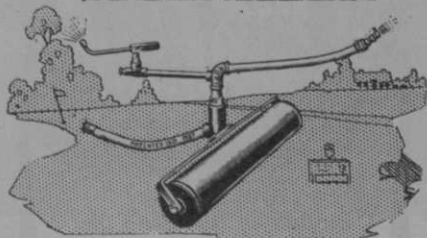


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We have some quite perplexing problems with our greens and it is our intention now to gradually work into the bent greens. We have convinced ourselves that this is the best for this particular climate and the conditions which we have to work under.

We enriched our fairways this fall with thirty tons of milorganite properly mixed to meet the condition of each fairway. We have taken quite a number of samples of the ground in each fairway and have made our mixture to suit each condition. We have on some of our fairways, where they are hilly, a clay foundation. This has made it very hard to get a good sod. We have accomplished this to a large extent and believe what looked to be at one time an impossible proposition has been solved. Strange as it may seem, those fairways which originally looked very bad and hard to handle are now our best ones.

Winter Overhauling

One of the jobs of the chairman of the grounds committee is to see that all machinery, tools and equipment are thoroughly overhauled during the winter. We go as far as to send our tractors into the factory for complete overhauling—the same with the other machinery. We also carry spare parts for mowers, sprinkler, etc. We

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have found that where you are isolated and perhaps considerable time away from supplies, that it is a very wise provision. We have found that when you need equipment in summer you need it very badly. We have also equipped our mowing and cutting machinery with lights which enable us when the peak load comes to work at night. This very seldom occurs, but we find it necessary to be prepared in case of a tournament, the Fourth of July load, the Labor Day load, and other peak loads.

Keeping Dandelions Out

We have made an arrangement for dandelions by taking an iron bar about 20 ft. long, joining it three times, making it flexible, and attaching to this a mat of wire netting. We then lay a few sticks of wood across this and fasten them with copper wire. We hitch these behind the tractors and go over the dandelions. We believe our method is the most successful one for the treatment of dandelions. We run this on the fairways, through the rough, and all over the course, and if it were not from the seed blowing from our neighbors and from the highways, we believe that we could eliminate the dandelion entirely.

By An Eastern Green-chairman

ONE who has been for 10 years the green-chairman of a noted New England course tells GOLFDOM's readers of the headlights of his successful regime, asking that we refrain from using his name or that of his club. His interesting testimony runs:

Some years ago we began to establish turf nurseries which we have found very valuable. If a green shows signs of sickness our greenkeeper finds it more satisfactory as a rule to cut out the bad spots and replace with a few healthy sods rather than struggle with chemicals. We do use arsenate of lead and some other preventive measures at times, but with plenty of good turf in the nurseries we can, if necessary, returf an entire green during the playing season without seriously interfering with the play or incurring criticism from our members.

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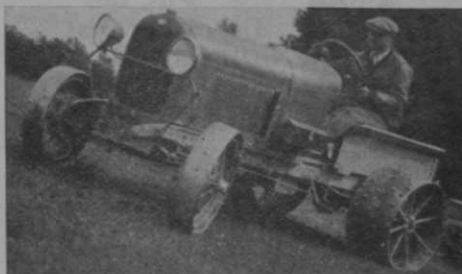
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