

"Dressing Up" the Course Has Big Place in Greenkeeping

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ALTHOUGH the condition and quality of the turf on the golf course is probably the prime requisite in greenkeeping there are other factors of importance to good course management. One very important factor might be termed "the dressing of the course." This is of especial importance at the off season of play, because much work can be done now along the lines which this factor covers. During the busy season it is often difficult to find time for any side issues, but by planning ahead, the course may be well-dressed when heavy play starts up again.

Probably those who play golf on a cow-pasture would be just as well satisfied if they had no tee markers, had tin cans for cups, and a stick with rag tied to it to mark the hole, and other things in the same degree. However, when courses spend thousand of dollars to maintain quality turf, they should not only be willing but eager, to spend a little extra time and money to dress up the course.

It has often been said that "it is the little things that count," and this is especially true on a golf course. It is not alone the missed putt which makes the player curse the greenkeeper. It sometimes is the missing tee towel, or no soap or water in the ball washer, or waste paper all over the course, or similar things which come under this heading of dressing the course.

As a player, especially a visitor to a course, often gets impressions of a course from the first tee, and sometimes carries these impressions all the way around the course, it is important that the first tee should not only be large, even, and have good turf, but it also should be well dressed. If tee stands are used, the sand should be clean, water should be clean, towels and brushes should be changed whenever necessary. Tee markers should be clean, and painted as often as necessary. If ball washers are used, they should

be kept in shape so that they will really wash a ball; soap and water should be replenished whenever necessary, and towels changed often. A waste receptacle should be provided at the first tee, and at other tees if possible. Waste and debris should be kept picked up. Any other course equipment around should be kept in good condition, clean and well painted. These observations can also apply to all other tees.

An example of to what extremes clubs go in this matter of dressing the course came up recently in a discussion I had with several greenkeepers regarding tee towels. One greenkeeper bought tee towels for his club at five dollars per dozen; the towels were changed daily at every tee, and laundered at cost of half cent each per laundering. At another course, they bought a towel for every tee at start of season and when season ended threw the towels away! And there are all of the fifty-seven varieties in between these two examples!

"Sunday Clothes" for the Course.

On the greens much can be done to dress up the course. The trend now seems to be toward better cups, poles and flags. Steel and aluminum poles may now be purchased; they give a feeling of security and strength. Flags should be changed before they are rags; poles should be painted before they shame a good green! The trend is toward a dressier green! The golfer shoots at the pin, and he wants it to attract attention and be neat.

Around the greens, the formerly often seen piles of grass clippings are now disappearing. They now are being bagged and in many cases gathered daily with the truck. Hose and sprinklers should not clutter too close to the green. At some courses, these are gathered with the truck after use, and then taken around when needed again. This is too much effort for the average course, but boxes can be made and left a little away from greens, out of

the way of play, and hose and sprinklers stored in these boxes. Other equipment needed around the greens, such as rollers, should be out of the way, and should be kept in good condition. Worn-out or discarded equipment should never be left where players see it; it will look too much like inefficiency to the uninformed, and they will probably think it was the greenkeeper's fault it wore out!

Dressing up the course as far as the rough goes, largely is cleaning what is there, and possibly a little extra planting out of the way of most play. Trees in the rough should be pruned of lower limbs so that a player may play a ball out toward the fairway with a half swing at least. Stumps should be removed, depressions filled, grass seed sown in bare areas, stones and debris picked up, and area in general kept clean.

All signs, out of bounds stakes, etc., should be kept in good repair, painted frequently. In general, areas marked "Ground Under Repair" should be as few as possible, in order that course may look its best. After any new construction, care should be taken to clean up any debris, and make the new work as well dressed up as the older parts of the course!

All workmen should be instructed to pick up and police the course as they work on it. They should report anything they notice out of order, or needing attention. This is a great help in keeping the course well-dressed during the season.

Promoting Players' Comfort.

Dressing the course properly means comfort for the players. Seats placed on tees will help greatly. Bridges across ravines, steps up and down steep hillsides, good walks between greens and tees,—all are means of dressing the course and likewise providing comfort. Draining wet areas aids in appearance and also in comfort. In many ways the two go hand in hand.

Dressing the course by means of landscape development is not within the scope of this article, as much could be written along this line. This field is hardly touched as yet by many clubs. It might be well to point out here that true landscape architecture aims to secure the maximum of beauty coupled with the maximum of utility, and hence anything which helped beautify the course while it did not hinder or lessen the usefulness is a landscape development. Those in charge of golf courses should do all in their power to use the parts of the landscape which are

theirs, a tree or trees here, and a mass of shrubbery there, a stream on one side, and a vista on the other—all should be used as far as possible to perfect the landscape development insofar as they do not affect the play on the course. Planting can be done between greens and tees, and in stretches along holes out of the way of play. Native species should be used, and only informal planting desired. Wild flowers growing naturally on the course should be encouraged if they are desirable species. The proper enjoyment of the game comes first, but there are many landscape features which can be introduced to beautify the course and be no detriment to play.

There are other side lines to this dressing of the course. Encouraging birds to nest on the course, by feeding them, providing food and water summer and winter, installing bird houses, keeping their enemies away, and in general, being friendly to them, is a means of dressing your course.

You probably will think of many others; if this article encourages someone to stress this part of golf course maintenance a little more, it will not be in vain. These suggestions are made with this idea in view of stimulating interest in this other side of greenkeeping. Although it may not be of such great importance as the establishing and maintaining of good turf, it is a proper companion to such work. A good course, well-dressed, should be the aim of the good greenkeeper!

N. E. Club Managers Hold District Meeting

On February the 5th, a district meeting of the New England Club Managers' association was held at the Hotel Statler, Boston. This meeting included all of the local chapters throughout New England, large representations particularly from the Connecticut chapter, Rhode Island chapter and the Boston chapter as well as many other members and guests from cities which do not have chapters but whose managers are members of the New England association.

This meeting started at four in the afternoon with the following program:

A lecture, with motion pictures, on "Deep Sea Fishing and Sea Food Products." A lecture on the "Oyster Industry" of especial interest to New England managers.

A dinner at the Statler Hotel at 7 P. M. with additional educational features and association business followed the dinner.