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ash on fairways. He recommended that nitrogen fertilization be restrained, particularly on putting greens, since heavy fertilization produces the type of turf which was likely to suffer from disease and mechanical injury. Prof. White also called attention to the need for further research on plant and soil problems.

Prof. H. B. Musser of Penn. State considered briefly the breeding work being conducted in an attempt to produce strains of turf grasses which are more resistant to disease and tolerant of soil conditions, than any strain now available.

John Anderson of Crestmont G. C. represented the National Greenkeepers' association, and conveyed a message from Colonel Morley.

Pittsburgh District Clubs Weather Tough Year

HARD-HIT SPOTS GET BY O. K.

MOST seriously affected by business depression are the golf clubs in territories where there is one predominant industry. Pittsburgh, dependent mainly on steel, and Detroit, the automobile capital, are two of the hardest hit golf club areas in the country.

John Camozzi, veteran manager in the Pittsburgh district, tells a bluntly honest tale of how Pittsburgh district house business was hit, but stoutly maintains the situation had some benefits, and is showing marked improvement.

TO DETERMINE the trend of country club operation during the season recently closed and to forecast its future is a tremendous task, even though one is recording observations for only one district. While one is tempted to be entirely

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non-committal, as it is a most delicate subject at this time, it would be unusually interesting if frankness could be observed and a comparative record be made from each particular district.

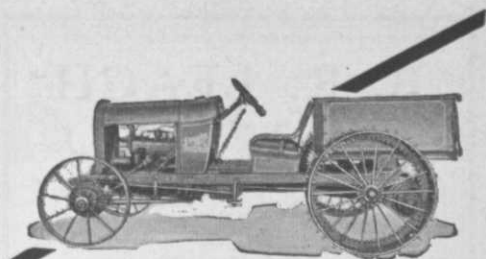
Western Pennsylvania is one of the major golf club districts in the country, with 85 large and small clubs within an area of 150 miles of Pittsburgh. In this section it is our observation that clubhouse operation since last spring has distinctly felt dwindled incomes. We speak of the matter generally, for there are a few clubs, and a select few, which can honestly say they kept their heads above water through the present depression. The Pittsburgh Field club, which I am honored in managing, has been fortunate enough to be included in this group. We have succeeded in staying in the black in the ledgers.

The trend downward in western Pennsylvania does not appear to be serious and it is our belief that this sector ranks among the topmost in weathering the storm.

Curtaillment of service within the club has been marked at several country clubs. If financial conditions throughout the country improve within the next year, a calamity in country club life will have been averted. If financial conditions continue to hover at the bottom of the well, so to speak, country club operation can not hope to escape further reductions.

At this time clubs that are on the ragged edge are making a valiant effort to ward off defeat, and their victory depends entirely on the general financial situation.

First attempts to meet this situation came last year when a number of country clubs devised new ways and means to bring money into their coffers. They offered new membership plans for golf or



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social activity, reduced dues, split dues and initiation fees into small installments and did almost anything else to induce the man outside the field to come in.

Following on the assessments caused by the drought of 1930, clubs suffered cuts in their memberships last spring when open season came around, and few of them have mastered that situation alone, much less reached a solid solution of the present problem.

Thrift Is Enforced

A good many clubs have done everything within their power to cut operating expenses, and have succeeded admirably. Naturally, at the Pittsburgh Field club we had to cut operating expenses; while we did not reduce in wages, we did reduce the number of employes. The diminished number of employes were forced to do work of the large force, which caused them to work a variety of jobs. In all, we have cut about 25 per cent from our operating expenses through this method, and we maintain a good percentage on our gross profit. As the last winter started shedding its coat of snow, we employed only a small staff; as the business increased, so we increased our help, but at no time was it deemed necessary to employ as many workers as in 1930.

We saved on our supplies also, buying daily only after considerable forethought and with strict economy. This was not unusual as all of the clubs in western Pennsylvania, regardless of whether they were at the top or the bottom of the list, were



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forced to curtail on operating expenses.

It may appear inconsistent that several of the larger clubs made extensive clubhouse alterations. One of the clubs has spent more than \$500,000 in capital improvements to their clubhouse and another one is contemplating improvements on a large scale. But clubhouse renovating and similar improvements can hardly assist to the generally necessary degrees in adjudging operating expenses for the clubhouse itself. However, in view of prevailing low building costs, the clubs in very good financial shape have an attractive opportunity for desirable remodeling and rehabilitation.

Just as it has been our unbiased observation that the trend has been downward for the 1931 season about to close, it is our optimistic prediction that an improved condition throughout this district, and throughout the country, may be expected within the next twelve months.

BELL IS TORO NEW MAN IN K. C.

Kansas City, Mo.—D. B. Bell, formerly division sales manager for Huey & Philp of Dallas, Tex., Toro representatives, has transferred here, where he will operate the Toro distribution and service business and that of other lines previously handled by Whitney Goit. Bell and his staff will occupy the Whitney Goit quarters at 1919 Baltimore ave. on a long term lease.

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