

Variation in Maintenance Cost Shows Character of Club

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(Continuation of Comment on M. A. C.—GOLFDOM Research Findings)

IN THE Greens Bulletin of the United States Golf Association, issued in April, 1930, appeared an article on "The Green-keepers' Dwindling Budget."

One paragraph in this article contained the following quotation: "What proportion of the club's income is spent on the golf course and essential facilities of a golf club, and what proportion on the trimmings that go to make a country club?"

TABLE 1

Total Expense	Amount for Golf Course	% For Golf Course
\$337,290	\$35,862	11
196,996	24,235	12
196,536	24,168	13
202,174	27,386	14
94,883	13,681	14
142,158	25,891	18
92,225	16,585	18
43,095	7,834	19
102,835	22,460	22
93,595	20,567	22
92,931	21,617	23
104,434	26,372	25
89,334	22,847	25
84,196	22,290	26
74,557	19,631	26
72,934	18,755	26
83,315	23,076	28
89,513	26,251	30
122,239	37,559	30
112,547	34,453	30
69,777	21,800	31
108,506	36,000	33
110,834	38,064	34
66,203	22,397	34
60,269	21,794	36
69,937	25,893	38
35,559	13,921	39
49,193	21,321	44
51,968	22,562	44
53,810	23,890	44
61,707	29,868	48
60,220	32,492	55
38,528	25,486	66

In the investigation sponsored by GOLFDOM and carried on at the Massachusetts

State College under Prof. Dickinson during the winter, 33 annual reports were received from country clubs having 18-hole golf courses. These reports published statements of their total expenditures, and the amounts spent by the green-committee. With this material, even though limited, it was felt worth while to attempt to find out what per cent of the total expenses of the country club were spent by the green-committee on the golf course.

None of these reports came from any state west of the Rocky mountains or south of Mason and Dixon line.

The following table lists the total expenditures of the country club, the total expenditures of the green-committee for the golf course, and the per cent of the expenditures of the green-committee based on the total expenses of the club.

No Definite Relation

While it is evident from this table that there is no definite percentage relation between the total expenses of the country club and the total expenses of the golf club, it does show that most of the golf courses received from 18 to 39 per cent of the total amount of money spent by the country club.

As the total expenditures of the country club increased, the golf course percentage decreased. This indicates that the golf course expenses have a maximum, but that there is no limit to the amount that a country club can spend.

Twenty-one of these clubs reported golf course expenditures of between \$20,000 and \$30,000; the average for the 34 clubs was \$24,702.

One club was able to spend \$39,000 on its golf course. This is the maximum cost of maintaining an 18-hole golf course in the area reporting.

The range of the total country club expenditures is from \$35,559 to \$337,210, with an average of \$99,297.

The Greens bulletin article goes on to say: "In many large clubs the cost of run-

ning the clubhouse exceeds the cost of running two golf courses." If a golf club cannot spend more than \$39,000 to maintain 18 holes, and the balance of the expenditures is spent on the clubhouse, these figures show that 15 of these clubs bear out the above statement. Two clubs spend enough to run three golf courses; three clubs spend enough to run five golf courses, and one spends enough to run eight golf courses.

If we use the average figure of \$24,702 instead of the maximum figure of \$39,000 it is apparent that these findings will increase, even with adjustments made for interest charges on the plant.

Perhaps some day an analysis of the country clubs' expenditures will be made, and it will be interesting to see just where all money goes and if there is any percentage relationship between the same divisions of the clubs.

Course Cost Per Round

Another angle of the golf course cost problem, about which little has been published, but closely related to this subject of country club expenditures, is the "cost of maintaining the course per round of golf."

There are a few private clubs which were known to keep an accurate record of the number of rounds of golf played each season, and it was to some of these clubs that GOLFDOM sent a questionnaire asking for the total number of rounds of golf played in 1930. It was found from the replies that the average number of rounds of golf for the 18-hole country club course in the same area as that from which the cost of maintaining the country club was obtained was 20,842 rounds. Dividing the average cost of maintaining the golf course—\$24,702—by the number of rounds of golf gives us \$1.13 as the cost of maintaining the course per round of golf.

If the private club golf course receives from 18 to 39 per cent of the club's total expenses and the cost per round is only \$1.13, one has some figures to combat those arguments of non-golfing country club members who constantly lament the money the greens committee receives.

Just why the actual number of rounds of golf played on a course is not kept is not known; perhaps the directors feel that the results would show how little the course was receiving per round of golf. Certainly there is nothing difficult about it. Nearly every club sees that an accurate record of guests is kept, and the total

amount of revenue received from this source is published in the annual financial statement. However, did you ever see the cost per round of golf published in the greens committee report? It might be easier to increase the budget if this were known and published. It also would remind the club of the profit in guest green fees and the wisdom of keeping the course in condition that would attract guests.

NORTH BRITISH BALL APPOINTS CENTRAL STATES AGENT

Chicago, Ill.—Beckley-Ralston Co. has been named distributor for the North British golf ball in territory extending from eastern line of Ohio, including Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama and other states west to the Rockies.

Extensive investigation conducted by Beckley-Ralston and the manufacturers' own staff resulted in the adoption of a policy that will restrict the sale of this ball to the professionals. The ball has been favorably received by pros and players and with the dollar retail price being protected against slashing by retailers other than the pros, the North British people expect their product to get a good pro push during the coming season.

Adequate stocks are maintained for immediate shipment, but the stocks on hand are not such that they will retard the switch made necessary by announcement of the new standard ball that becomes official April 15, 1932.

LEACOY, GA., PROFESSIONAL HAS TRICK IDEA FOR PUTTING

AL LEACOY, West Point, Ga., pro, has invented a putting instruction device that the birds start to kid at first but certainly are finding that it helps the pupils get the idea of putting with a pendulum stroke along the line to the hole. Al's stunt is a band that is comfortably fixed around the leg below the thighs and to which a swivel joint is attached in the middle. The handle of the putter is held by this swivel joint and when the pupil holds the putter handle he, or she, has to putt along the line to the hole. Leacoy worked it out in his own instruction work and developed some marvelous putters with the notion.

GOLFDOM's notorious testing laboratory for nut ideas has given Al's idea a good workout and made the skeptics pay-off. The device retails for \$1.50 and has a good discount in it for the pros. If you want any more dope on it, write Al Leacoy at Box 362, West Point, Ga.