

# Golfdom

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## Question Tradition That Outlaws Year's Best Golf Months

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**A**S THE GOLF season in the northern and central states draws near its traditional mid-September close, thoughtful club officials are beginning to appraise the tradition that has been responsible for the curtain dropping on the season while some of the finest playing weather remains.

Examination of weather statistics of representative central and eastern states territories for the last three years shows that for temperature, rainfall and sunshine the latter part of September, October and the fore part of November are the ideal golfing days of the year. Then, why should the bulk of the play sign off shortly after Labor Day, leaving the course to a few habitual players who have discovered the charm of the latter months of the season?

In some cases the answer has been a simple one; leaves and lost balls. It is not costly or difficult to remedy this. On the west coast an ingenious course operator has a huge motor driven vacuum sweeper that takes care of the leaves. Planting of evergreens has been a feature of course landscaping for the past 4 or 5 years. This, of course, has helped to reduce the leaf problem.

Mild, invigorating fall weather is ideal for golf. Why, then, do so many golf clubs schedule the end of their tournament and entertainment programs for Labor Day? Properly promoted, departmental business can easily be held up in satisfactory volume to the end of October.

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But back of the premature discontinuance of steady play in previous years has been a factor that no longer should worry the officials—clubhouse losses. Formerly it was thought that extensive operation of the clubhouse must be in order from the start of the season to the finish. During two years of economic pressure club officials, members and managers have learned to exist without big clubhouse operating staffs, with a servant or two ready to break an Olympic sprint record at the slightest indication of a member's wish.

### Simple Service Problem

Buffet lunches, simplified to the point where the club is bound to make money at low prices and where perishable foods and serving expenses are minimized, now can be served to the autumn trade with-

out arousing member protest. Luncheons usually prove sufficient as the early dusk drives the players off the courses in plenty of time to get home for dinner.

Grass growth is not active so the mowing and other maintenance costs are cut to the quick. Members are not so exacting. They are playing for greatly-needed exercise and pure pleasure rather than for a startling score. There may be some disturbance due to construction work, but not a lot of it this fall except for installation of fairway watering systems.

There need be no worry about injury to the course, so maintenance and turf experts assure.

Prolonging the golf season would be beneficial to the club members because it would give them more for their investment in club membership. It would keep the band together enough longer to somewhat cut-down the membership problem of the following spring which owes part of its severity to the long gap between September and the following May with resultant lack of contact and loss of interest among members.

### The Ritzy Thing

It will be noticed at the more exclusive clubs in almost every central and eastern district there is a far larger proportion of the "snow birds" playing than there is at the average club. Perhaps when this fact begins to be generally noticed by the average golfers they will follow the leaders in usual American fashion.

One factor that may be noticeable in extending the length of the golf season is the gradually diminishing interest in college football. Last season the gate at college games showed a marked drop. Undoubtedly part of this was due to the economic situation—taking in a big college game is an expensive pastime. But for a greater part of the football season the weather was unseasonable warm and the lament that the afternoon wasn't devoted to golf instead of the vicarious athletics of football attendance was frequently heard from the football spectators.

### Pros' Opportunity

It is very much up to the pros to consult with their club officials and see what assistance the pro can offer in extending the period of the club's service. Many professionals have related that August this year saw a quickened pace in shop

business. Undoubtedly this must have been partially due to the stores getting fed-up with high pressure and unproductive advertising of liquidation sales and to the slow but certain process of disposing of surplus stocks. However the generally improved tone of locker-room business chatter by the members which reflected general business conditions, gave the pros a chance they want to nurse before the season folds on them.

Tom Boyd, pro notable, who is at Fox Hills, G. C., Stapleton, L. I., tips off the clubs and the pros to what can be done by developing golf interest in the beautiful weather of autumn by remarking that his busy season is from Sept. 1 to Nov. 15. Tom says, "Of course this is caused by keeping our tournaments going. One of the biggest tournaments we have is on Election Day. The pro can keep up this interest around his club if he will get busy and see that the week-end tournament schedule is maintained."

Jerry Glynn, clever Celt who presides over the pro department at gigantic Olympia Fields C. C., says the club officials and pros ought to be able to put over an extension of the season this year because of the novelty of such extension. He notes that the novelty Thursday night parties at Olympia Fields have accounted for record crowds this year. One thing he suggests that is well worthy of consideration is more attention to mixed foursome events later in the season. Glynn makes the further timely suggestion that this year it is especially smart to be thrifty and for that reason people would be inclined to play longer and get more for their dues than they have done in years past.

With the weather permitting, it seems entirely logical that 1932's golf season could have one more merry month that would be greatly to the advantage of the members, club and pros.

Prolonging the season with a lively program of events assuredly will be one of the important matters discussed at many clubs' meetings of directors during September, and there's no good reason why the idea should not work out well.

**UNEMPLOYMENT** has increased attendance of adults and children at outdoor municipal playgrounds, golf courses, etc., 17% since 1929, according to *Yearbook of the National Recreation Assn.*