



Photos by Fred Kuehn.

This grandstand at the first tee of the National Open and its mate at the eighteenth green, were well filled during the event's most interesting moments.

# Tournament Lessons Are Taught By National Open

By HERB GRAFFIS

**S**UGGESTIONS from the USGA fairly well standardize the handling of all tournaments held under the governing body's supervision. In each championship, however, certain problems are solved in original ways and contribute to the regulation procedure first formulated by those responsible for handling championships at Merion Cricket Club.

The 1933 National Open at North Shore was a well handled tournament. Professional and greenkeeper Alec Cunningham, and Manager John Schweitzer got on the job even before the tournament was awarded. They went to Fresh Meadow in 1932, gambling their expenses on the chance the 1933 Open would be awarded to their club. If North Shore got the event they would be ahead whatever they learned at Fresh Meadow and the club would pay their expenses. If the 1933 Open

hadn't gone to North Shore, John and Alex would have been out the money for their trip to New York.

Promptly on being advised of the award of the 1933 Open and after consultation with the USGA officials, some minor alterations were made in the course. Several traps were added or enlarged. A new tee was built on the second hole and the seventeenth green was resodded.

One of the lessons that Cunningham and the North Shore superintendent, D. G. Burnett, will pass along to others who are to hold championships is to get to the work involving new grass just as soon as possible. The wet spring held back the new second tee so it couldn't be used and only because of extraordinarily fine work on the part of those responsible for the North Shore course maintenance was the resodded seventeenth brought into

championship condition. Inspection and recommendations of the USGA Green Section officials, who now have a strong responsibility in the selection of championship courses, were made at North Shore late last summer.

### Greens the Big Item

If the USGA were to elect Christmas as the opening day of the National Open, it seems as though the country would have a heat wave. North Shore ran second only to Interlachen for heat, being even hotter than Inverness. However, this being the first National Open in years at which beer was available, the tropic agony was pleasantly alleviated by carloads of suds.

Hot weather always brings the menace of brown-patch, but North Shore escaped. Usual preventive treatments were made. Greens were in fine shape, although it seems pretty nearly impossible to prevent some nap; but this is offset by the now common practice of the players testing the grain prior to putting. Any one of a dozen contestants might have been champion had they been putting better and Cunningham, as a veteran pro, was especially anxious that the North Shore greens meet with highest approval of the players. Burnett was kept busy 16 hours a day in

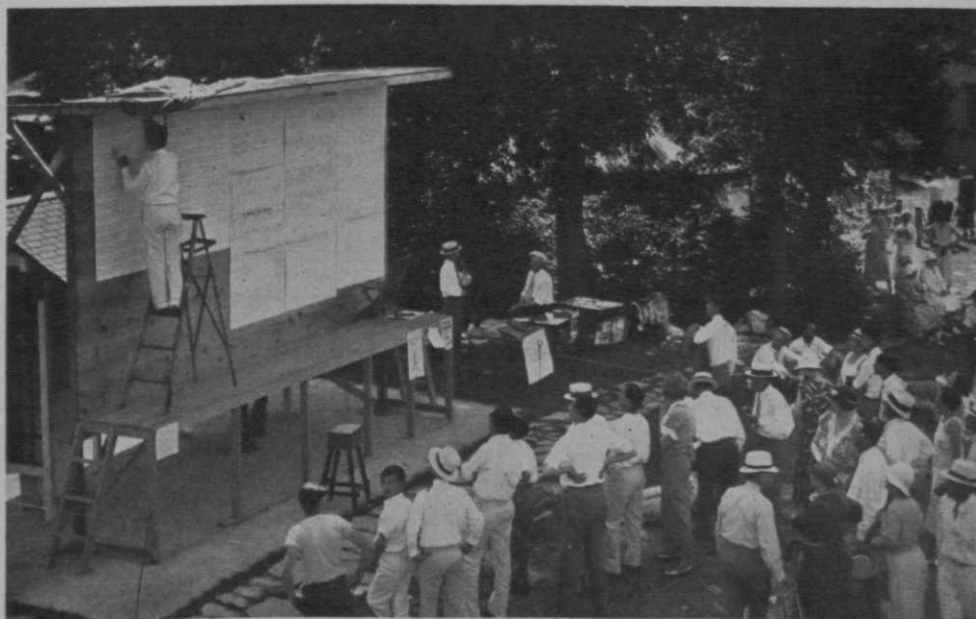
course conditioning and no complaint was registered by the exacting players on the character of the greens.

Talking at North Shore with John Morley, distinguished ex-president of the National Association of Greenkeepers, this writer was told that from a technical greenman's standpoint the greens were superb. John did come up with the following statement, though:

"They tell me they have been taking four catchers of cuttings each time they go over the greens. That listens like too much nitrogen to be healthy for a normal diet in this sort of weather, but I guess they had to do it to be safe for the Open."

### Beef About Fairway Borders

About the only howl heard about the condition of the course concerned the bordering area of the fairways. The fairways were cut narrower for the Open, with the result that the fairways were flanked by a heavy crop of clover. A player could be considerably wide of the fairways and have a better shot than he would if he were just off the fairways and in the heavy clover. North Shore has fairway watering, but its fairways haven't much clover as a general thing. Judicious watering is the order there. However,



Public scoreboard was between the first tee and a locker-room door. It was the location most frequently used for keeping appointments.

the spring was so wet that several days it was necessary to close the course, even prohibiting morning play, just prior to the Open.

Players commented that the fairway lies were better than at Fresh Meadow where the grass was rather lush and the ball wouldn't sit up. One squawk was registered on the second day about the ground being so much drier than on the preceding day that some of the players suffered from long, wild bounces. Probably the wind had considerable to do with these complaints as the prevailing westerly wind at North Shore, when it does blow, blows strong.

All in all, the course got by with far less than the usual amount of criticism.

### Why Make Them Hard?

North Shore didn't go crazy about setting the pins in places to make the course record unassailable. This practice, which is far too frequent, is directly opposed to the USGA recommendations.

As a matter of good common sense and publicity the pins in any championship ought to be set where putting is not only fair, but easy. No course is immune to someone getting hot and making it look simple. Hagen, in the concluding round, got a 66 with a ball out of bounds on the 17th and missing a two-foot putt on the ninth.

If there were 6 or 8 65s made during a championship you may be sure that the fellows who made those low scores would go away bragging about the course being one of the greatest in the world and there would be big galleries to see the sharpshooters go wild.

But that never will be learned by those in charge of championships so we might as well turn the crank and go on to the next picture of the 1933 Open.

The gallery this year was by a considerable margin the biggest since the year of the Jones grand slam. Official figures are not available but our guess is that the gallery income exceeded by a very comfortable margin that of a normal year prior to the depression. If Guldahl had sunk that fairly short putt on the last green and made a play-off necessary the executive committee of the USGA would not again be faced with a terrifying financial problem for 1933 and the Green Section's important work would have benefited. An official of the North Shore club estimated to GOLFDOM that Ralph's putt not clinking in the bucket cost the club

\$7,500 profit it would have collected from a play-off on Sunday.

A couple of very bright ideas were put into effect for the benefit of the gallery by the North Shore people. There were stands for the spectators at the first tee and eighteenth green, both of which were used with great convenience. There also was a platform for the prize presentation, which enabled the spectators to see the ceremony.

### News Men Get Excited

You'll note that the newspapers didn't carry many different pictures of the prize party. Here's the story on that: After Guldahl had failed to tie everyone knew Goodman was the victor. News photographers, with the light getting bad and a long haul into town to make deadlines were clamoring for some action on the awarding of prizes.

There were some other players still out in the field, but apparently the cameramen didn't realize that the prizes couldn't be passed out until all contestants had finished. Emissaries sent to implore the officials to snap into it for the ceremony brought back word to the other cameramen, "The big shots are up in a private room drinking swell drinks and ain't in no hurry to give nothin' to Goodman no-how and you can't crash into a drink, so t' hell wit' 'em."

Not knowing the conditions the news photogs were piqued, interpreted the delay as an intentional effort to apply the ice to Goodman, and made only a few imperative shots.

Thus showing you how easy it is to be the innocent victim of circumstances beyond your control when you are an official.

### Press Facilities Adequate

Press arrangements were well handled. Johnny Schweitzer, club manager, originally had intended to have press quarters on a balcony used for dances. This would have been ideal, as it commanded a view of the first, second, ninth and tenth tees and first, eighth, ninth and eighteenth greens. But no canopy could be secured for the place, due to the Century of Progress apparently having laid a prior claim to every loose piece of canvas in the Chicago area.

Consequently it was necessary to erect the press tent in a spot where it was surrounded by shrubbery and did a grand job of holding heat. However, Johnny, Cunningham, the North Shore officials and

the club staff did noble in reducing by 50 per cent the cutting criticism of brilliant Jimmy Powers, New York News golf writer: "The USGA awards the Open to the clubs having the hottest places as press sties and the coldest guys as officials."

North Shore officials and marshals did a smooth job of keeping people happy. Instead of the usual amount of sometimes justifiable hollers about prices being hiked to lift the mortgage and pay a dividend from the profits of a tournament the only howl that was registered was about 75 cents for a deck of cards.

Gene Conley, newspaper syndicate executive and chairman of the publicity committee of the North Shore club, had one of the most difficult jobs on the lot in being responsible for the handout of press tickets. Just why it is there always is a clamor for press and other complimentary tickets always is a mystery. Tom MacMahon, executive secretary of the USGA, is about the only one in the planetary system who can handle the job of issuing, or turning down requests for deadhead tickets and keep everyone happy. Conley did an expert job, however, in sifting out the real licensed holders.

Handling the gallery this year was done for the most part by U. S. marines under the direction of some competent club officials. The marines didn't know what it was all about, but at that were a great improvement on many marshals who have thought they knew it all and were intent on acquainting the wide world with their knowledge and importance.

Some of the well-meaning scorers could have taken an advance lesson on holding the flag and avoiding stepping in the line of putts and saved the players the mutual embarrassment of having to advise the correct procedure.

The unfortunate disqualification of Paul Runyan when Chick Evans attested to an incorrect score was one of those bad accidents liable to happen in any family and seems to indicate the necessity of a revision of that rule so the penalty will not be so mandatory.

One detail that obviously needs codification is that of greensmen repairing holes made by pitch-shots. In some instances the sod was lifted up while the player was walking up to the green and before he putted. In other instances the shot holes were repaired after the players had putted and left the green; this latter prac-



The press tent had as one valuable feature, blue prints of each hole on which were marked with colored pencil, the shot by shot play of the players.

tice sometimes making it necessary for a player to putt over a spot in which a backspin shot had hit.

Five dollar coupon books were sold for restaurant and locker-room use. Buffet lunches were served off the locker-room to men only. Despite the heavy business this service was smoothly handled under the direction of D. Howard Hawk, who assisted John Schweitzer during the Open. Buffet lunch was \$1. Meal service to members and guests accompanied by women, or to women alone, was in the club dining room on the second floor.

Toughest problem in clubhouse service was in keeping beer properly cooled to Schweitzer's usual expert service. Demand ran ahead of the supply.

Even the concession stands on the course ran out of cold drinks. Just why it is that these concessions stands at every Open seem to select the all-round sloppiest employes within the state for service can only be accounted for by assuming these employes work at a tournament only one time. Once is too much.

North Shore's handling of the Open was the best all-around job done on this event during recent years. The eleven months of study and planning by the men responsible for the event paid out richly.

**T**HE CAREFUL greenkeeper varies his methods to meet changing conditions. On the same course, variations in soil fertility, drainage, contour, etc., may lead the wide-awake greenkeeper to depart from standard practice. But first he makes sure special methods are required.