

Greenkeepers at Annual Meet See Brighter Skies Ahead

By JOE GRAFFIS

RAYS OF HOPE beamed on the greenkeepers who managed to squeeze enough out of their personal budgets at attend the eighth annual convention and exhibition of the National Association of Greenkeepers of America, which concluded Feb. 2 at Pittsburgh, Pa.

Attendance was not large, but considering the times that's nothing to be alarming. The greenkeepers spend their own money coming to the convention to pick up something for the benefit of their clubs and there are not many industries whose superintendents would come to an industrial meeting unless on the company's expense account. Equipment and supply sales by the exhibitors at the convention were poor although lively buying interest and promise was in evidence. Judging from expressions at Pittsburgh the greenkeepers and their chairmen are working in close harmony better than ever before, so equipment purchases now are made when both the greenkeeper and his chairman can sit in together and wrestle with the budget problem back home.

Two phases of the equipment business were standouts; fairway watering and power greens mowing. The irrigation equipment makers reported record volumes of business on hand and power green mower manufacturers spoke of a steady increase in business during the depression.

For the first time in the association's eight years a Canadian, William J. Sansom of the Toronto G. C., Long Branch, Ont., was elected president. John MacGregor, previous president, refused a second term. Election of Sansom and other officers was accomplished with a minimum of disturbing politics. The Sansom election was part of the aim to make the territorial scope of the association broader. There are 25 sectional greenkeepers' organizations, a number of which are not affiliated with the national body, and the association's ambition is to reorganize on a basis that will weld all of these groups together for power in promoting the green-

keepers' interests. The plan contemplated is somewhat along the lines of the PGA, with each section having delegate representation at the convention. It is proposed to pay delegates' convention expenses when they come more than 500 miles to the scene of the convention.

Sansom's home town of Toronto is to have the 1935 convention. French Lick put in a bid, calling attention to the ease of demonstrating equipment on the golf course right outside the convention hall.

Green Section Work Continues

Greenkeepers who have been crying about the enforced curtailment of Green Section activities because of lack of USGA funds were tremendously cheered by Sansom Depew, chairman of the Green Section, who was the headline speaker at the association's annual banquet. Depew indicated that the USGA might soon announce that it was agreeable to the sectional solicitation of funds for maintenance of turf gardens and other research work; these funds to be spent in the section from which they were subscribed and under the coordinating supervision of the USGA.

The greenkeepers' appreciation of USGA action in continuing the vital work of the Green Section was expressed in making Herbert Jaques, president of the USGA, one of the association's few honorary members.

Interest and action in this matter prob-

NAGA NEW OFFICIALS

President—W. J. Sansom, Toronto (Ont.) G. C.
Vice-President—Fred Burkhardt, Westwood C. C., Cleveland.

Secretary-Treasurer—A. J. Brandon, St. Charles (Ill.) C. C.

President Emeritus—Col. John Morley, Youngstown (O.) C. C.

Directors—L. J. Feser, John Anderson, Edward B. Dearie, Jr., Jack Gormley, John Quail, Robert Scott.

ably is one of the most significant developments in the golf field during the past 10 years. In importance to each golfer, the USGA's determination to maintain the Green Section work undoubtedly ranks ahead of the balloon ball subject which caused so much comment several years back. With budgets hacked to the limit and clubs in keen competition for members, course conditioning during depression years has been a baffling problem. From an attitude of suspicion and harsh criticism the greenkeepers switched to a position of lively gratefulness and appreciation of Green Section service. There can be no denying that had it not been for Green Section practical aid to the greenkeepers, budget cuts would have resulted in the general standard of course maintenance dropping decidedly.

Just what definite announcement the USGA will make on this matter is not known. Merely the tip-off came from Depew at Pittsburgh, but it was enough to give high hope to the greenkeepers. Now if the clubs that employ these greenkeepers and burden them with responsibility will take substantial interest in the Green Section and kick in instead of riding on a pass, golf will continue to benefit from Green Section work.

Get Down to Earth

The program of the educational conference this year was strictly a down-to-earth proposition. A. L. Brandon, superintendent of St. Charles (Ill.) CC, presided at the conference.

John McGregor in his president address told of the tough breaks the greenkeepers had been having with the root of all evil. Not only had many of the former members been compelled to pass up payment of their association dues but the association funds, built up mainly from sale of exhibit space, had been tied up tighter than a wet true-lovers' knot in a Cleveland bank, with dismal prospects of substantial salvage. John also related troubles in getting launched an official bulletin for the association. This job finally was turned over to Leo Feser, who has handled it excellently in its proper function as an association internal medium. Sectional support made possible the start of the bulletin.

McGregor expressed his gratitude for the cooperation his administration received. He strongly advocated the reorganization plan, previously referred to, and pointed out the need for a full-time execu-

GREENKEEPERS GET PUBLICITY

Pittsburgh convention got more greenkeeping general publicity than any previous meeting. Local newspapers featured the event and radio stations put prominent greenkeepers on the air.

Chester Smith of Pittsburgh "Press" interviewed John McGregor over KDKA. Mac also broadcast over WCAG, detailing how the greenkeepers' work is the foundation of successful club operation. He gave golf listeners some tips on cooperation with greenkeepers. Plans for affiliation of the NAGA with overseas greenkeeping bodies also were mentioned.

tive secretary. Because of his belief that a variety of progressive ideas was best for the association, McGregor said he would not accept a second term.

Addresses given at the convention will appear in GOLFDOM as space permits. Several of these appear in this issue.

The convention papers were all featured by a timeliness and practical application that made this year's program one of definite benefit to the clubs whose greenkeepers were able to attend and to take part in the lively informal discussions in which groups of greenkeepers appraised the speakers' remarks in the light of experience on the job.

Closer contact between officials and greenkeepers was clearly in evidence at the convention. Unquestionably the depression has made pals of the harassed top-men of greens departments at golf clubs. "Marse Ganse" Depew has had quite a little to do with promoting cooperation between greenkeepers and their chairmen on an official basis. In his capacity as Green Section head, he again was a prominent figure at the convention. In his banquet speech he paid tribute to Col. John Morley, McGregor, Fred Burkhardt and other officials and members of the association as men whose work in the service of golf has been especially invaluable during the critical past few years. He made an eloquent plea for recognition of the greenkeepers. Depew surveyed the work the Green Section has been doing under the active and capable management of John Monteith and his top-sergeant, Kenneth Welton.