

Fee Course Owners Work For National Association

WITH SECTIONAL daily-fee course associations in Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland and Akron as a nucleus, efforts are being made to form a national daily-fee course association. A letter sent to owners of all of the approximately 800 fee courses in the United States has drawn a 10 per cent reply from courses, but these replies are from courses estimated to represent about 30 per cent of the invested capital.

There you may have the picture of the plight of the fee courses; the larger clubs are desperate enough in many cases to be interested in salvation and the smaller ones are hopeless, figure that they can get by on a five-and-ten-cent platform or just don't give a damn.

One of the main reasons for feeling out the fee course owners on a national organization was the prospect of a code being laid down on them without any organization representative enough to put up a case for all sorts of the courses. Should this code business come up, the fee courses won't have enough time to organize and will have to accept a code which in some cases would practically drive them out of business. Not having more than 3,000 people (excepting caddies) employed at any time of the year nationally, on a generous estimate, the privately-owned fee courses wouldn't be able to make out a case on the strength of labor thrown out of work by an adverse code. The municipal courses, where the politicians usually provide jobs for guys with votes, would be set up as the answer to the need for golf facilities available to the general public.

Private opinion by high officials of the USGA continues to be that there will be no private golf club code put into effect, except in cases where the clubs are shown to be operating in competition with privately-owned business establishments. Private club competition has been a big factor in wrecking the fee course business, so the leading fee course owners are of the opinion that a national fee organization can use this code business in bringing the competitive private clubs into line as well as to stabilize prices and control internal competition among fee courses.

Consequently those who believe a national fee course association will be a strong factor in lifting the fee courses up to a generally profitable basis are planning

ANNUAL STATEMENTS WANTED!

THIS is our annual request for your club's latest financial statement. Each year we receive hundreds of reports from clubs throughout the country and from these statements are able to analyze and tabulate the comparative health and well-being of golf for the past year and to forecast the sort of season that lies ahead.

Whether your club is an unpretentious 9-hole layout or a large multiple-course organization, we would like a financial statement for 1933. Nor does it matter whether your club operated at a profit or at a loss. We are interested in the true picture of 1933 results.

An early issue of GOLFDOM will contain a report on what these statements show, but individual clubs will not be named unless they operated at substantial profit during 1933.

on following up their first letter with a summary of the responses to the first letter and then seeing what the boys want to do.

"STORM IS OVER," SAYS PHILLY GUS

Pittsburgh, Pa.—Representative of the brighter attitude among golf course equipment and supply dealers was the statement made by T. L. Gustin, head of Philadelphia Toro Co., at the greenkeepers' convention.

"The new deal begins to appear in the golf field," Gustin comments, "because there is noticeable evidence of a desire to let someone make a living in the golf business. At this year's convention nothing has been heard of the visionary co-op buying 'services' that intend to save about one per cent net to the clubs, not counting the cost of service sacrificed because dealers no longer could afford to supply that additional and expensive emergency attention that was possible when the dealer had even a bare chance for a profit.

"I have missed sleep many a night chasing work that would enable a greenkeeper to get his worn equipment out on the course the next morning, and have not charged for the service. But it cost someone something; first of all me and other distributors who have given service, and, in the long run, the clubs.

"Today's deal is to allow a fair profit. I see the trend sharply defined in other businesses. The appearance of this tendency in the golf business is a cheering and overdue sign of better management."