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Clubs Riding Deadhead Are USGA Financial Problem

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A NNUAL REPORT of the executive committee of the USGA must have caused Herbert Jaques, president of the association, to repeat Hamlet's moan: "*The time is out of joint; O cursed spite, That ever I was born to set it right!*"

But Jaques is a hard and able young man to whom the tough problems of golf are no novelty; he was chairman of the Implements and Ball committee when the heavy matter of the lighter ball was laid in his lap. Having worked that out to general satisfaction, destiny seems to have picked him to solve the critical membership and financial problem revealed by the 1933 report. Herb, as conductor of the tour, is puzzled by so many passengers riding deadhead. He can't toss the vags out on the roadbed as is the customary practice when wayfarers want to ride but won't pay.

Three hundred and thirty-six golf clubs resigned their membership in the association during 1933. By selling securities at a price of \$19,061.15 and after paying off a loan of \$15,000, the association operated so its surplus at the end of the fiscal year was \$37,349.54. The USGA surplus on November 30, 1930, was \$114,406.44. Operating loss for 1933 was \$6,932.60.

Let's reflect on the last of the circus years when the Jones finale brought up the tournament income of the USGA to \$53,432.30. We can take 1930 (with the exception of

tournament income) as something like a normal year because the effects of the depression had not been generally and severely felt by golf (with the marked exception of the shrinkage in value of USGA security holdings). Here are some comparative figures:

	1933	1931	1930
Dues	\$22,140	\$31,080	\$31,800
Entry fees	9,000	9,940	7,865
Admissions	12,031	20,140	53,432
Total	\$43,171	\$61,160	\$93,097

There is a drop in 1933 income of about \$50,000 from 1930 and \$18,000 from 1931. The increase in entry fees is due to the sectional qualifying expansion of the amateur championship. To the 1933 income is added a net of \$1,361 from the advertising in the programs at the Open, Amateur and Women's championships.

Now for a comparison of major expenses:

	1933	1931	1930
Administration ..	\$16,786	\$28,513	\$24,048
Green Section ...	26,256	44,032	44,918
Total	\$43,042	\$72,545	\$68,966

It took a year for the USGA to find out what the departure of Jones meant to the championship gates (of which the USGA got 50% of the net) but since the whole country took more than a year to realize

that Santa Claus had been shot, no one can criticize the \$11,000 excess of major expense items over the major income items in 1931. By 1933 the USGA was strictly on a cash-and-carry basis, with all charge accounts closed out.

But now comes the tough part. Expenses of the New York office have been cut down to the point where another dime hacked off would be serious and Green Section operations have been curtailed to a degree that is dangerous in these critical times for course maintenance.

Section Bows to Funds Famine

The Green Section during the depression has given vital help to the golf clubs. Many of the clubs that used Green Section findings in saving themselves from costly and lasting mistakes, and in effecting sound thrift in their maintenance expenses, didn't contribute a penny to the USGA income for Green Section operation. They apparently think all the USGA has to do for dough is to wave the wand over a silk hat and out comes the American flag, a Belgian hare and \$100,000.

The greenkeepers, poor devils, have a close-up on the value of the Green Section's work. Four years ago there were many greenkeepers whose attitude toward the Green Section was one of suspicion, if not of outright contempt. They regarded the Green Section as a crew of high-falutin', scientific guys who didn't know what the hell the score was on actual dirt and grass. When the pinch came and course budgets were cut in a couple of years from 30 to 50 per cent and the harassed greenkeepers had to exercise superhuman ingenuity to keep the courses from deteriorating tragically, they found out that the Green Section was a keystone in American golf.

The Midwest turf garden at the Lasker Mill Road farm will cease firing this year, in the battle against course maintenance problems, the Green Section *Bulletin* discontinued and the activities of the Section otherwise curtailed drastically, unless money is made available.

Need Cash for Walker Cup Team

The USGA not only hasn't got the money it would like to devote to the Green Section, but it has another drag that it can't escape this year. The Walker Cup matches will be played in England. The last time we sent a team across it cost the USGA \$9,511.79. Rate of exchange and recently increased trans-Atlantic travel costs will make the rap plenty this year.

What can the USGA do about its financial plight?

Not a thing, unless the golf clubs of the country bat up and lay their dough on the line as members. The club has to be pretty badly off that doesn't get far more than the cost of its USGA dues in the definite value it receives from Green Section service. Dues are only \$30 per club.

The critical situation is one that calls for attention and action by the boards of all non-member clubs at their next meetings.

Other high-spots of the executive committee's report for 1933:

Changes in rules of golf already approved by the R&A went into effect January 1, 1934, in the U. S. USGA suggests that clubs secure from the association, at 110 E. 42d St., New York, copies of the revised rule book for distribution to members. Prices will be sent on request.

USGA's share of the Open championship gate in 1933 was \$3,713 under the 1932 take, and the Amateur gate cut to the USGA was \$2,631 under 1932. The good news came from last year's Women's National, which brought in \$2,407 to the USGA. This was far in excess of USGA Women's National revenue in any previous year. Tip-off to what an attraction this championship is becoming lies in the fact that all play with the exception of the last day's 36-hole final, is in the morning. USGA courses and dates for 1934:

Amateur—Country Club of Brookline—Sept. 10 to 15.

Open—Merion Cricket Club—June 7, 8, 9.

Women's—Whitemarsh Valley C. C.—Oct. 1 to 6.

Public Links—Pittsburgh Muni Links—July 30 to Aug. 4.

Women's International—Chevy Chase club—Sept. 22.

Walker Cup—St. Andrews—May 11 and 12.

Longer session for the Amateur means that the first day there will be 52 18-hole matches with 76 players drawing byes. The 52 winners and 76 bye players go into 18-hole matches the second day. There will be two 18-hole rounds on the third and fourth days. Semi-finals and finals will be at 36 holes. Ex-champions "in good standing" are assured of places in the amateur championship field.

The USGA reported 855 member clubs as of Nov. 30, 1933.

No important matters were put up to Implements and Ball committee for decision.