

ARLINGTON SAVED!

By HERB GRAFFIS

USGA Increases Green Section Budget to Preserve Research

THE USGA has answered the distress cries which arose after the association announced that the Arlington turf garden, center of Green Section research work, would be discontinued this year due to lack of funds.

Digging down into its reserve fund, the USGA managed to come up with enough to maintain the Arlington garden and save for the nation's golf clubs the great and irreplaceable investment in research represented by the Arlington plots.

Official announcement of Arlington's preservation, as released by the U. S. Golf Assn. over the signature of its secretary, Frank M. Hardt, read as follows:

Experiments on matters affecting every golf course in the country are to be resumed immediately by the Green Section of the USGA. They will be conducted at the Arlington turf garden in Washington, D. C., on government-owned ground, by the scientific staff of the Green Section's Washington bureau, under the direction of Dr. John Monteith, Jr.

To enable widening of the Green Section's scope in this and other directions, the USGA has appropriated \$5,000. The fund will be used at the discretion of Harold W. Pierce, of Boston, chairman of the Green Section Committee, and Dr. Monteith. US Department of Agriculture officials have promised to cooperate.

Dr. Monteith's plans call for work on varieties of grasses, soil improvement, disease and weed control, and kindred matters.

At the start of the present year it was planned to continue the reduced appropriation for Green Section work and to limit the Washington bureau's activities to ad-

visory and educational service, on a budget of \$10,000.

However, a feeling grew that a major phase of the work should be experimentation. This sentiment seemed justified by the Green Section's contributions in other years, findings which definitely elevated golf-course standards and resulted in uncounted financial savings to clubs.

Therefore, believing the work too valuable to be abandoned, that a real need exists for it, the USGA has decided upon revival even though it should involve dipping into reserve funds.

The Washington bureau will continue to advise individual member clubs on their specific problems.

When news of the intention of the USGA to abandon Arlington appeared in GOLFDOM, greenkeepers and green-chairmen began to have cold chills. One prominent club official of the Pacific Coast estimated that Green Section service had been worth \$30,000 to his club. Other sectional association officials such as Harry Radix, president of the Chicago District GA and Leo Baumann, head of the St. Louis district green section also got busy.

Golf seed and equipment houses and golf turf nurseries began to sweat. One of the nurseries, The Old Orchard Turf Nurseries of Madison, Wis., sent out to the grass trade the following letter to golf turf nurseries:

No doubt you have noticed in GOLFDOM that the Arlington Turf Gardens of the USGA Green Section may be forced to discontinue.

You and I, as nurserymen, have reaped many rewards from the research work and the data on turf production and main-

tenance in past seasons and it would hurt us as nurserymen to have this valuable source of information discontinued.

Our united efforts may be of some value toward carrying on the good cause by writing to our senators asking them to appropriate money to support turf works of all kinds. Also write to the Secretary of Agriculture; Harold W. Pierce, Ch. Green Section, USGA, 74 State street, Boston, Mass., and furthermore, to make sure that all golf clubs in your district belong to the USGA.

Some of the experiments have been going on for fifteen years and discontinuing these experimental plots for even one year means the sacrifice of years of investment in incomplete research and starting all over and waiting another fifteen years until Arlington catches up to its condition at the time of discontinuance.

We hope you will agree with us that the Green Section is a very important source of knowledge to the fine turf nurserymen and no stone should be left unturned to keep it going.

What the Show-Down Showed

Defections in the personnel of the Green Section kept getting more serious. Ken Welton, right bower to Dr. John Monteith, jr., technical head of the Green Section, resigned to take up government soil erosion work; thus another valuable man, extremely well acquainted with golf course turf and maintenance problems was lost.

As is customary in human affairs, the tendency was to pass the buck and blame the USGA for the whole serious condition. But calm second thought showed that the fault began in another spot. The USGA depended on member clubs and as long as clubs wanted to deadhead on Green Section service instead of paying \$30 annual dues, the USGA wasn't able to get enough dues and tournament income to finance the Green Section up to its bare needs.

These sectional officials who became intensely interested in the plight of the Green Section quickly saw that what was needed was sharply focused sectional campaigns to get clubs in all localities to join the USGA. There are extremely few clubs that can't afford the \$30 annually for the USGA on the basis of Green Section work alone, but bringing this point before individual club boards for action is something that has to be done by men personally acquainted with members of the boards. The deal has been complicated by the sectional associations' own problems of membership.

What possibly will be the outcome of this crisis in Green Section affairs is a reorganization of the Green Section of the USGA, bringing into intimate contact with the national association all of the sectional associations and trade organizations, somewhat along the lines of the British Greenkeeping Research organization which works closely with the various golf unions of the empire.

To Expand Section's Reach?

There certainly is an opening for more effective selling of USGA memberships through the medium of the Green Section. Hundreds of letters for advice are received from non-USGA clubs each year, without the valuable replies to such inquiries making a bid for memberships. Apparently the association's gentlemanly error has been in taking too broad a view of service to the game, not realizing that with many clubs changing officials each year there are bound to be many new officials who don't realize that the USGA has to be run with money.

After one has been a green-chairman for a few years, the value of the Green Section's service is fully realized, but the frequent turn-over in chairmanships is such that a lot of these officials are in the dark as to the Green Section's functions and not of a mind to acquaint themselves with facts.

Indicative of the serious prospects for conscientious green chairmen comes from the sage and observing Ray Slotter, green-chairman of Philmont CC, in a recent letter to GOLFDOM. Without Green Section research and every other aid, the green-chairman and greenkeeper these days are fighting for the course with the odds against them generally, because, as Slotter points out:

I am very much afraid, in these days of curtailment of cost, club executives are "becoming set" in their thoughts that economy can go on forever and the battle of chairmen and greenkeeper to obtain budgets will be terrific.

A good greenkeeper gets his work done for economical reasons before interference by members during play and for convenience of members playing, with the result that workmen are not always visible on the course. Many board members wonder where all the men can be. Then too, very few laymen realize that turf can be compared to human beings, it is subject to disease, in need of medicine and nourishment and sorely in need of help in the proper upkeep during the season.