

LESSONS BY THE YEAR!

**Members, for a flat annual charge,
entitled to lessons at any time**

AT THE Worcester (Mass.) CC, an idea is being nicely worked out that may have wide and beneficial effect on golf as a satisfying recreation for club members and as a business career for professionals. Briefly, the Worcester idea is to put golf instruction on the basis of coaching as it is done at universities, where the entire student body may take advantage of expert coaching talent, instead of on the now general practice of having lessons paid for individually.

The method employed is to make a charge of \$20 a year a fixed item of the club charge to all members. This \$20, in the case of Worcester, is paid \$10 at the start of the season in April, and \$10 in September. The \$20 covers the expense of club-cleaning and individual lessons, without additional charge, whenever the member arranged for them.

At a club of 300 members, that means \$3,000 at the start of the season with which the pro can finance his shop stocks and beginning operations, and \$3,000 coming in when the pro is faced with that stern problem of how to support his family during the winter.

Willie Ogg, veteran pro-supt. at Worcester's Country club, reports that the plan in its first year is working out to the satisfaction of members, the board and the professional. He forecasts extensive adoption of the plan by clubs where it is applicable, and a future of wholesome influence on the pro job and service situation.

The function of a golf club, Ogg points out, is to provide the greatest possible recreational enjoyment to its members. Proficiency in the game obviously is an assurance of more enjoyment, and certainly proficiency can be developed by competent instruction. However, either due to a casual regard for golf instruction as a non-essential or due to the false fear of undue expense involved, many members do not give golf lessons the opportunity to increase the player's enjoyment of the game and of the club.

Therefore, reasoned the Worcester officials, broadening the scene of golf instruc-

tion is advisable in order that members use the club more and get more out of each visit to it. Results to date have amply confirmed the judgment of the Worcester board.

Ogg relates that when the news of the plan got around there was some belief that it would be a bad thing for the pro. Individual lesson income was sacrificed and a murderous schedule of instruction was in prospect. The matter of arranging lesson schedules to keep everyone happy also was viewed as a detail that couldn't be solved. In some cases, Ogg admits, these factors would damn the plan, but in the Worcester situation, which is representative of many first class clubs, all has been serene.

Pro and Aid Must Be Competent

The plan requires not only that the club have a competent pro instructor, but that the pro make careful choice of his assistant and religiously attend to the assistant's training and performance so the teaching may be split between the pro and his assistant without complaints that the pro is playing favorites among the members.

Booking of lessons is not the problem that one might think it would be. Ogg keeps checking up to see that the members all make use of this teaching to which their payment entitles them. He believes that a fifteen-minute lesson period in most cases under this plan, will solve any problem of booking.

The effect that such a plan, if widely adopted, would have on the pro job situation is plain. A competent coach couldn't be replaced by a low-scoring caddie of inadequate instruction qualifications, because the members would effectively protest. Selection and education of assistants would become an important detail of the pro job and an apprenticeship under a

good man would become almost an essential to the ambitious young man who wanted and deserved a pro job of his own.

Ogg testifies that the plan has practically doubled his shop sales thus far this year over last year, because it brings everyone into his shop. He gets well acquainted with all the members and is in position to see what they need. The plan has greatly increased interest in play and has effected a substantial increase in clubhouse business. It keeps the pro department in frequent contact with the members because when a member has booked a lesson and can not appear, his alternate on the lesson book, is notified by the pro-shop in plenty of time to fill in. Thus the pro's non-productive time is kept at a minimum.

"It does your heart good," says Ogg, "to see how many of the players who never have had lessons before are beginning to get very good games as the result of instruction.

"Members ask me how I can afford to go in on such a plan and I tell them I had to do it to relieve the traffic on the right hand side of our course. We had too many slicers who needed the cure of golf lessons."

The Worcester pro admits that in its present stage the plan is not one that can be successfully applied at all clubs, but he avers that it is showing many benefits at Worcester. If there is a pro disadvantage to it, Ogg remarks, it is that of work and a lot of it, but the pro who isn't eager to work providing he can get an income commensurate with his effort, his ability and the results, had better pick another field of employment.

He does see in this plan a logical chance for building up many of the smaller club jobs to the point where they will be attractive to good pros and afford fair rewards for the labors by the simple process of bringing to all of the club's members the profitable pleasure of better scores.

Greenkeeper's Mind Most Important Maintenance Equipment

WHILE referring to overhauling and repairs of course equipment, it is well not to forget the most important piece of equipment used in maintaining a modern golf course—the greenkeeper's mind.

Perhaps there are a few worn-out or antiquated parts there in the form of theories or so-called practical ideas. Perhaps some of these ideas had better be

scrapped and replaced; others may need simply a little polishing and sharpening by rubbing against similar ideas from other minds or through the printed page.

The club assumes the bill for the parts and replacements in the mowing equipment for the course, so why not include at least part of the expense involved in improvements in the mental equipment to be used on the course?

It is argued that the particular piece of equipment mentioned above does not belong to the club and may leave at any time. Regardless of the merits of this contention, there seems to be no reasonable argument against the club assuming the bill for a good collection of books, bulletins and pamphlets to become a permanent part of the greenkeeping equipment.

Throughout the season a modern greenkeeper who knows how to use books will find plenty of occasions for a handy library.—USGA Green Section Comments.

Re-Seeds Fairways—Dixwell Davenport, USGA Green Section member and greenchaimen of San Francisco GC, who has been experimenting for some time with methods of re-seeding fairways without interfering with play, reports considerable success with a recently tried method.

Davenport says, "We take a strip of the fairway 150 yds. from the tee and lay out a strip at right angles across the fairway 50 yds. wide. This we cut close by going over it twice with power mowers. Then we spray with sulphite of ammonia, using about 200 lbs. to the acre, and allow to stand about two hours until the weeds are burned. Then it is watered and seeded with bluegrass, redtop and New Zealand bent, the mixture being 50 lbs. New Zealand bent to 100 lbs. redtop and 100 lbs. bluegrass, seeding 150 lbs to the acre. Then we heavily topdress with good loam and water it in.

"In two weeks we have a lush growth of bluegrass and redtop and in about three weeks the bent begins to come up through this grass. This fall it will look like Casey's parlor. We get rid of all carrot-grass, Japanese clover and plantain and retard the growth of all other weeds by smothering them.

"In the re-seeded portion we play winter rules and before the growing season leaves us, which will be about the first of October, we will have all of the fairways re-seeded. Many of our players now are using drivers off the re-seeded fairways."