

Jersey Municipal Course Solves Tee Wear Problem

By GENE F. HAMPSON

COMBINATION of a suggestion carried in GOLFDOM (May, 1934) plus a bit of experimenting has enabled the maintenance department of the Union County Park commission in New Jersey to solve one of the great problems confronting them at their attractive 27-hole Galloping Hill public golf course at Kenilworth.

The problem which appears to be solved is that of suitable tees, always a leading trouble-maker for officials of public links. Because of the heavy traffic this Jersey course, which has proved popular ever since its construction, tees were cut up more quickly than workers could repair them.

Therefore it was up to club officials to seek some substitute for grass which would be sturdy and yet contain as many as possible of the characteristics of a natural tee. The first workable hint came from a GOLFDOM story telling of the use of Masonite by a Mid-Western club.

Tested

Thirty Materials

Jarvis Badgley, assistant superintendent of maintenance for the Union County Park commission, was intrusted with the task of finding whether or not this idea was suitable for Galloping Hill. Badgley tested 30 different materials before he was satisfied that in Insulite he had found the best working material.

Once convinced in his own mind that Insulite was the best available substance, Jarvis ordered the construction of several experimental tees for the Galloping Hills course. Strips were cut from the board, 2½ inches in width and 5 feet in length. The material is approximately ½ inch in thickness.

Boxes to hold the strips were then built, 5 by 10 ft., 2 in. in height. At first they were constructed without bottoms but after some difficulties it was discovered that bottoms were needed. The boxes were sunk into the tees, flush with the surface.

Prior to the installation of the strips, the material was treated with a green stain mixed with gasoline, which not only served to harmonize the tee with its natural setting but also to waterproof the Insulite to some extent. The strips were nailed

surface-to-surface into sections of 18 and set edgewise into the boxes, so that the strips extended one-half inch above the turf.

Saves Through No Repairs

The idea of sections was adopted for several reasons. Not only do they handle easier but it is also possible to replace worn sections without disturbing the entire tee. Strips can be turned over when they become worn on one side. It was found that the cost of each tee was approximately \$15 but officials found it a distinct saving over constant repairs to grass surfaces.

To tee-up the golfer simply inserts a wooden tee into the edge of the Insulite. It is easy to push a tee into the material, yet the wood fibers of which it is made grip firmly.

The tees became immediately popular with the public golfers who found that they not only acted quite well on the shot but also afforded them a far better footing than possible on lumpy or badly torn tees. It was early discovered that the mechanical tees were by far the better in wet weather, the footing being secure.

Wood shots act extremely well on the Insulite tees, it being nearly impossible to miss a shot, since the club head glances off the material if hit too deep. While not quite as satisfactory for iron shots, the tees nevertheless are exceedingly serviceable and have been adopted for all shots by many regular players of the course.

A survey conducted by the Union County Park commission revealed the fact that 55% of all players used the artificial tees. On some days this percentage ranged as high as 80 with the resulting saving to grass surfaces, protecting them for the more skillful golfer and enabling workmen to repair them before they became too badly worn.

So popular have the tees become that the idea is being studied by officials of other public courses in New Jersey and they probably will order such tees installed before play opens next spring.

DURING the depression some clubs have forgotten the utility and comfort of wisely located shelters around the courses. Construction or rehabilitation of shelters should be checked when next year's budgets are being planned.