

GREENKEEPER QUALIFIES

By CLINTON KENT
BRADLEY

*He Is In Best Position to Determine
Course Needs, Now Budgets Are Bigger*

*"Labor and hoard,
Worry and wed,
And your great reward
Comes when you're dead;
A long time to sweat,
A little to shiver,
If that's all we get,
Where is the river?"*
—GRASSHOPPER PHILOSOPHY.

GREENKEEPERS' perennial problems with climatic conditions are again on hand. In better times, weather was taken as a matter of course. Today, the elements are an important influence on cause and cost of keeping things green.

Industry as a whole has kept going these lean years on the reserves stored up in times of plenty. The business of turf production and golf course maintenance was one of the first to feel the effects of curtailment, and in many cases, will be the last to recover. Great withdrawals have been made from soil fertility reserves, and many courses are trying in vain to produce modern play requirements with antiquated equipment that is suffering from upkeep.

Extremes of weather, dry or wet, play havoc with turf and tool.

The results of stringent "economy" are apparent on many courses. Ravages of insects, disease and the encroachment of weeds can be observed from the lack of seed, fertilizer and control materials. Hard greens, scald and thin turf appear from the lack of proper irrigation, drainage, and maintenance facilities.

The greenkeeper sees the wear that occurs on mower knives and drive wheels in dry weather. While the grass may not need cutting, mowing must be done to keep down weed growth and to even turf. Due to lack of lubricating action of grass, the reels, even though properly adjusted, soon heat, expand and bind, resulting in excess wear. Loose soil in thin turf drifts around grass stools, and pebbles work up that nick and damage vital machine parts.

Worn and insufficient irrigation equipment has to work overtime, at additional

cost, which makes normal dry weather a dread to the man who produces your golf facilities.

Now is the time to make note of these conditions, and take an inventory of your golf course investment. In making up the year's budget, an emergency fund should be set aside to meet unexpected conditions as they arise. Every official from the president down the line should confer with the greenkeeper. Consider him the sole judge of what amount should be set aside, and if he sees need to draw on this money, permit him to do so with a free hand, without delay of board meetings. Don't worry about him spending needlessly. From what I know of greenkeepers, their own personal financial budgeting makes them wise spenders.

From the business standpoint, it is only fair to him that he be properly compensated for his valued services. And finally, amortize your equipment and material costs by setting aside an annual depreciation fund for repairs and replacement. This is not a wail, but a warning!

N. Y. Greensman Comments on Golf Course Labor Conditions

Editor, GOLFDOM

Dear Sir:

I am very glad to see from Joe Meister's article in October GOLFDOM that there is at least one green-chairman who realizes the importance of a competent and steady force of greensmen.

It certainly is true that a greenkeeper has his troubles keeping good men from year to year. When he can't keep them and has to go to the risk and expense of training new men, whose fault is it? It's the club's fault, for when the season is ended the greensmen are dismissed on short notice and with no recognition or thanks.

Does the club give these men a Christmas present of five or ten dollars? Very, very seldom. The club probably will boast of having a surplus in the treasury while the men who have worked for it have to go on relief unless they are lucky

enough to pick up odd jobs during the off-season.

Do you wonder why few men come back to golf course work in the spring? The clubs either don't realize the situation or don't give a damn. They are going to have to pay higher wages for the men they can get to work during the season because they have neglected to show any interest in these men in the off-months. In the spring the clubs ask, "where is this man and where is that man," but they didn't give a damn about the men in the fall. So when spring comes and the greenkeeper asks a good man to come back to the club to work, the good man says to the greenkeeper . . . [Remark unfortunately must be deleted although it is a gem as a soul's outburst.—Ed.]

If clubs would show a little more consideration for the men who do the work on the golf courses the men also would show their appreciation by doing better work and by coming back in the spring.

Half of the clubs don't even appreciate an honest man. If a greenkeeper saves some money on his budget the club should show its appreciation by giving him part of the saving to split between himself and

his force. Do they? Like hell they do! They just cut his budget the next year.

If clubs would take a tip from Meister's article in *GOLFDOM*, golf clubs would be more pleasant places to work and better work would be done.

John
(Just a course laborer).

Greenkeepers Course at Michigan State Covers Field Well

GOLF is big business in Michigan. In the Detroit area alone the golf courses have assessed valuations in excess of 20 million dollars, says a newspaper press release on the course in turf management at Michigan State college, which begins Jan. 4.

The greenkeepers at Michigan State college are given information in practical floriculture, landscaping, golf course machinery, grass growing methods, soils and fertilizers, control of weeds and diseases and pests, tree trimming and even practical work in golf course accounts and bookkeeping.

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