

ROLL CALL

*... of the progress of golf in
1937 and its promise for 1938*

HERE'S the story of 1937 in the golf business, together with those business lessons and reminders of the season that foremost authorities in every phase of the business consider most useful for reference when establishing 1938 operating policies.

This survey of the golf business situation, in the opinion of experienced golf club officials, constitutes a series of valuable guide posts to be observed by incoming administrations of golf clubs. To those who cooperated in supplying data the thanks of the golf field and of GOLFDOM is most sincerely given.

Highlights of the 1937 developments were:

Membership increase that returned waiting lists to clubs;

Play increase of approximately 18% in number of rounds;

Lengthening of season in northern and central states to offset rainy weather;

Increase in club bar revenue helping to offset advances in food costs;

Golf club buying on active, but conservative financial basis;

Increased labor costs bringing serious problems to greenkeepers and managers;

Hot, humid weather troubles in course maintenance;

Pro instruction of juniors at schools and clubs accounting for biggest year golf has had in introducing youngsters to the game;

Federal Trade Commission complaint against PGA and Ball Manufacturers' Assn. ending attempt to solve ball merchandising problems with PGA ball deal;

Club interest in building modern pro-shops;

Heavy increase in practice range patronage;

Manufacturer-pro inauguration of golf promotion plan.

Following are reports from club presidents and secretaries, from pros and greenkeepers, and from greens supply dealers commenting on conditions in their districts.

NEW ENGLAND

New addition to locker-room; on second floor new locker-room for women and on ground floor new pro-shop. Cost, about \$21,000. Completion of 10 year campaign for modernizing course and operating facilities. Bad season for dollar brown-patch with consequent increase in preventive and treatment costs. Weather also probably responsible for manure beetle trouble. Greens spiking and arsenate of lead to combat manure beetle; fairways slightly affected.

Club's own sand pit is exhausted, hence sand replacement of trapping on 27 holes is becoming an appreciable expense. During past 5 years more than 90 traps have been taken out without changing famous championship character of course. Brookline has been in black figures all through depression so has not been forced to spend heavily in 1937 for restoring clubhouse and course to good condition. Play same as 1936. Club operating plans are made on long term basis with results that highly

• NO MORE GOLFDOMS UNTIL JANUARY •

In accordance with our annual custom, there will be no issues of GOLFDOM in the months of November and December. The next issue of this magazine will be dated January and will reach readers on or about January 5th, 1938.

endorse this policy as wise change from one-year plans of most club administrations.

• *Harold W. Pierce*

Another prominent N. E. club, tells a significant story of revival. The club prefers that its identity not be revealed in this instance but furnishes the information as an illustration of what has been done by exclusive clubs that were hard hit by the depression.

Our club started in 1926, buying 800 acres and building 18-hole course and clubhouse for \$500,000. Money was all borrowed from members. Interest has been defaulted now for several years. Membership dropped from about 550 to 250 but it is now back to over 400, mainly as the result of an organized drive for new members in May of this year, which resulted in 102 new members and an increase in income of \$10,000 a year, due to the efforts of about 100 members who attended 6 dinner meetings and by those meetings were inspired to go out and make a real solicitation of desirable members after these prospects had been passed on by the membership committee. At the start hardly any of us thought that we would get over 25 new members by this method but we actually got 25 old members to rejoin and found a large number of men who had stopped playing golf during the height of the depression had not been inspired to take it up again. We also found many newcomers in the district who had actually not been invited to join any club.

Put in a complete fairway watering system with our own wells and pumps, and as a result have real fairways, which we have not had in the past. We have instituted free golf tournaments, which have increased the competitive play greatly.

We are now about to go through a financial reorganization in order that the club may have the benefit of a sound financial situation. Probably the best that we can do is pay about one-quarter of the amount of interest that is really called for by the original bonds.

There has been talk of a swimming pool which most everyone thinks would be a paying proposition and offer additional inducement for the youngsters to use the club. We are also considering changing all the grass on our greens to velvet bent,

from the Metropolitan bent on which we have had to spend about \$1500 annually for topdressing in order to keep the grain at minimum. Our experience is that with velvet bent we would not have to topdress more than twice and would have a more accurate putting surface at all times.

There is a real need of golf committees in all clubs making more of an effort to stimulate competition and play, as there is real competition in a recreational way in our vicinity with yachting, horseback riding, tennis, etc. Cannot say there has been much increase in the play at our course this year, which may be due to an unusually hot summer. Municipal courses are doing a large business in this vicinity, increasing the number of golfers substantially.

Clubs that have weathered the depression in this vicinity are in good shape financially and will make substantial progress next year.

Name Withheld

Country Club of New Bedford (Mass.) is finishing a prosperous year. Our membership, all classes—was 359 last year and this year is 374; most increase has come in the active membership.

We have, during this year, made considerable improvements in our clubhouse by changing from coal to oil heat, repainting and refurbishing the locker-rooms, etc. There has been little change in the golf course itself.

While we have had increased membership, at the same time it has been necessary to raise the pay to laborers, largely on account of the Social Security Act.

This year's State amateur champion, David Whiteside, comes from our club and that fact has given considerable enthusiasm to the golfers in this neighborhood.

Our invitation four-ball tournament in August was a very great success, both from the social and the golf side.

*Hart Cummins,
Sec.-Treas.*

Estimated income from the Rutland (Vt.) CC for 1937 is between 10% and 15% in excess of that for 1936. The membership, insofar as number is concerned, is 321 as of Sept. 1st, this year, compared with 319 the same date last year. The class of membership, however, has changed

substantially, there having been resignations from quite a few members who pay relatively low dues and the additional members are mostly of a class paying the highest dues.

Future prospects of our club appear to be very satisfactory. We are planning on spending several thousand dollars this fall and next spring in reconstructing the men's locker-room and attendant facilities.

Other clubs in this district I assume are in satisfactory condition, as the tourist business through Vermont this year has been relatively heavy.

C. H. Maurice,
Pres.

NEW YORK METROPOLITAN

Satisfactory collections indicate healthy financial condition of clubs. Present figures rosy and in course equipment business would be acceptable for 1938 and 1939. Present stock market situation has depressing effect on N. Y. golf club business. Number of clubs at present allows for increase in players. Sales of course maintenance equipment and supplies far in advance of last year, due to essential replacements and conditioning, as well as to general improvement in business conditions earlier in the year and several years' work of golf clubs in getting themselves into sound financial shape.

Portion of recent increase in supply business due to lead arsenate orders to control Jap beetles. Irrigation equipment sales retarded by wet early summer.

Buying trends include:

Increase of annual fairway fertilization programs;

Increase of high organic nitrogen content fertilizer use;

Increase in bent seed for repairing severe attacks of brown-patch—also appreciable increase in fairway seed sales;

Extensive replacement of worn and obsolete maintenance equipment, spurred by sharp rise in labor prices which has forced more and faster mechanical work on courses.

Arthur D. Peterson

Pro reports indicate play increase of from 15% to 20% over 1936. In playing about 30 different courses in this section I have found them in very fine shape considering adverse weather conditions. Some greens in bad shape due to soil binding into a caky crust on top of greens. Frequent spiking and topdressing of powdered peat moss, I have found, corrects the condition.

Pro business in NY metropolitan district suffering from cut-price store competition which I estimate costs pro about 25% of his legitimate business. Can't blame members for buying 75-cent standard brand balls at cut prices, but am convinced change in certain practices of manu-



When fire destroyed the clubhouse of Tam O'Shanter CC (Chicago district) last fall, the club promptly laid plans for a replacing building. Here you see it as recently completed; its interesting site is along the upper reach of the Chicago river.

facturers would stop this price cutting which threatens continuance of 75-cent retail ball price in this district and serious loss to manufacturers as well as pros.

New lines of golf merchandise look better, especially bags. Smartest idea I've seen in 1938 lines is detachable back pocket that can be used as carry-all bag.

Pro work in Westchester County has been responsible for increase in play, especially among women. A schedule of 25 events in which men and women amateurs participate has been responsible for arousing amateurs' interest in their scoring, hence more business in lessons and equipment for pros, and more patronage at clubs.

Adoption of plan to have pros attend monthly board meetings at their clubs has been profitable for clubs this year and deserves extension. Pro is in constant contact with club members and can inform and advise board, also receive information to help him promote general satisfaction of members and improvement of operating conditions within his province.

George McLean,
Grassy Sprain GC

Almost every club in NY Met district has done better this year than last, according to pro business indications. Teaching is up 25%. Ball sales better, altho store competition menaces future of 75-cent standard brand balls, some of which have been sold for as low as 48 cents. PGA ball has helped meet this competition. Many players changing from cheap balls also accounts for pros' business improvement. Club and bag business has been fair; again store low prices on inferior goods cutting into pro volume.

Pro merchandising situation becoming a matter of concern to informed club officials who now realize that the amount and na-

ture of pro service required at a first class club calls for assurance of pro income earned by such service.

At some clubs a pro can only get from 20% to 25% of his members' golf merchandise patronage, yet members expect service that demands the pro hire an assistant and end every year losing money.

The average golfer knows little, if anything, about golf merchandise values and increases his golf cost by indulging in wasteful so-called bargains. As a member of a good club with a good pro he is entitled to shopping protection which the pro can supply. However, only a few members realize that.

If club officials would take action in this matter and so direct their members that a pro could be assured of the bulk of the club members' business in clubs, balls, bags and other golf equipment, the pro would be in a much better position to improve his service facilities for the good of the club and his members, and—with the larger volume—would be able to reduce prices.

As the condition now exists, club official oversight of this matter is curtailing pro ambitions to increase their duties to clubs. Most pros go to club jobs expecting shop service profits will give them a reasonable living for themselves and their families, but with club members uneducated to traditional and basic factor, I am convinced that the net pro income for the U. S. during 1937 was still so low it constituted a danger to the future of golf.

The matter is one that should be discussed between every competent and considerate club official to whom the pro is responsible, and the pro, as a highly important phase of 1938 club plans.

*John Inglis,
Fairview CC*

Membership larger with indications pointing to a substantial increase by opening of 1938. Installed fairway watering in time to show great benefits when late summer drought hit. Considerable damage from brown-patch and Jap beetle in district and greenkeepers and chairmen busy with all scientific preventive methods, plus prayers.

Completely remodeled 3 holes and are having Robert Trent Jones design further course changes for modernization.

*Leonard Tingle, Green Chmn.,
Garden City CC*

CENTRAL NEW YORK

Golf courses in this district all have been in wonderful shape due to the frequent rains. On two or three of the courses, I have never seen the fairways so luxuriant as they have been during all this season.

As a result of this condition, golf play-

ing has come up about 25% over 1936. I can safely say I have never before seen so much enthusiasm in golf in this district.

All the clubs are in better financial shape than they have been during the last five years. Most of them are closed memberships. They are all talking sprinkling systems, and two clubs are installing these this year. As far as our club is concerned, we are planning on the installation next year.

All in all, this 1937 season has been a great one for golf, and it seems to me to prove that greener fairways and better greens create golf interest in a multiplying ratio. At any rate, this is true in this district.

*Nelson G. Corkhill, Green Chmn.,
Irondequoit CC*

Most of the clubs in this district are looking forward to a fine year in 1938 and are contemplating buying more equipment and supplies than they have for some time.

*T. C. Robinson, Sec.-Treas.,
Golf & Tractor Equipment Corp.,
Syracuse, N. Y.*

PHILADELPHIA

Llanerch CC activities have progressed very favorably since the early part of 1936. A membership drive started in February, 1936, secured 100 new selected members. Our club at the end of fiscal year 1937 was nicely in black figures after we had spent considerable money and effort in improving our 27-hole layout, which we feel is one of the best courses in this district. That opinion is shared by many golfing enthusiasts. Club is very fortunate in having a competent staff of officers and directors who are active and successful business managers.

My personal observation of other clubs in this district leads me to believe that golf is continuing to grow and I am pleased to note the number of juniors who are making their initial appearance in this very substantial pastime. Golf is no longer a rich man's game, but can be enjoyed by everyone.

*John P. Frazier, Pres.,
Llanerch CC*

Conditions in the Philadelphia district as reported by course supply dealers reveal a satisfactory financial situation which has settled some old accounts. Decided trend of club buying on quality basis.

Some dealers in this and other sections commented on greenkeepers entering retail seed business selling to members and capitalizing on prestige as men responsible for well kept courses. Seed dealers claim division of greenkeepers' attention will not be profitable to greenkeeper, but

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ROLL CALL OF 1937

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greenkeepers reply that their seed buying for members is result of member demand they had to obey.

PITTSBURGH

Fred Brand, Allegheny CC pro, and veteran observer of golf trends, reports that in the Pittsburgh district lessons and shop sales have increased 10% over 1936, by a conservative estimate. Play, says Brand, is slightly ahead of last year.

Chartiers Heights CC is glad to report the best year since before the depression. We gained about 90 active, golf-playing members, and as a result, the entire activities of the club showed a decided increase. Our dining-room was quite well-supported as well as our various dances and entertainments.

Most clubs in our district have had healthy increases, and there are several whose memberships are entirely filled. We expect this to be the case at our club next year.

Our club installed a complete fairway watering system, built a new amacite road from the road-entrance, re-decorated our entire building, which is 12 years old, bought a new tractor for the course and a new service truck. For next year, we have further improvements in mind, which will, undoubtedly, be possible because of the additional new members. Our expansion program also includes tennis courts and, eventually, a swimming pool.

Because of needed improvements, we have had to watch our finances quite carefully and try not to spend faster than our budget will allow. We have not yet returned to the old system of selling a share of stock to each new member, but after our membership is filled, and we can accommodate about 50 more golf-playing members, we shall again revert to the old system of selling stock with the membership.

*M. C. Hamilton, Pres.,
Chartiers Heights CC*

SOUTHEAST

We are very proud of our record of keeping the club in black during the last several years. We lost quite a number of members in the early stages and had a hard struggle in '34 and '35 to make the grade. In February of this year we put on an intensive drive (invitation membership) and succeeded in securing 55 new members. Some were old members that

had dropped out, but 90% of those taken in were new.

We also remodeled our locker-room and made it very attractive, re-decorated the entire building and added a men's grill, which has helped the good fellowship of the club considerably.

The financial and physical conditions of the clubs nearby, am glad to say, are in rather fair shape. We expect during the winter and early spring to again take in at least a dozen new members because of the better financial conditions in our community.

*W. L. Altenderfer, Pres.,
Fountain Head CC*

Greenkeepers' meetings in Washington and Baltimore this year have brought out information that club financial condition this year is well ahead of 1936. Large estate business comeback in maintenance equipment was a feature of 1937.

C. F. Armiger

Our Club is in a very satisfactory condition in every way. While our membership is about the same as it was last year, interest is much greater in practically every phase of our activities. Golf has increased materially; there was more tennis played on our courts than at any time in the past 10 or 15 years and while our winter social season has not yet opened we believe that this will be successful, too.

As evidence of our faith in the future, we are just completing a renovation of our ballroom and refurnishing of our lounge that will cost in the neighborhood of \$7,000. We have bought new tractors and golf course equipment to the tune of \$1,500, and are contemplating the installation of a swimming pool.

Although our club is not large, we have one of the finest courses in this part of the country and several times have been hosts to major sectional tournaments.

*(Club prefers not to
disclose its identity)*

Membership as of July 1937 compared to July 1936 showed an increase of 21½%. We are advised by our pro that golf has picked up during the past year from 20 to 30%. We are proud of the record of our golf team, which started in 1931 and has lost only one game in eighty-six matches and that, by ½ point. The departmental business as of July 1937 compared to 1936 shows an increase of 23%.

Our club is making forward strides in every line each day, and present conditions indicate a bright future.

During 1936, we completed one of the South's most beautiful swimming pools, constructed eight tennis courts and installed an entire new kitchen at a cost of approximately \$35,000. We are making daily improvements to our clubhouse and are

keeping our tennis courts and golf courses in excellent condition. At the present, we are contemplating only two major improvements within the next few months, consisting of an additional men's room and a new soda fountain.

In spite of the major improvements that we have made during the past year, and the minor daily improvements, the club is in an excellent financial condition, having a current position of 1:1, with ample cash reserve to meet all of our requirements.

*C. Braxton Valentine, Pres.,
The Country Club of Va.*

CLEVELAND

There has been a noticeable upturn in golf activity in the Cleveland district. Play, notwithstanding weather setbacks, is well ahead of 1936. Lessons show a decided increase although still about 50% of 1929. Free lessons to the juniors have been given by most Cleveland district pros.

Pro-shop business continues to have its headaches. Hard for pros to cope with prices on lower grade merchandise dumped through stores. Golfers need education in the value of club and ball quality, especially the public course players. Problem needs concerted study and action by pros and manufacturers, otherwise standard priced merchandise is doomed.

Club officials could help assure their members of exclusively high value merchandise at reasonable prices if they would put "Buy from your pro" educational material in each club mailing.

The hickory-shaft repair business, formerly an important item in pro income, is gone and that has meant an entire new condition for pro department business operation for service and profit. It has meant that the pro has had to adjust his thinking and his work to a new cycle. We can only hope that the readjustment of pros to generally reviving conditions in golf will take place as the result of individual effort on the part of the pro, and cooperation between manufacturers and pros to eliminate many dangerous elements that have been allowed to hang over from the old days.

*Grange Alves,
Acacia CC*

A discouraging detail of pro-shop operation in the Cleveland district during 1937 has been the "buy it wholesale" habit of so many club officials and members. They will spend far more than they save in efforts to "buy it wholesale." I wonder if this condition exists in other golfing sections.

I can't buy my own insurance or groceries or clothing or pay my rent "wholesale," and as a matter of fact unless a fair profit for retailer service is provided

at the pro-shop, I won't be able to buy anything, retail or wholesale.

What can be done about this, I don't know, but I am sure that the national "buy it wholesale" evil has hit Cleveland district pros in a ruinous way.

*(Pro who prefers his identity
not to be disclosed)*

Work of the Ohio Assn. of Golf Course Supts. and its members has been an outstanding item in bringing the state's golf courses through a difficult year. Comparison of notes between greenkeepers at these meetings has been of great value to every club represented.

Much rain in early season resulted in showing serious defects in course drainage systems, which probably will be corrected to some extent by 1938 club plans.

*Bert Sheldon, Supt.,
CC of Cleveland*

MICHIGAN

Cascade Hills CC passed through the depression operating in the black.

Our membership shrunk but not to the extent suffered by other clubs, and we were able to conclude every season in the black without levying extra assessments or advancing dues.

On July 10, 1936, we suffered by fire the complete destruction of our clubhouse and locker-rooms. Within ten days we had erected a temporary clubhouse with showers, lockers, pro-shop, etc., enabling us to continue the 1936 golf activities but, of course, our social program was somewhat curtailed.

In December, 1936, we started the erection of a most modern, beautiful, efficiently designed and attractively furnished clubhouse.

With this modern clubhouse, a beautiful swimming pool, attractive and sporty 18 hole golf course with watered fairways, we have all the attractions and facilities demanded by the golfer and his family, resulting in maximum attendance and enjoyment by all its members and guests.

We are enjoying the greatest activity in the history of our club. Our authorized membership is 350 and practically filled, only a few blocks of stock being available as members move to other cities or from the estates of deceased members.

This is our biggest year for attendance, activities and patronage and we look forward to 1938 with confidence that our full membership will be maintained and the operation of our club will prove equally as successful and enjoyable.

*E. O. Bulman, Pres.,
Cascade Hills CC*

INDIANA

Highland G and CC is experiencing a very satisfactory year. Our sales, fees and other revenue for the first eight months

were about 20% ahead of last year's, while disbursements of all kinds, including repairs and replacements, have increased only about 10% in the same period. Our membership has increased by 71 since August 1st, 1936, and we now have about as many members entitled to golf playing privileges as we can properly accommodate.

Last year we added 2 new tennis courts, and this year we completely refinished and waterproofed our swimming pool, made extensive changes in our clubhouse plumbing with new and modern shower equipment, installed a stoker in our heating plant and recarpeted our locker-room. Our swimming pool, tennis courts and golf course are all in splendid condition. Play on the golf course this year has been exceptionally good.

*Frank H. Davis, Pres.,
Highland G & CC*

The golf club situation in this district has been much better this year, both in volume of sales and in payments of accounts. Equipment and supply sales have been larger this year than in 1936. The financial condition of the majority of clubs in this district has been much better and the majority have been more cautious in assuming obligations on the purchase of equipment. We have had the greatest number of cash sales for large equipment that we have had in several seasons. We find a lot of clubs, although their financial condition is better, are still making old equipment do, rather than obligate their club for new equipment, which indicates to us that we should have a healthy business next season. The major maintenance problems this season have been the usual brown-patch and the mowing problem, the latter being the greatest problem this year due to the favorable grass growing season. Trends in maintenance practice are leaning more to power equipment and larger and faster equipment.

There seem to be no major developments in prospect for 1938 so far as we can see.

*C. E. Griener Co.,
Indianapolis*

CHICAGO

Waiting lists returned to the Chicago district clubs for the first time since 1929. Park course play increased to come close to record figures. Daily fee course play increased to the point that the cut price competition of previous years vanished. Fee courses had the best September in their history.

Increases in course and clubhouse labor costs and in caddie prices caused trouble early in the season. Clubs got used to the increases; that's all they could do.

Courses were in best condition of any year in Chicago district, although muggy

hot weather and poa annua were responsible for spotty outcroppings of trouble.

Fairway fertilizing at some clubs has gone on a spring and fall basis; fairway watering being responsible. Excellent, closely knit, weedless fairways have resulted.

Considerable clubhouse rehabilitation. Record income at bars. Swimming pools at clubs credited with great increase of family business. Numerous early announcements of 1938 improvement plans such as those for Oak Park CC where \$75,000 building program for 1938 includes addition to men's lounge, rebuilding women's locker-room, kitchen and pro shop, swimming pool and other building extensions, including furnishing for the enlarged building.

Conditions at Olympia Fields CC are decidedly better than a year ago. Membership is about 17% greater than it was in August 1936. Clubhouse business up to August 31, was just 17% over the same period last year and golf play, as measured by receipts from greens fees, is up 16%.

The limit of regular and perpetual members has been fixed at 850. The roster now contains 670 names which is 79% of the limit. A year ago there were 580 members or 68% of the limit. This is an apparent increase of 90 members, but the improvement is even more. From September 1936 to January 1937 the club was being reorganized and by January 1937 the membership had dropped to 515. The increase to 670 means the addition of 155 names this season. From this experience we believe it will not be difficult to add 180 names and fill our roster in 1938. These figures are in addition to 140 women members and 70 special members, such as non-resident, clergy and educator, junior, Army and Navy, etc. The total of all classes now on the list is 880.

No changes or improvements are contemplated in either golf courses or clubhouse at Olympia. There is considerable agitation for the addition of a swimming pool to our facilities. This probably will be worked out during the fall and winter and constructed in the spring of 1938.

*H. P. Ramey, Pres.,
Olympia Fields CC*

I have yet to find a pro in Illinois who has not done better this year than last. The 1937 increase in Illinois pro-shop business probably will run 20%.

Most serious merchandising problem of Illinois pros is a sale of "discontinued" models of clubs in stores. In my opinion this can be remedied to the benefit of both pros and manufacturers. Sale of "discontinued" models of clubs at the start of the season is so plainly a foolish and costly

business practice it discredits the golf business' claim that it is a business.

Golf club officials have begun to see that calling the pro into club executive councils will reveal much information of value in practical operation of the club for the good of all the members. A 1938 plan of pros should be to "sell" themselves so their value to such official councils will be realized and enlisted. This year has been a good one for the pro in bringing sharply to his mind that he must help himself first before he can expect to get help from any other source.

Outstanding achievement of the year in pro golf, I believe, is giving clubs and their juniors the benefits of instruction either free or at nominal cost.

A plain need in pro golf is short courses of instruction for assistants, which could be given by well-known and able PGA members this winter.

*Alex Cunningham,
North Shore GC*

Elmhurst CC is one of the Chicago district clubs that has a filled membership. Last November we moved into a membership campaign, raised our equity price, raised our dues through an organized drive made up of 18 teams. We succeeded in adding approximately 80 new members to our roster and bringing our membership to a total of 250, which is our limit. We now have a waiting list.

We have enjoyed an excellent year of business and our financial statement will show a fine profit at the close of business October 31. We have also added a great many improvements to our club.

The future for Elmhurst is bright. We are in excellent financial condition and all departments in our club are being operated profitably.

Golf in the Chicago district seems to be moving forward rapidly.

*L. S. Broadus, Pres.,
Elmhurst CC*

This year has been a kind year to golf, but a hectic one for the greenkeeper.

Clubs are again operating in the black and the memberships are playing a lot of golf. However, in spite of this fine picture, our correspondence reveals many greenkeepers finding themselves behind the "eight ball".

Players are demanding more finely conditioned courses and the greenkeeper is not able to satisfy this demand because of the past years' skimpy budgets. No greenkeeper can present a conditioned golf course under these circumstances even though his resources this year are as plentiful as those of the Federal Government.

The creating and conditioning of a golf course requires not a period of 3 or 6

months, but years. This year's experiences certainly present a sound argument for augmented budgets in the future.

*A. L. Brandon, Sec.-Treas.,
National Assn. of Greenkeepers*

In our opinion the golf course equipment and supply business looks very good for 1938, although we hardly expect a repetition of 1937 business. During 1937 the golf courses in this district spent approximately one-third more on machinery and supplies than they did in 1936. The general financial condition of clubs has improved, though certain clubs which failed to readjust their financial set-ups properly several years ago are still in trouble and are now unable to compete for memberships with strong clubs due to their inability to keep comparable playing conditions. Club members are demanding the highest perfection in playing conditions, putting virtually all private clubs in competition with each other for members.

We believe the next major development in golf course maintenance is the eradication and control of weeds and noxious grasses.

Maintenance budgets are being revised upward in line with greater incomes, and club officials and greenkeepers should see to it that their respective courses are brought up to perfection and kept there, as between golf clubs competition is almost as keen as in any other line of business.

*C. O. Borgmeier, Sec.-Treas.,
George A. Davis, Inc.*

MINNESOTA

Clubs are bouncing back from depression. Much more play and good signs in return of equipment business. Installation of watering systems probably has stimulated play, and has increased necessary costs of operation. Clubs have been buying what they need to make up for buying lay-off of previous years, and are paying promptly. *H. E. Erickson Co., Inc.*

In this area there has been much improvement in club conditions in the past season. Our membership and golf play has increased more than 50% over 1936. Our cafe department shows an increase of 33% and our bar will show 100% improvement over 1936.

Golf in general in the state has shown like improvement. To the best of my knowledge, all Minnesota clubs will enter 1938 in good financial condition. I believe there are less than 100 memberships available in all the Minneapolis clubs put together.

Here at the Country Club we have made many improvements this season. We are

now in the midst of building a new fairway on our 400-yard fourth hole, we are improving an important part of our fifteenth fairway and are building a new eighth green. We also contemplate an extensive addition to our clubhouse, which will increase our locker-room and the present grill.

On September 1 we released thirty-five 1938 memberships and they close our roster. Dues for 1938 will be increased \$15 a year, due to higher operating costs.

*A. C. Statt, Pres.,
The Country Club*

IOWA

Keen interest developed among Iowa greenkeepers this year in soil construction of greens and in topdressing specifications. There is considerable rebuilding of greens in the state. Method I have employed in rebuilding 10 of my greens is to start with proper tiling. Disked and plowed into the soil is 4 to 5 yards of peat and 4 to 6 yards of concrete mix sand, not too fine. Quantity of sand depends on the character of greens soil.

There seems to be a dawning realization of the necessity of better working conditions for the greenkeeper, and an increase in budgets commensurate with increased labor costs and greater demands of players, but the situation still needs much consideration. Greenkeepers of the state are making careful studies of air circulation and of the bent strains that do best in their localities.

*Wm. Keating,
Des Moines G & CC*

April and May were sad for pro-shop business, due to cold and rain. Many pros were unable to catch up because of general money shortage in the state, and in some cases shop sales ran as high as 20% behind 1936. Chain stores are cutting into sales and the junk wave has soaked some of the boys. Stores, of course, lose interest in golf and golfers when the golf money hits the cash register. Answer to the situation, for the good of clubs as well as pros, lies in club officials getting behind the pro and arousing members to the fair play involved in doing business with the pro. The pro, having some assurance that the club doesn't want him to go broke working for its members, will get a keener, more constructive and pleasant interest in his job. This will reflect profitably upon the entire operations of the club and the enjoyment of the members.

*Dave Bonella,
Ottumwa CC*

MISSOURI

Pro-shop business 20 to 25% ahead of 1936. Definite improvement in membership and financial position of all clubs in the district. Indication of revived golf in-

terest was apparent at exhibition match put on in May by Smith, Cooper, Little and Thompson which drew about 7,000 people at Forest Park. Ed Duwe, pro, told me that the following Saturday and Sunday 735 golfers played on the 27-hole layout, the usual amount being around 450. Previous to this match, we had the movies of Bobby Jones on "How to Break 90," and the "Golf Excursion" pictures at the Auditorium, and turned away 1,000 golf fans after the 1,500 capacity had been filled.

Our biggest problem is department and chain store cut prices.

The pros would be helped greatly if club officials would get out a letter each month to their members, letting them know how little salary they pay the golf professional and try to induce them to patronize their pro. I honestly believe that 20% of a membership does not know how important it is for them to patronize the club professional.

*John J. Manion,
Sunset Hill CC*

Both public and private clubs are in decidedly better financial condition than a year ago. All have paid their accounts more promptly than in the past two years. Clubs in widely separated districts have been making some decided improvements in their courses, quite a few rebuilding old unsatisfactory greens; several new courses have been built, and quite a lot of general improvements both on club houses and grounds. There is a decided increase, 1937 over 1936, in the volume of maintenance items sold, whether or not it will show material boost in dollars and cents volume. Everybody has been slashing the hell out of prices. We are hoping that before the beginning of 1938 everybody will have a belly-full and we will settle down to more normal competitive price conditions.

There has been increase use by clubs all over this section including Kansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, and Missouri of such items as peat moss, seeds, fertilizers, and chemicals. The major maintenance tasks in 1937 in this part of the country have been reviving the turf areas due to the successive years of extreme drought. There is quite a lot of interest being taken at this time, and apparently increasingly so, looking forward to the installation of irrigation systems on the golf courses.

As to the trends in maintenance practices in this territory, it looks like a constant cry for more economy, more economy; the result of the years of depression has dethroned the greenkeepers, most assuredly to the detriment of the clubs. There has been quite a tendency to reduce the maintenance cost on many courses by starting at the wrong end of the line. Clubs following this practice find it costly

and my observation is that it will soon react so unsatisfactorily that they will go back to their former system of employing an efficient and capable man and placing on him the responsibility of maintenance.

*D. D. Bell,
Kansas City*

Hillcrest has enjoyed the best year since 1926 as we have a full membership of 300 members which is all we can accommodate. On April 22nd we launched a membership drive which lasted one week and added 87 members. This was headed by Wm. Barton. Hillcrest has not waived the initiation fee for anyone since Jan. 1, 1936. During 1937 we lost 27 members on account of transfers to other cities. Those were replaced with active members.

In 1936 we increased our catering department 100% and our beverage department increased over 100%. Our future looks great and we are now planning a swimming pool. We have just completed renovating our clubhouse and since we have the largest in K. C. that was quite an item.

All clubs in our district have had a good year. We are a little ahead of average increase possibly due to the fact we have built our membership up with young blood and they are the members who play at least twice a week or more and hence spend more money in our departments. We showed a small profit in 1936 and will show a good profit in 1937. One condition that helped keep our play up was the fact our greens have been perfect all year.

Our women's organization is the largest in K. C. That helps any club. My assistant has given one morning each week for class lessons and started more than 50 women playing for the first time. While that is a lot of work it pays big dividends. We raised our dues as of July 1, 1937, which was the second boost in two years.

Another thing that has helped all private clubs in K. C. was the new organization formed this year called the Private Club Assn. That was started at Hillcrest in April, 1937, and the fact that they conducted two series of competition which were held every week was a big factor in clubs adding new members; many fee course players joined private clubs so they could participate.

*Wolf C. Rimann,
Hillcrest CC*

NEBRASKA

Crop situation kept 1937 pro-shop business down at many shops in Nebraska. State's pros are wondering about retail prices on better grade clubs and balls for 1938. Early announcements of price increases indicate the going may be tough

for Nebraska pros in next year's sales, unless there is a decided improvement in business conditions throughout the state.

Play has been ahead of last year but equipment sales haven't kept pace with the advance.

*Ed Newkirk,
Lincoln*

TEXAS

It has been by observation that all the pros in this section are enjoying a big increase in business this year. I have had an opportunity to visit almost every section in the State or have talked with the boys and they all seem very busy and encouraged regarding the future. Also, I have had an opportunity the past month to visit through California and Colorado and all pros with whom I talked are enjoying a big increase.

We have in our association, both national and sectional, some very sound thinking men and it is my opinion that clubs should call them in and consult with them about matters pertaining to the golf courses. In some instances professionals have been made members of the green-committee. This, I think, is a move in the right direction.

The more interest the professional takes in the workings of the club and the more interest and cooperation shown by the executive committee in the professional, the more valuable he will be to his club. The club, as well as the professional, would be much better off if the officials consulted more often with their professional regarding changes, etc., in connection with their golf courses.

*Willie Maguire,
Houston CC*

PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Alderwood CC has made very satisfactory progress during the past year, from every angle. Our club roster is practically full. Club activities, which were disrupted by the 41st National Amateur championship, are back to normal, and the financial condition of the club is improving.

Other clubs in this district are understood to be on a much better footing, and their activities are greater, than they were one year ago. It is felt that the major clubs in this district will start 1938 under favorable auspices.

No contemplated major improvements by any of the clubs have been called to my attention, although most of the clubs will probably make additions to their equipment during the year.

There seems at this time to be a much stronger interest in golf than at any time during the past few years, which interest, no doubt, has been stimulated by the hold-

ing of the National Amateur championship in Portland.

*L. E. Crouch., Pres.,
Alderwood CC*

There has been a big advance in golf in the Seattle sector this year. State and sectional tournaments have increased in entries, which is a good indication. In January and February we had an unusual amount of snow which stopped play but the play has caught up since then.

As usual, some clubs have done better than others due to club spirit and better management, etc. At Inglewood we have an increase of 200 members.

Disposal of trade-in sets is becoming a pro problem. At private clubs there is danger of these sets piling up unless an outlet can be found for them. The average golf club member now wants a new set but the pro profit in the sale may be tied up in the trade-in. There has been the usual amount of chiseling and price-cutting by companies to which golf is a sideline, but it is my experience that the real golfer does not go much for that kind of merchandise.

Reduced sales for the manufacturers who have allowed their merchandise to be butchered in prices at stores, also is helping to solve this particular pro problem.

Club officials and pros are getting together more on problems and suggestions of mutual interest. It is being realized that the pro is the man to whom golf is a specialized business, hence his consultation in golf club problems must be of value.

*Walter Pursey,
Inglewood CC*

SAN FRANCISCO

Wisest things that have been done in greenkeeping at our club and in the district this year in my opinion are:

The results of the reseeded of fairways last year—this was a grand success and in the process of seeding we burned the weeds off with ammonia sulphate which stimulated the grass and now gives a wonderful lie and also makes a springy mat for the players to walk on.

Power mower eliminating labor cost of one man.

Purchase of automatic couplers, economizing in time formerly taken by the thread system of screwing on the hose.

Less watering, economizing on fertilizer. Constantly dragging in seed in greens when topdressing.

Purchase of new white sand and constantly applying a little of it on bunkers which sets off the greens and makes the course look very neat and tidy.

I think the problem of scientific fertilization on putting greens is one that should be given the most serious consideration. The constant forcing of growth of grass

and depletion of soil necessitates the application of fertilizers under constant scientific supervision so as to keep the soil in proper condition.

Greenkeepers should freely discuss with their Presidents and Boards of Directors the problems that they have to confront so as to establish confidence in their supervision and obtain appropriations for necessary expenditures, which if not understood by our officials might be construed as extravagant waste.

*George Paulsen,
San Francisco GC*

Pro business in this section is about 10% better than last year.

The number of players in this district has been increased by about 5%. The hotel strike in San Francisco this spring cut our playing and the amount of business down considerably, otherwise we would have had a better season. However the play increased this fall.

Our greatest problem was and is in keeping the retail price of golf goods at the standard price. We have had some competition from jobbers, selling at a fraction above wholesale cost. Our greatest menace is the so-called broker, who sells anything at a price. They have office solicitors who sell our members standard golf goods at cut-price. The "buy it wholesale" fellow has given us some trouble.

We have taken steps to remedy these evils and are going to do all within our power to keep our section clean.

We called a meeting of our entire membership, asked them to bring in all complaints about cut prices. We got this information. Then called a meeting with our directors and the manufacturers. They were all represented and agreed to cooperate with us. We are having another meeting October 11. We must have the cooperation of the manufacturers in solving our problem.

Golf club officials should know the problems of their professionals in operating shops. They should know of expenses as well as income. Most officials want to see their pros make a good income and will be willing to help in operating their shops at a fair profit.

Club officials should take the pro into confidence, let him know their program; what various committees are striving for. They should consult with their pro about the things he thinks will make the playing of the game more enjoyable for club members.

I have a class of 40 Juniors taking group lessons this fall and will have a tournament, graduation and presentation of PGA diplomas on October 23rd.

*Dewey Longworth,
Claremont CC*

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Southern California territory shows a very substantial gain in pro-shop sales over 1936. Main reason is that people are now facing the economic situation in a calm manner. Most people are making more money and have worked themselves out of the mess that the sudden panic found them at the start of 1930.

After a lapse of 7 years equipment has to be renewed and we are now in the happy position of having many players returning to a regular golf routine and finding that new clubs and bags are absolutely necessary to their game.

Golf ball sales are up at least 50% in the top grades. All players prefer top grade balls because of their obvious superiority and only severe economic conditions drive them to the less expensive types.

Golf club sales are up at least 40%, the increase being practically confined to the top grades.

Golf bags are probably showing a bigger increase than anything. Players are getting away from the cheap grades and buying real leather which has lasting qualities.

Accessories right along the line are showing a fine increase.

It seems to me that one of our major problems is getting the pros to gamble on bigger stocks. For many years we have been confining ourselves to an absolute minimum stock and buying from hand to mouth. The time seems ripe to dress up our shops with a very complete line of all standard-make clubs, balls, and a comprehensive line of golf bags, besides always having enough of all the small accessories which players demand. In this way we will not take so many chances of missing a quick sale. This applies more especially to metropolitan centers where competition is keen.

Lessons are away up and this despite the many fine practice ranges. Club officials could help in this matter. It is much more preferable for clubhouse business to have your member come to the club to practice rather than go to a city range, but most clubs have little or no facility for practice.

Some club officials realize that the only person who contacts all the members is the pro. Those who do, delegate a lot of work to him which of course he is only too pleased to accept, as the more work you do for the members the greater the return in business. We are happy to say that in this district the clubs in most cases hand over the club concessions to the pro, and also that in many cases where the club tried their hand at the operation of a club shop they have now given up the task. I do not know of any golf shop run by the club where the members get the service they deserve and the result is their

major business goes to some smart guy on the outside.

I believe that club officials really wish their pro well, but in few cases do they go out of their way to educate the members to the pro's business. Probably in most clubs there are at least 30% of the members who do not understand that the pro earns his livelihood by their patronage of his golf shop.

We are still bothered by price cutting, although I would say that the situation is considerably better than for many years. In this respect it would appear that the remedy is very much in the manufacturers' agent's hands. The evil of selling at wholesale to people without a place of business or to those who do not carry a stock is strictly unfair to the real merchant. In our own particular district this is the biggest single factor of chiselling prices. We find that the big department stores uphold prices on standard merchandise and only cut to meet some unfair practice of a competitor. California Fair Trade laws provide teeth to compel retailers to uphold prices, but manufacturers show reluctance to use the instruments provided.

*Willie Hunter,
Riviera CC*

In my opinion the wisest change made in this district during the past year has been the change for better turf. The greenkeepers have developed a stronger and more resistant turf by changing the contents of fertilizers and methods of applying same, with due regard to watering. Realizing that weather conditions cannot be changed or summer heat controlled, much thought has been given to putting the turf in condition to withstand the strain of the summer months. For example, good results have been obtained in some cases by increasing the percentage of phosphorus in the topdressing, spiking thoroughly before and as soon after topdressing as possible, then partially withholding the water during extreme hot spells.

The golf course labor situation should come in for some real consideration and readjustments that will pay the clubs big dividends. There is no place or line of work where a man can better show his appreciation or respect for his job than on a golf course. If he is fitted physically and mentally (and that does not mean he should be a numbskull) and is treated with the utmost fairness, his work will fairly shine the year around. On the other hand there are lots of good workmen who are not fitted to work on a golf course. Get the right man for the right job, treat him fair, give him all you can and a little more and your labor troubles will be next to nil.

*Clarence W. Hazlet,
Bel-Air CC*