

'37 GOOD TO GOLF

Annual USGA Report points to progress in all phases of game

REVEALING continued improvement in golf, the report of the USGA Executive committee, submitted at the association's annual meeting Jan. 9, 1938, and covering the year ending Nov. 30, 1937, showed a net increase of 21 in USGA member clubs, bringing the total to 813. This is an increase of 46 clubs over the 1935 low in USGA membership. High during the last 11 years was in 1931 when the association had 1,154 clubs.

The association increased its surplus by \$13,576.41 during the fiscal year to \$76,463.16, despite a \$2,275.17 slump in income from the women's championship. No Walker Cup or Curtis Cup matches were held in 1937 so the association did not have approximately \$9,000 expense attached to these competitions, as in 1936.

Detail of the accountants' report of USGA operations reveals a clear picture of able and thrifty management by the association's officers and staff executives. In the prominence and completeness given its financial statement the USGA presents a model for other associations in golf.

Pros Credited With Game's Advance

Credit for soundness of the game's growth was paid to pros because of the increase in group instruction of juveniles under the nation-wide PROMotion plan. John Jackson, retiring president of the USGA, in submitting the report of the Executive Committee, cited as excellent examples of this development of youngsters' interest in golf, the work done by the Michigan PGA, and the Detroit District GA's work in connection with the juvenile program and caddie welfare.

Mention was made of consideration the

Executive Committee had been giving to ending any increase in distance of the ball.

The Rules of Golf Committee had a busy year. After extensive consideration the stymie was revised on an experimental basis, so that for at least a year, the nearer ball must be lifted when it is within 6 inches of the cup in match play. A footnote was added to the 14-club rule, permitting a player to replace a club which becomes unfit for play, and adding club or clubs up to the limit of 14 without borrowing from an opponent, partner or fellow competitor.

Open Entries Set Record

The Championship Committee reported a record entry of 1,402 in the Open. The committee also advised that the increase in money-prize winners from 20 to 30 in the Open and the increase in prize money from \$5,000 to 6,000, which was put into effect in 1937, would be continued in 1938.

Amateurs in USGA competition must now state on entry blanks the nature of their employers' business and of the entrant's duties, thus eliminating from amateur competitions players engaged in occupations conflicting with the amateur definition.

In stroke play competition conducted by the association in 1937 the USGA recommended "the player whose ball is nearer

1938 OFFICIAL USGA TOURNAMENT CALENDAR

May 17—Entries close, National Open.
 May 31—Sectional qualifying rounds, National Open.
 June 3-4—Walker Cup Matches, St. Andrews, Scotland.
 June 9-11—National Open, Cherry Hills Club, Englewood, Colo.
 Late June—National Intercollegiate Championship, Louisville (Ky.) CC.
 July 22-August 6—District qualifying rounds, National Public Links.
 August 10—Entries close, Public Links.
 August 12—Entries close, National Amateur.
 August 22-27—Public Links Championship.
 August 30—Sectional qualifying rounds, National Amateur.
 September 3—Entries close, Women's National.
 September 7-8—Curtis Cup Matches, Essex County CC, Manchester, Mass.
 September 12-17—National Amateur, Oakmont (Pa.) CC
 September 19-24—Women's National, Westmoreland CC, Wilmette, Ill.

to the hole exercise the right given him by Stroke Rule 10 to play first in a case where he otherwise might lift to avoid interference with the stroke of his fellow-competitor." Results were excellent, and the recommendation is renewed. The British PGA, and later the US PGA followed the USGA lead in adopting rules making it mandatory to play the nearer ball in case of possible interference.

The USGA decided to certify for any R & A championship only American amateurs who could meet the entrance requirements for the corresponding USGA championship. The R & A acts similarly.

Bear Down on Prize Values

A. M. Reid, new president of the USGA, who headed its Membership and Reinstatement Committee and the Amateur Status and Conduct Committee during 1937, in the Amateur Status and Conduct report reiterated the association's policy that amateur prizes should be merely symbolic. "The attraction in amateur golf is purely sport," states the committee. The committee also said it "is always glad to rule on the propriety of a given prize" and advised that prizes "should not be of such type, either in monetary value or number, as to be bait to attract competitors, nor should they be advertisements for commercial donors." The committee expressed concern "about rumored acceptance by amateurs of golf merchandise without fair

payment or payment of any kind," and "rumored acceptance by amateurs of contributions toward their expenses in competition."

The Amateur Status and Conduct report has ruled that amateurs would forfeit their status by participating in "open tournaments of certain character in which commercial enterprises are promoted."

Amateurs were warned against writing or radio-broadcasting golf instruction and against advertising themselves. It was stated that an amateur could not accept an "honorary" club membership unless it was awarded as "purely and deservedly honorary and in recognition of an outstanding performance or contribution to golf."

It was pointed out that greenkeepers, caddie-masters and assistant pros are not amateur golfers.

At least half of the clubs submitted to the Implements and Ball Committee for approval during 1937 were of the putter type. This committee also found during the year that some of the cheaper golf balls were not in accordance with USGA rulings.

The Committee of Sectional Affairs reported that many clubs expanded from 9 to 18-holes during the year and changed from sand to grass greens.

Green Section Serves Clubs

The Green Section Committee gave an outline of its activities during 1937, which was one of the Section's busiest years. More than 2,000 letters were sent to member clubs in which technical advice was submitted in reply to club queries. Dr. John Monteith, Jr., chief of the Green Section staff, visited 59 clubs in 19 states and inspected turf improvement work in Europe during the past year. A brief digest of the Section's work on putting greens, fairways and tees, grasses, fertilizers, weed control, disease control and soil improvement showed highlights of the tremendously valuable work done by this department of the USGA.

Morton Bogue, retiring General Counsel for the association, reported on legal matters involving caddie employment, injuries on courses, and the effect of workmen's compensation and social security legislation on minor and adult employees at golf clubs. The complexity of legal problems now concerning golf clubs might well be cited as another strong reason for club membership in the USGA.