

TEST FOR GREEN-CHAIRMEN

By A. A. HOLMES

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GOLF clubs generally have appointed as green-chairman men from the fields of business, law, engineering or medicine, or fellow members who have retired from active careers. Seldom is there a man of any practical experience in agronomy appointed to the hazardous and complex job of assuming responsibility to the members for the condition of the course.

The members don't know it, but they insist on maintenance of a turf condition that is unnaturally delicate and difficult to achieve and preserve. They want fairways on which the ball always has a good lie and greens soft enough to hold a pitch and so true that putts always will drop.

What often happens is that the members stampede the chairman and the chairman rough-rides the greenkeeper. In a year like 1937, when weather conditions were particularly bad in many territories, the panic of ignorance may become serious. In desperation the greenkeeper will make a wild try, using some weird effort at a cure-all when, in his private and experienced judgment, he may suspect that clogged drainage, compacted water-logged soil, or some other fundamental feature is the source of the trouble.

This hurry-up demand for magic entails a penalty that golf maintenance must pay for ignorance each year. Because virtually none of the members knows anything about grass it is impossible to explain why a course cannot be maintained in ideal condition year after year. The best courses have their off-years. But the highest possible standard is maintained—and for the thriftiest expenditure of cash—if the green-chairman knows enough about growing and maintaining turf to handle his assignment soundly.

Take stock, Mr. Chairman, of what you know about the turf of your course. Here are some questions that will help you take inventory of your greenkeeping knowledge:

DO YOU KNOW . . .

- . . . anything about soils?
- . . . the meaning of different soils such as clay, clay loam, loam, sandy loam and sandy soil?
- . . . what is meant by an alkaline soil or an acid soil?
- . . . what the pH of a soil is?
- . . . what topsoil is?
- . . . what topsoil is used for and how it acts?
- . . . the characteristics of the different grasses and where they can be used to the best advantage on the golf course?
- . . . how deep the roots of bluegrass, poa annua, redbtop, fescue, german bent, metropolitan bent, Washington bent, velvet bent, penetrate the soil?
- . . . whether the greatest quantity of roots of the above grasses are in the first, second, third, fourth, fifth or sixth inch of the soil?
- . . . how the roots of the above grasses propagate?
- . . . when to sow grass seed so that the weeds won't choke the grass?
- . . . what effect the height grass is cut has on grass?
- . . . how much water is transpired by the leaves of grass in a year?
- . . . the role moisture (rain, dew, snow and watering) plays in growing grass?
- . . . what is meant by fertilization?
- . . . what role nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash play in growing grass?
- . . . what the difference is between organic and inorganic nitrogen? What is the effect of each on grass?
- . . . the value and effect of other fertilizer materials?
- . . . when to apply various kinds of fertilizer?
- . . . how many diseases attack grass?
- . . . how to control these diseases?
- . . . what *Rhizoctonia solani* is?
- . . . what dollar-patch is?
- . . . what *Fusarium nivale* is?
- . . . what scald is?
- . . . how to treat each of the above diseases?
- . . . the difference between a Japanese beetle and a grub worm?
- . . . the habits of the above worms and how to treat them?
- . . . how to kill ants?
- . . . how to get rid of earthworms?
- . . . what webworms are, what damage they do and how to control them?

That list of questions gives you a scant outline of the technical problems with which the greenkeeper must contend. If you can answer any 15 of those 31 questions you are beyond most chairmen in technical knowledge of greenkeeping. But the greenkeeper has to know the answers to all of them . . . and to many more.

It is certain that the green-chairman, if a businessman, would hire a lawyer to defend himself against a law suit, but too often the same businessman as a green-chairman will over-rule the professional status of the competent greenkeeper, and insist on being boss of the case.

Consider the performances of the most successful green-chairmen. They are frank to admit that their policy is to make sure that they have engaged the most competent and dependable greenkeeper they can find and have allowed this qualified man to conduct operations with the minimum of interference and the maximum of co-operation.

The average greenkeeper has to fight:

1. A green-chairman who generally has no real knowledge of greenkeeping but thinks he does. There are exceptions.
2. The criticisms of the club members and these are numerous.
3. The elements.
4. Turf diseases.
5. Insects.
6. Poor soil conditions.
7. Many other problems of a smaller nature.

You can see that the greenkeeper has his hands full. He must be a diplomat, an agronomist, a soil expert, an entomologist, a good handler of men, the possessor of a good quantity of horse-sense, and a sense of humor. Quite a lot of qualifications for one man, don't you think?

If you have a good greenkeeper, advise and back him up; but as he knows his business, let him run the greenkeeping department as you would allow a department manager to run his department.

HOW GOLF RETURNED TO BEDFORD

By DOUG. SMILEY

BACK in early spring of 1935, when around town, those who were in radical would have to be done quick was to continue to enjoy such a thing as a golf course. The Bedford CC, long the mecca for those who could afford a \$200 membership fee, as well as \$66 per year dues, was already in the hands of a receiver, and Hillcrest, a privately owned public course could not open in the face of the ever-remaining depression.

A few of the dyed-in-the-wools had managed to stage a membership campaign, at \$15 per person, to keep the Country club open under receivership during the '34 season. A similar campaign was staged in 1935, but there were no prospects for 1936, because everyone knew the Country club property would have to be sold in the fall of '35.

We had taken up the game in 1931, not to become a great golfer, but merely as a pastime. During that period between 1931 and 1935 we did a column "In Par" for our paper and we started an annual

the "golf bug" started biting the boys the "know" realized that something if the "Home Of Indiana Limestone"

city tournament. We hated to see golf leave Bedford. On days when we had nothing else to write about we jumped on the city for not purchasing the Country Club property and making a municipal golf course out of it. But all our writing was in vain, as far as the city was concerned, because the City Dads had the idea that those who played golf were sissies.

"It would make a beautiful city park," we wrote from day to day. And while we wrote about it we started dreaming what a wonderful playground it would make for the eastsiders, better known as "Dutchtowners" around Bedford.

Finally we appealed to Fred B. Otis, editor and owner of the Daily Mail and painted a vivid word picture of the place. "I'm not interested in going into the golf business," he flatly told us. But we continued to persist and one Sunday afternoon convinced him that he should see the