

\$200,000 IS STORM LOSS

By KARL SUTPHIN

LA TE reports received by GOLFDOM from the New England sector reveal that the worst Eastern flood and hurricane within memory that came roaring up the coast late in September, caused damage to golf courses of from \$200,000 to a quarter million dollars. Some sections of the storm area have yet to report their storm losses, and allowance has been made in the above figures to include some damage in these centers, although huge losses there could easily throw the final total far above that estimated.

Returns from a questionnaire sent to clubs in the affected states by the New England Toro Co., West Newton, Mass., give a fairly complete picture of the damage to clubs from the storm. Results of this survey show the following:

Up to October 13, 159 clubs in six different states had estimated their storm losses at \$120,000. Fifty of the clubs reporting escaped damage, leaving a rough average loss of \$1,200 per each of the remaining 109 clubs. Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New Hampshire suffered most severely, the reports indicated. Massachusetts clubs alone estimated their storm damage at \$70,000, of which \$46,000 was given as the labor cost to remove fallen and uprooted trees.

Trees and Buildings Suffer Greatest Damage

Damage done to trees and buildings accounted for the major golf course losses in these states. Massachusetts reported building losses of \$17,800, New Hampshire, \$4,600, and Rhode Island \$2,900. Damage losses to trees, in addition to that of Massachusetts, was given as \$12,400 in New Hampshire, \$9,000 in Connecticut, and \$2,200 in Rhode Island. Only 6 clubs had been heard from in R. I., however. Damage to greens and fairways, and the seed, fertilizer and sod that will be needed to repair and rebuild them, and roads that were torn up by the flood, accounted for much of the remaining losses.

Because torrential rains had preceded the hurricane, most all courses were left covered with varying amounts of mud, silt and debris. Greensmen, however, went right to the task of removing the accumulation, and huge quantities of silt piled high around the edges of greens of those



The hurricane played some queer tricks, such as this tub on a green of the Kittansett club at Marion, Mass.

clubs in the storm area were a common sight. Many instances of loss of equipment, swimming pools, tennis courts, etc., were also reported.

Thus far, only one course employee was known to have been killed. Frank Howell, Montaup GC greenkeeper, Portsmouth, R. I., was drowned attempting to rescue a woman, and a member of the Montaup green-committee, Walter Chase, was also drowned in the same rescue attempt. Numerous course employees were injured by flying and falling debris, however.

Comments on storm conditions received by GOLFDOM from several sources, indicate the extent of the damage. O. O. Clapper, N. E. Toro Co., said:

"I have seen quite a number of courses in the Massachusetts sector, and to say the least, things look pretty torn up. Trees and greens are as brown as a Nazi shirt. The wind took most of the moisture from growing things. I saw one course with over 3,000 trees down, while heavy sugar maples that had been uprooted at another

What's the most beautifully landscaped municipal course in the United States? So many have nominated the Triggs municipal course at Providence, R. I., for this honor, GOLFDOM would like to see if the nomination is seconded. Martin C. Noonan, Supt. of Parks at Providence, is in charge of the maintenance but Noonan passes the credit along to the men at the course. Lewis Myers, the Triggs pro, says that the course is not only one of the most beautifully groomed in the country but set up a record for exhibition crowds in having approximately 6,000 in the gallery when the Spalding Rover Boys—Smith, Thomson, Cooper and Little—put on their show.



Two to ten inches of river silt being removed from green and fairway at Tekoa CC, Westfield, Mass.

course had balls of dirt 10 ft. in diameter hanging from them. River silt from 2 in. to 10 in. covers greens, tees and fairways of some courses, and I've found parts of clubhouses, boats, bath tubs, etc., several hundred yards from their original locations, now resting in the middle of fairways. When you see a 40 ft. boat carried $\frac{1}{4}$ mile over a fairway inland you get a better idea of the water and wind."

Kent Bradley, Passaic County GC's greenkeeper, made a 600-mile inspection of the storm area just a week following the hurricane, and he writes:

"Trees centuries old, in full matured foliage, were down along fairways, and banks of tees and greens were left with gaping stump holes up to 40-ft. wide and 10 ft. deep. Clubhouses, shelters, bridges, pro-shops, and maintenance barns were broken and leveled by the winds. Boats, dock timbers, wreckage from buildings littered courses; sand traps were filled to the brim with mud and sea sand.

Will Salt Injure Turf?

"The tidal wave, which carried sea water far inland, contains about 39,000 parts per million of chlorine, and this burned turf a ghastly yellow orange. The salt laden spray also discolored shrubs and evergreen trees as far inland as 15 miles. Unless there are heavy rains and snows this winter, the sea salts will not leach from the soil, which will cause toxicity to turf for some time to come. Damage that can be repaired can be estimated in money, but intrinsic and sentimental value of landscape loss can never be counted."

Lawrence S. Dickinson, agronomy dept., Massachusetts State college, says of the storm:

"The storm was a real one, and I, for one, don't want to experience another like it. The loss of trees, I believe, is due to

the fact that the soil was very much loosened by being already saturated with water, and therefore the holding power of the roots was greatly weakened. Many more trees were blown over than were broken off. If the clubs are able to get the mud and silt off the courses immediately, I believe that permanent damage to the turf will not be so great. The experience from the '36 flood is standing the greensmen well in hand."

Members of clubs in the storm center have already started "pitching in", and there have been several instances of clubs having gathered several thousand dollars in hastily formed rehabilitation funds. Many generous members have contributed prior to official club action, and one, in



At Leicester, Mass., the hurricane demolished half the clubhouse.

particular, started off the fund with a gift of \$500. Most clubs, however, will be able to carry on in good shape, without any special money raising, and the general feeling among the clubs, even those worst hit, is "that it's just 'one of those things', and we'll try to be doing business next spring even better than before."

Warns Against Making Courses More Difficult to Play

E. A. BATCHELOR, interviewing **H. G. Mooch**, Detroit automobile magnate and golf enthusiast, for "Saturday Night," a local magazine, warns against golf clubs remodeling courses to make them tougher, now that money is more plentiful.

Oakland Hills during the 1937 National Open is cited as an example of how a course may be made very tough and long for a competition without defeating the par-busting attacks of the sharpshooters. The yarn brings out the fact that a great golf course is one that in normal condition gives the stars plenty of problems without breaking the back and heart of the average member. Oakland Hills, according to Mooch, is that type of course.

The story says that the real hazard of golf is the player's own mind, his inability to concentrate on making simple shots.