

## The Perfect Library for the 19th Hole

# GOLF

ITS RULES and DECISIONS

By RICHARD S. FRANCIS

Completely revised and rewritten and brought up to date.

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## Rains Hit Greenkeeper Hardest

By Peter Stewart

Greenkeeper, Lake Shore CC, Glencoe

THERE has been a good deal of effort employed to get golfers to play despite showers and to come out to the club right after cloudbursts that have left the course soaked. The club wants the patronage, the pros want the members' business, and the members want their sport. Vast improvements in drainage have made golf courses playable during, and after, heavy rains. Spiked overshoes, waterproof apparel and grip wax have made it possible for the players to go around in a fair degree of comfort.

However, there is one element of the golf army that doesn't enjoy this trend toward more wet weather play because serious problems are involved. The greenkeeper has plenty of headaches as a result of excessively heavy rains or floods. Too much water is worse than none at all. Last summer, in many localities, the heavy

rainfall eased the financial load of operating the fairway watering systems, but kept greenkeepers in a constant campaign to correct the damages of play on soaked courses.

Frequent, drenching rains may pack a course so that the turf is seriously weakened unless conditions and finances permit extensive spiking.

Walking and twisting of feet on soaked tees hardens the soil and may kill the grass. Deep and wide, long divots are hacked out. In one day's play damage may be done that requires a week or 10 days for repair.

After a heavy rain we discover that the fairway divots are twice as large as the average. Footprints stay in the soft soil and cause bad bounces. If the sun comes out strong and there is a drying wind right after a heavy rain, the divot marks dry out quickly and resemble moulds.

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When a few balls come to rest in these divot scars there are enough loud kicks to keep the greenkeeper worrying all through sleepless nights.

On the greens the aftermath of heavy rains is most serious. Wet, soft greens are dented by high approaches that half-bury themselves. After 40 or 50 of such shots a green that was in perfect condition becomes sadly pockmarked. Some spots in such greens must be plugged, or seeded and topdressed. It takes days to erase such evidence of an afternoon's hard use.

Then there are the golfers who must wriggle their spikes to get their putting stance. That jitter-bug footwork is deadly to putting surface and to the tender grass that has been carefully nursed to a superb, but delicate, condition.

The greenkeeper is accustomed to trying to achieve and maintain excellent golf turf under unnatural conditions. He knows that soil, when excessively soaked with water, should not be cultivated, or packed so its porosity is reduced. He knows that grass won't grow on soil that has been packed by the traffic of golfers.

But the greenkeeper continues to do his best, and to hope for a break, although realizing fully that he's up against one of the worst of the two-timing combinations of nature and the golfers who pay his salary. One break that he hopes for, is that the golfers will appreciate what the greenkeeper is up against.

## **Iowa Greenkeepers Told of New Putting Turf**

**T**HE April meeting of the Iowa Greenkeeping Superintendents Assn. was held at Wakonda CC, Des Moines. Speakers were Prof. Pickett, head of the department of horticulture, Iowa State College, who gave advice on how to start turf experimental gardens. Prof. S. W. Edgcombe, ISC extension horticulturist, gave all the information obtainable about turf gardens conducted by other experimental stations. Jack Welsh, pro-greenkeeper at Wakonda CC, showed what he was doing to get his usually perfect course in shape for the coming National Intercollegiate