

new one. But just as certainly, it has never been given the proper play generally that it merits in the average club's playing program. Golfers like the competitive spirit of the challenge. Further, it relieves the pro of the responsibility of matching (with sometimes dire results), does not disrupt the club's "cliques," and promotes the competitive spirit of any club wonderfully.

These Are Sure-Fire

A number of events that are nicely adapted to the challenge idea are:

Match play twosomes; medal play twosomes; match nassau twosomes; medal nassau twosomes; low-ball—low total foursomes; medal nassau threesomes; nassau threesomes on the popular "skin" basis; any of the above as handicap affairs.

That small list alone is good for 14 competitive events that will hold any golfer's interest from the first hole through the 18th, and from April to November. Many other variations are possible.

Best results are obtained by confining the entire season's program, for the most part, to a man-to-man competitive basis, instead of playing everyone against the field. Award prizes to the winner or winners of each match, setting aside a certain portion of every entry fee for awarding field prizes such as low gross, low net, high net, most 4's, most 6's, etc. This gives even the match losers a chance at prizes—and how golfers like to win 'em, regardless of what the prizes may be.

The challenge idea may be made an integral part of the season's program by awarding a trophy for the year to the competitor scoring the most points in, for example, 10 challenge events. Prominent, up-to-date postings of standings serves to promote discussions of same and keep interest at a high pitch.

If your club is suffering from the tournament doldrums, just throw some "challenge" events at them and watch the interest revive. Well-timed and tactful match suggestions, at any time during the week, will prove a potent promotional weapon in your hands.

This coming season analyze the events your members like best, and give them what they want on a "challenge" basis. You'll find it an effective aspirin for tournament headaches—and well within the desires and dignity of every golfer, whether his handicap be 3 or 30.

WHAT DO YOU DO With Your Used Equipment?

By "A Dealer"

Here's a warning—and a wail—from one of the best known golf course equipment and supply dealers.

The trade-in mess he mentions has been whispered about long enough. Somebody's got to bring it out into the open—so here goes.

Greenkeepers at the GSA convention in New York, and at other meetings for the past few years, have talked about phases of the trade-in mess this dealer doesn't mention. They have complained that they got unreasonably large trade-in allowances on old equipment only to have their chairmen tell them that at neighboring clubs bigger allowances were granted on equipment so far gone the man who took it on a trade-in didn't even go to the trouble of removing it. Such cases unjustly make a good greenkeeper look bad.

The manufacturers' improvement in his product, and the manufacturers' and dealers' hope of a necessary profit, both are offset by the sale becoming a matter of giving away money rather than selling performance.

However, with full sympathy for the conscientious and harassed dealer in his plight, we suspect that the greenkeeper and chairman will comment on this trade-in matter: "It's bad business, but if they try to see who can be the biggest sucker, why shouldn't we take them?"—Editor.

I DOUBT if there is a man reading this article who has not traded a used car towards another used car or a new car. Having been through that experience, he knows the problem facing the dealer every time a prospect drives up to his door.

The golf equipment business hasn't quite the trade-in trouble of the automobile industry, but it is rapidly heading towards the same dangerous position. And to make the situation more alarming, golf equipment hasn't a market of the automobile's.

The good manufacturer my firm represents spends thousands of dollars in improving his equipment. This goes to engineers, field men, shop men, and to raw material makers, all in the hope that each year his machines will be better made, will stand up longer with less trouble and expense for the user, look better, handle better, and be more acceptable to the eye.

The same may be said of every manufacturer in the golf field. Very few industries with our extremely limited sales field can boast of such unstinted manufacturer cooperation.

The tractors and mowers of today will last nearly twice as long as those of 15 years ago. From the manufacturer and dealer standpoint, this further limits annual sales to the golf trade.

Total Outlets Are Up Little

There is no large number of new golf courses being built as in the 'twenties. This means no increase in consumer numbers, and it also means limitation of outlet for used or traded-in machinery. It is true that driving ranges absorb some of this equipment, but few of them can afford to pay the "going prices" of today. Also, what would a driving range do with a 7-unit gang mower outfit?

There was a time when golf clubs preferred to keep their old tractors and mowers for emergencies, and spare outfits for tournament use if rains held the crew from getting work done in the normal time. This preference seems to have gone. Maybe it was because dealers' salesmen made the trade-in offers too wild to be refused; maybe it was because the old equipment was so useless that it would not be worthy of storage room; maybe it was for other reasons. At any rate, the acceleration of the trade-in prices has gone on unabated and bids now to consume the dealer and the essential service he supplies to the business.

We have all seen how the automobile dealer business has shifted until today a few outstanding dealers in every community are making a decent living and are an asset to their city. It is just as vital to the car owner that these men exist and make a profit as it is for the individual dealer himself. No one can today stand on his own feet unassisted.

This same thing is true in the golf equipment business, but it is becoming increasingly harder for those few successful dealers to hold their own. If the day comes when these dealers cannot make an honest living selling and servicing equipment, then the sales will revert back to the manufacturers. When this day comes, it means service that will be extremely costly and almost unknown. It will mean waiting for weeks for the factory sales or service man to call.

Every piece of used equipment has some value. This value may differ in the opin-

ions of the several salesmen selling new equipment. This is largely because one or two men may have a request for the very machine you plan to turn in. If either of these men allows more for the old equipment than he can get for it after spending some money in pickup, service, and delivery, he is simply cutting into the dealer's legitimate margin of profit. The dealer must then charge a higher price for this used equipment than it is worth or take a loss. If he does the first, it is working a hardship on some smaller club which might be developing the golf market and cause these smaller clubs to cease to exist. If he does the latter, then he is issuing an invitation to the sheriff to take over his affairs. No one ever gained when a legitimate business house went to the wall—not even his competitors, as the entire sales and credit load is thrown onto the competitors.

What's It Still Worth?

It seems to me the fair approach to this problem is for the greenkeeper to decide how much the used equipment owes the club, based on years of service and upkeep cost—on the probable life left in it—and on the fair cost to recondition it for normal use. Then he should buy the new equipment suited to his needs and not sell used equipment based on that new equipment deal which will cost the least additional dollar investment. I have heard certain men denounce two certain pieces of equipment during its last three years of service, only to reorder the very same machines. Why? Because that equipment's dealer gave them the longest trade—hence it was the best bargain. In these cases, all were losers.

The opportunity exists now for a cooperative action between the equipment dealers and the greenkeepers. Such a step would improve all relations and re-establish the buying independence of the greenkeeper, and raise him from the bargain-driver type to the true executive which he must be if he expects to assume more management responsibilities. It will lift the salesman from the bargain-giver class into a quality product merchandiser and bring from him more truths as to the ability of his products to perform. This would leave with every buyer a better picture of what he is buying and what performance he may expect from his purchase. It will also permit these dealers to be more prompt in financing their own business. Through this early release of

money to manufacturers, they in turn will be allowed a greater reserve to be expended in the development of newer machines.

Failure to see the rocks ahead will mean sooner or later the breakdown of the existing dealer set-up with a probable reversion to direct manufacturer representation or form machinery dealers with golf equipment as a side line. This would be accompanied with higher prices and maybe complete refusal of trade-in deals.

Nobody wants to see such a picture before him, and there is still time to avert such a catastrophe if genuine, unselfish thought is followed with cooperative action.

Minnesota Program is Tops in Talent

THE Minnesota Greenkeepers' Assn. annual meeting and educational conference was held at the Nicollet Hotel in Minneapolis, February 28-March 1. The

speaking program at the conference was really one the greensmen will talk about for some time to come; a glance at the talent on hand gives a quick tip-off on why the large number attending were so enthusiastic over the sessions.

Speakers were Dr. John Monteith, Jr., USGA Green Section; O. J. Noer, Milwaukee Sewerage Commission; W. R. Smith, secy., Twin City Senior League; Ray Rolfs, Milwaukee; Don Quay, asst. secy., Woodhill CC; Joe Rush, supt., Minneapolis CC; E. A. Swanlund, Rochester CC; Emil H. Picha, Midland Hills CC; and from the University of Minnesota staff, A. H. Larson, Dr. C. O. Rost, Lloyd Stein, George A. Thiel. Arthur Anderson, greenkeeper, University GC, was chairman for the first day's sessions; Carl Anderson, Nemađji CC, Superior, Wis., handled the chairmanship on the second day, and Gilbert Foster, greenkeeper at Town & CC, was chairman for the day at the concluding day's sessions. Annual banquet was held Thursday evening, February 29.

Golfers Get All-Weather Driving Range

AN all-weather driving range, said by experts to be one of the finest in the South, is nearing completion at the St. John Golf Club in City Park, New Orleans.

The range, which is being constructed by the WPA, will be 300 ft. wide at the north end, 600 ft. wide at the south end, and will be 300 yds. long. In fair weather a 300-ft. teeing strip will be available, while in inclement weather golfers may practice in six protected stalls, each 18 ft. wide, in front of the administration

building. Inside the administration building are two locker-rooms, two refreshment rooms and two dressing rooms.

A series of light standards have been erected to provide for night practice. Atop the driving stalls are four batteries of lights which project onto the range, while midway down the field are two standards on each side of the field, each equipped with a battery of five 1,000-watt bulbs. A parking lot will accommodate approximately 100 automobiles.



In inclement weather, New Orleans golfers may hit their practice shots from these six protected tee stalls built in front of the administration building.