

OCTOBER, 1941

Greensmen Face Tough Test Again in '42

By HERB GRAFFIS

Greenkeepers prepare for worse conditions, but hope for better, as plans are laid for next year

PESSIMISTS might have reason for telling the greenkeeper or green-committee member who complains of 1941 having been a year of trouble on the course, "you ain't seen nothing yet."

However golf course maintenance is no place for any but the optimistic, hence the possible—maybe probable—difficulties of next year's work are being contemplated as merely another severe test of planning and resourcefulness.

In considering next year's work experienced greenkeepers and committeemen have given much thought to the experiences of the past season which has been the most unfavorable in years on turf of most clubs from the Mississippi valley east and the Mason-Dixon line north.

Winter Favored Insects

Winter conditions had favored development of insect pests. Although grub control by arsenate of lead has been very definitely effective, clubs had taken a chance in easing up on the treatment and lost the gamble. The clubs also lost gambles they took in skipping snow mold treatments. In fact, it was the super-bum year for clubs taking a gamble with the budget in hope they'd be able to save some money. Fertilizer skimping showed up flagrantly. Weather conditions in many instances were the worst possible on clubs

that had eased up on preventive treatment because of increased mercury price.

All these misfortunes most surviving clubs say they won't risk again, as the cost of repair has far exceeded the most generous estimate of the possible hoped-for saving. Hence it is not unusual among 18-hole clubs to have tentative maintenance budgets for 1942 in excess of those set for 1941.

Poa Annua Bad

Poa annua again gave many greenkeepers headaches and hell in the central and northeastern sections of the country. The *poa annua* going out was of course most obvious by contrast on the better maintained course. About all they seem to be able to do with the *poa annua* areas, if they don't dig them out and resod or reseed, is to get used to them as a visitation of divine punishment.

Chemical weed control was tremendously extended and with promising signs that the field is on the way to the right answer. There's still considerable uncertainty about factors governing successful control, among which is the factor of soil temperature when applications are made. Consequently chemical treatment generally followed cautious experiments on courses to be treated. Although fall treatments

were by a wide margin in highest favor, spring treatments in entirety or as a final knockout for weeds had some advocates.

Veterans in greenkeeping maintain that course maintenance is in for a period of tough going. They say that fundamental construction faults on courses built during the boom period of the early 20s now are beginning to show seriously. They assert that heavy watering and high-pressure treatments demanded by members now is beginning to exact its toll. Such drastic treatment as chemical weed control of such strength that it also eliminates much of the grass and requires reseeding is the necessary means of getting fairways of highest playing condition, so numerous practical men aver. They recommend doing the rehabilitation job without holding back, saying that it's virtually impossible to correct conditions by a series of easy treatments.

Experiments Promise Help

Highly promising developments in selection of bent grasses most suitable to various localities have been forthcoming from the Green Section work in which many state universities and clubs are cooperating. Fairway grass strain work begun by Pennsylvania State College several years ago has begun to spread out, especially at Iowa State College. Short courses and research and advisory services of universities and colleges never before has been as helpful to golf clubs as it has been this year. Few golf club officials and members realize the extent and value of the close cooperation between greenkeepers and schools which is certain to figure importantly in 1942 course maintenance.

According to several authorities, among them watering equipment engineers, plenty still is to be learned, and applied, in correct watering of fairways. Regardless of any arguments about the naturalness of letting fairways bake and grass shrivel during midsummer, public preference is overwhelmingly for watered fairways. The unwatered courses can't compete with watered courses in playing desirability. In preparing programs for 1942 short courses, watering practice will come in for more attention than it's generally received in recent years.

According to greenkeepers and chairmen in all sections of the country who have been queried by GOLFDOM concerning their 1942 plans, the problems will rank:

1—Money; 2—Labor; 3—Machinery; —4 Weather.

The money problem doesn't appear to many club officials as one that will be any worse than it usually is. The consensus is that regardless of taxation and drastic business readjustments for defense priorities the vast spending will allow a normal amount to filter into golf, at private, fee and public courses.

Club officials expect that golf play will continue its big increase of 1941, especially if the trend toward accenting the importance of individual physical conditioning responds to the high pressure development planned to be given it.

The problems of training new labor, frequent labor turn-over, higher wages, lower efficiency, and labor management have been sampled with distress this year on many courses. Nobody expects these problems to be reduced in 1942. Considerable attention is being given by greenkeepers to the preparation of standardized method instruction sheets or workmen's sessions to be started early next season as a means of doing the best possible job of acquainting new workers with what's required.

With labor being difficult to get and uncertain in performance, and of indefinite period of availability, machine maintenance is salvation.

Orders Should Be In

However, those clubs that haven't ordered what they need and don't have credit rating to interest suppliers in considering the orders, are trusting a lot to the Lord, to Washington and the warring nations. Although it finally is becoming widely realized that A. Hitler and none of us is primarily the dictator of defense material requirements, delay in recognition of the fact has caught non-defense equipment manufacturers in plenty of a jam. There is some hope that during the winter the priorities and labor difficulties will be ironed out in a way to maintain non-defense business on a basis that will not completely upset the national economy. If so the course equipment situation will be greatly eased. As it is now manufacturers are exercising great resourcefulness compatible with national defense, but rarely can promise deliveries. The old days of trade-in of used equipment for far more than it was worth have vanished.

Fortunately for golf courses, fertilizer and seed supplies are good and prices are

(Continued on Page 30)

at minimum expense. Advertising in the program netted a profit although rates were low; only \$7.50 for a ¼ page, the largest unit of space sold. The program sold for a dime.

Members handled policing, scoring and ticket sales. The tournament was so interesting and successful the members of the Long Beach municipal course club have agreed to underwrite it next year.

In addition to the operation of the tournament in black ink it was a very successful event in adding to well publicized reputation of Recreation Park as "The Public Course With the Friendly Atmosphere."

Hawaii's New Hanakekua Course Is Beauty Spot

IF HAWAII'S new and beautiful 9-hole course lives up to its name it should be a great place for men concerned with the business end of golf, as well as for the hackers.

The new 2,470 yard course is called Hanakekua, meaning "work of the Lord." It is on the site of an old missionary home.

A. D. (Doug) Monro who formerly operated a practice course at Molokai was one of the moving spirits of the new club and is its manager.

Highlights of Hanakekua's development are given by Dick Faris in the magazine Hawaii. Dick tells:

"Frustrated by the total lack of public recreational facilities on Molokai, where not even a public beach is available, the committee, headed by Wilson N. Jacobson, began organization of the club nine months ago.

"Surmounting financial and land problems in rapid order, Senator George P. Cooke was induced to make arrangements for his Molokai Ranch to turn over 50 acres of its finest pasture land on a ten-year, dollar a year rental basis, and an additional donation of \$1,000 for a clubhouse; Libby McNeill & Libby and California Packing Corp. contributed \$500 each; and a satisfactory membership list was subscribed.

"Three months of labor on the fertile pastures by Calpack men and material levelled rough spots, built up greens, mowed fairways and cleared courses through giant ironwood and cypress forests. Lush grass pastures easily shaped

into fairways under the manicuring process, natural contour greens were marked, and clumps of forest hemmed fairways with tricky hazards. Permanent greens of finest top carpeting now mushroom beside the temporary installations. Nightly rains and heavy dew provide sufficient moisture for perpetual greenness.

"Cool trades sweep the 1,300-foot elevation from mountains to the East. A pause on any fairway commands a view of Maunaloa mountain in West Molokai, and two coastlines separated by the 20,000-acre richly fertile plain of Hoolehua, offering a stunning pattern of Hoolehua homestead farms outlined in the vivid red dirt, green crops and brightly painted roof tops far below. Spiraling fields of contour planted pineapples extend geometrically in wedges almost to the sea.

"An Hawaiian-styled clubhouse on a hill-top with lounge, locker-rooms and canteen bares a glassy front to the widest sweep of the view.

"Wilson Jacobson became Hanakekua's first president, serving with Frank N. Kinnison, John W. Hoxie, Kenneth Auld, J. E. Milligan, Charles Meyer, Melville O. McGuire, George A. Will, James M. Hill, H. F. Cowan and Charles Kawano as officers and directors.

"An initiation fee of \$25 was receptive, and \$3 monthly dues complete all greens fees and assessments for full membership. An associate membership is secured by payment of \$25 and small greens fees."

Greensmen Face Another Tough Test

(Continued from Page 12)

in line. On many other requirements the policy enforced is to order and hope for delivery. The condition has focussed golf club attention on equipment requirements as never before.

Considerable filling in of unnecessary traps has been ticketed by clubs for fall and winter work. Clubs have been reminded that this work, too, costs money.

Dependent, of course, on weather, winter sports programs at the northern clubs seem due for emphasis. This will mean winter work for whatever men of the crew can be retained. Other work is planned to keep them on, should winter sports be ruled out by adverse weather.

And on the subject of weather, the greenkeeper and committeemen are, as customary, trusting to prayer but budgeting to fight the weather in case the prayers are unanswered.