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# Wartime Course Maintenance Helps Average Golfer

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Reduction of maintenance standards considered absolute minimum heretofore, has in many cases brought about better playing conditions for the majority of players.

**A** PROPOSAL for raising height of fairway and tee cutting and increasing the interval between greens mowing, recommended by the Midwest Greenkeepers Assn. at the suggestion of the Chicago District Golf Assn., now is generally being adopted in the Chicago area. Also in the plan of wartime maintenance is elimination of trap raking, and adopting of winter rules, where needed, under the timely label of War Rules.

Details of this pattern of "standard" greenkeeping practice in the Chicago district appeared on page 44 of May GOLF-DOM. Since publication of this recommendation other district golf organizations have worked out with greenkeeping associations of their districts similar schedules for wartime maintenance and already have begun to see that expected complaints from members rarely have been forthcoming.

## Weather Favors Turf Growth

Weather conditions so far this year in most regions have been very favorable to growth of turf, and with the wartime revision in maintenance practice many greenkeepers are expecting that courses may go through the season in better shape and with less trouble and expense than

for many years past. The major worries hanging over the heads of greenkeepers generally now are insect attacks and equipment breakdowns. Enforced development of more rugged turf is expected to reduce fungus damage. That's a lucky break because of the shortage of the customary fungicides which is becoming acute as dealers' stocks are swiftly diminishing. High promise of effectiveness appears in at least one of the wartime fungicides but until it has been fairly extensively used for a season greenkeepers do not consider themselves in position to declare the fungicide problem is solved.

## Labor Is Big Headache

Where maintenance trouble is really giving greenkeepers headaches is in the labor department and in parts replacement of machinery, the latter especially at the smaller clubs. Machine care is far more important now than it's ever before been on a golf course and time saved by curtailing course maintenance routine is being devoted partially to careful cleaning, oiling and adjusting of machinery, and the prompt repair of worn or otherwise injured parts.

A large part of the country has had so much rain that watering systems

haven't had much use. The greens watering has been sharply reduced at many clubs.

The experience and other qualifications of greenkeepers in mechanical work has qualified many of them for war production factory work and clubs in numerous instances are beginning to wonder how long they'll be able to retain their greenkeepers. Course laborers have gone by the thousands into war factories, leaving the course maintenance work to be done by boys and old men who require special training, supervision and pretty nearly a petting program of labor management. Greenkeepers themselves are taking night school courses in war factory work as foresighted education, just in case. . . .

### Greenkeepers Really Shine

But what shines brightest in today's picture of course maintenance is the highly satisfactory manner in which the emergency has been met by permitting the greenkeeper's judgment to determine the minimum wartime maintenance requirements of a course permitting pleasant play, instead of going, as has been customary, by the ruling officials or members who are not conversant with all details of the job of maintaining a golf course.

It has been astonishing to see how the so-called reduction of course maintenance standards has really brought about better playing conditions for the majority of club members.

Longer greens, for instance, have enabled the two-or three-time a week golfer to putt with greater confidence. With his war worries and his nervous tension he simply hasn't got the touch for fast greens. Drier greens also have helped him. It has been thought that heavily watered greens were necessary to get the ordinary golfer's approach shot to stick. But it has been observed that the usual approach shot is far short of the cup and that a harder green giving more of a run to the ball results in bringing the approach shot of the 90-and-up player closer to the cup.

Longer fairways were expected to cause the greatest percentage of complaints because of the longer grass reducing the run of shots. However the slightly longer fairways generally tee the ball up just enough to give the high handicap player a much better chance for a good shot. The low handicap player may complain about the higher cut of fairways making

the shots less agreeable to him, but since he's in the minority and there are other far more important subjects of complaint these days he might as well make the best of it and rejoice that he has a course on which to play.

One development that has been highly valuable in providing the groundwork for a logical wartime course maintenance program is that of keeping the greenkeeper quickly and closely informed about the monthly variations in membership and income of the club.

Here is where the cost accounting and other record-keeping operations greenkeepers have been conducting for years demonstrates its practical worth. When the club's gross income says the greenkeeper who knows exactly what each operation costs him can make wise revisions in his operations immediately, based on all factors involved, instead of waiting until the board meets and debates.

Greenkeeping now, regardless of sound theory, is mainly a day-to-day job that calls for executive as well as technical ability. The way it's being handled by representative greenkeepers is giving club officials revelations of executive ability they never suspected their greenkeepers possessed, as previously, the greenkeeper was not often allowed to manage the job for which he was hired as a well qualified expert.

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## This Public Course Has Real Tournament Program

ELMWOOD Park GC, Sioux Falls (S. D.) municipal course, has a club tournament program and prize list far more extensive than public or private courses usually have. Pro Ed Livingston of the club has solicited from local business establishments, prizes for men's and women's events conducted every Saturday, Sunday and holiday throughout the season. This year War Bonds were among the prizes contributed.

An army air school is being built adjacent to the Elmwood Park course. A plan was worked out to provide moderate-priced golf for soldiers and to encourage play of the civilian engineering and construction personnel working at the new field.

Greenkeeper Cliff Anderson of Elmwood completed installing a fairway watering system before the season opened.