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Greensmen Tell of Duties in War

Prominent Superintendents Tell How Problems Are Met and Licked Thru Careful Planning

Careful Schedules Get Our Work Done

By KENT C. BRADLEY,
Supt., Passaic County GCSE, Paterson, N. J.

FOR the duration and some time after, before the post war golf boom, many clubs, especially the private ones in outlying areas are going to have one hell of a maintenance problem. Maintenance is in 4 parts, Membership, Money, Men, and Material. The first 2 need not be dwelled upon herein, as that's a club executive board problem. Workmen—labor—largely is a local problem for each club. This year we have made 2 increases—the first from 50 to 60c per hour last spring, and starting September 1, a blanket increase of 5c per hour—regular men to get 65c, and "helpers" 55c. We have 6 regular men and 4 helpers. Starting the year, we had 5 regular men, put on the sixth very early in spring, finished up all "winter work," then started routine. As season advanced and work increased, we put on older caddies, and as school let out, local boys. When school starts, we plan to give these kids work after school, say from 4 to 8 p.m.—all day Saturday, cleaning up "accumulated work" of the week. By keeping the regular men on main jobs—watering, matting greens, mowing, and hole changing—and saving the "trimming" work, trap raking, leaf raking, compost making, etc. We can hold things under control. A "regular" man in such times takes charge of a "task force"—to use a Navy expression—and regular men take the task force in charge in their respective upkeep sections. On special jobs, as topdressing, etc., the foreman takes them out. Thus we have 2 age groups of workers, those 40 or more in age (up to 58 at present) and those from 16 to 20 years old . . . "men and boys." It seems to work out swell. The older guys seem to prefer to instruct kids much younger than themselves and they break them in easier without squabbles, than they would from men of their own or near ages. The kids are the age where an older man has "parental" influence over them. Trouble brews when 2 kids, or 2 older men are teamed up. I'm dwelling on this, as it is a problem that I learned to solve the hard way—by experience. The

older man can be directed to work for quality, while the kids make up the quantity. Healthy competition results between 2 men forming a section team. The older men in charge of sections keep after their kid helpers so their sections compare favorably with the others. A little practical applied psychology on the greenkeeper's part goes a long way to attain results.

The other problem is the private club that can't get labor either for lack of funds, or lack of available men. The old system of having members pay less dues, if they put in an equal value of work, may have to do in such cases . . . but then it's a matter of time before they drop out of doing this. Obviously the greenkeeper can't do all the jobs alone, and it's only prolonging the agony of club survival. Power machinery helps a lot, and each club should have at least one power greens mower if it expects to survive. Here, we are cutting down size of greens; that size is governed by one or two swaths around the inside bank or "collar" using a triplex mower, which runs around twice a week, or 3 times if growth is rapid. If fertilization is watched carefully, applied on schedule, and according to weather, growth is kept more even, which helps make for even-scheduled mowing.

Mowing Moves on Schedule

Mondays here, we start out (27 holes and practice field)—one tractor to mow all fairways, lawns, and paths from tees thru first 100 yds. of rough. The job is finished Tuesday afternoon, using 7 units. The other tractor takes 3 units out, cuts tees, collars and approaches with units cutting slightly lower than fairways. Then the driver makes up a set of 5 units, set at rough height, cuts all rough (starting around 2 p.m.) and cuts to 4:30, then all day Tuesday, takes out the triplex Wednesday a.m. and cuts tees only, then goes back to cutting rough Wednesday at 12:30 to 4:30, and finishes up Thursday a.m. or afternoon,—the latter if rain slows him down. Tractor drivers have rain clothing with them and keep going unless it is a deluge.

Wednesday no fairways are cut unless rain delays work Monday or Tuesday. In this case, if Wednesday is free for the fairway man, he uses his tractor on tees, and lets the rough mowers get ahead on cutting. Thursday the tractor man on fairways starts out again, finishing up early Friday. Friday a.m. the rough tractor is again used on tees and collars. The second fairway mowing of the week does not cover lawn cutting, practice field, and other areas not subject to bulk of play.

Thus we have a regular schedule, keeping machines in use as much as possible, but not unnecessarily. We even gain time often so that one driver can go on other work—picking up grass clippings, etc. or running power mowers in "odd corners," or taking over a special task force, if foreman is busy spraying greens, or fertilizing, for instance. Full crew is kept busy 6 days a week.

This year we worked differently than last year, changed because of lessons learned then. Last year we worked differently than previously. Now we have things down to the minimum of lost motion, and yet have retained our upkeep standards to "grade B".

Members Accept Lower Standards

Lately we have tried lowering standards gradually to see the reaction—by doing it gradually, no notice was taken of it, and if need be I think we could lower to "grade C" on some things and get away with it, and not lose patronage next year. Despite wage increases, and material costs, I think we are ahead of last year's income. Our play volume this year tops all.

As to material, rubber hose needs be nursed along. We always keep ours in ventilated boxes, locked when not in actual use. Already our hose is 6 years old on the average. I expect it to last another 6 years, with care.

We leaded our fairways last spring, and finding it not economically practical to do rough also, expect to do some reseeding this fall, but it would not cost anyway near the lead price, even if we have to do this for several years. Tees and greens have been treated also, and while this year the Jap beetle infestation has reached its peak (apparently), since we can't get anymore lead, I'm not losing any sleep over it. Many of our trees have been denuded of foliage, but with the rains new leaves are sprouting.

"Mineral" nitrogen, whether natural or synthetic, may be reserved only for farm crops, and demands will be made for the organics in commercial mixes, and even these may have to be rationed to clubs, as there are already heavy demands for them. Phosphates and potash while not so much in demand for turf are essential,—lime is plentiful, but shipments may be delayed

due to transportation. The wise thing to do is buy what can be ordered now and hope for shipments to be made in time.

If any mineral nitrogen is available or on hand, it should best be used to break down compost materials. Club garbage, some weeds, cut before they go to seed or get "woody," grass clippings, tree leaves raked up and piled before they dry out too brittle, and local peats should be considered as compost ingredients. They should be piled now, with only a little top soil to hasten decay, then increased in bulk with sands of right grade before freezing. This material while low in fertility compared to commercial materials, will have to do, even tho bulkier, and costing more to handle.

Hold Men Through Winter

It is economical to keep the main crewmen working thru the year so they will be available for the next season, but fall and winter work should also justify the expense of carrying these men on the pay roll.

For example, some courses built on stony ground find that stones frost-heave over the winter, and altho they do eventually settle as the season progresses, they do not all return beneath the surface. Such stones that stay exposed are a financial liability. They cause damage to mower knives, wheels and rollers; may cause a player to break a club if he takes a divot from turf just covering a stone. A ball landing on an exposed stone may be deflected off into the rough or woods where it gets lost for good, or ties up play while it is being sought.

Painting, repairs or alterations in the clubhouse and other buildings is best done in the slack golf season. The water-mixt casein paints are quickly applied, and require little if any skill. While wet, the paint looks streaky, but the better grades of paste or powder paints level off in drying which takes little time. These paints are inexpensive, and are highly satisfactory in rooms not subject to shower steaming or cooking grease mists. They come in many colors, and have good light reflecting value, which means less consumption of illumination electricity. This is a job that can be done on stormy days, and done yearly, keeps a freshness in the appearance of the rooms.

Trees and shrubbery on the grounds are an asset, best maintained by pruning, treating bark bruises and cavities in

These sports trophies were turned in to be sold to raise funds for war materials. Chairman Clarence Low (right) of WPB's New York Salvage committee, and Holcombe Ward (left) Pres. of the U. S. Lawn Tennis Assn., head of the sports committee which secured the trophies, inspect the haul to be converted to win the world's title from the Axis.

dormant months. The Greenbrook C.C., Caldwell, N. J., has a good scheme for adding to grounds planting. Before ground freezes, holes are dug and fertilized and fill soil is brought under cover. Members buy evergreen trees, balled and tubbed from nearby nursery "overgrown stock." After New Year's Day, these trees are brought to the club, the grounds crew plants them and each tree is marked with a sign bearing the donor's name. There is some cultural loss, but a gain in trees that do live, nonetheless.

Here's My Fall Check List

By RAY H. GERBER
Supt., Glen Oak CC, Glen Ellyn, Ill.

AS the golfing season in the Chicago district is drawing to a close I believe most golf clubs have a much better feeling than when the season started.

A good percentage of the clubs are reporting their play as good as last year. Some others are ahead of last year, but the contrary is the situation with clubs in the out-lying districts.

Here at Glen Oak the golfing picture is much brighter than early last spring. Our play is as good as last year's. If there should be a gas rationing, there should be no need for us to worry as the electric train stops at our ninth tee. This will make transportation very convenient. So our plans for the coming year are going to be about the same as in the past.

I am going to try and do as much of

my next spring's work this fall as I possibly can. This will be a smart move for every club that plans on opening next spring.

Some of us have been doing very little topdressing in the past few years. But under our present mowing program we are creating a heavy mat on certain types of bent greens even tho they are brushed frequently. This mat should be removed or serious trouble will occur.

As soon as the heavy mat is removed a good topdressing is usually necessary. In most cases it is left until spring. Clubs having facilities to keep their topdressing dry should screen their next year's supply this fall, if the compost is dry enough to do so. This has been my practice for several years and has always worked out satisfactorily.

If there is an opportunity to prune any trees or shrubs, trim any hedges that have gotten out of hand or spade shrub beds, this work should be done this fall. It can be done to good advantage any time up until the weather gets too cold for this kind of work.

All leaks in water pipes or sprinkler valves should be repaired, and tile lines that need cleaning or repairing should be done before the ground freezes.

If Possible, Do It Now

It will be a good idea to keep all grass cut this fall at a reasonable height so that there will be no old grass to bother with next spring.

At many clubs the leaves in the fall are a problem and nothing is done with them until spring. It will be a wise move to dispose of them this fall and thereby save many hours of work next spring.

Any sand traps that are going to be filled in or made into grassy hollows should be done this fall.

All buildings, bird houses, tee benches, and ball washers that need painting should be done as soon as possible after the golfing season is over.

All equipment should be checked for broken or worn parts before storing away. These repair parts should be ordered without any delay as it may take some time before your order is filled. Orders do not go through as fast as they used to.

Clubs that do not do their own repair work should send their equipment to the repair shop this fall, and not wait until spring, as they may not have them back when they need them. These repair shops may have labor shortages too.

In many cases as soon as the golfing season gets near the end, clubs begin to lay off their help. This may have been all right when men were plentiful but those days are not now.

The reason I feel that as much work should be done this fall as possible is because we now have some of our old help that has been with us for years, plus the ones we have been training for the past season. These new men now have a good idea of how to do most of this work.

But next spring where will they be? Lord only knows. In fact, the greenkeeper does not know where he will be. But he can show his club what his intentions were and after the war is over, a welcome hand will be waiting for him.

Warns Against Too Little, Too Late, in Course Work

By G. M. DEARIE
Supt., Edgewater GC, Chicago

WHAT you do on your course this fall will determine next year's condition. Beware now of too little, for next spring it may be too late.

Fall maintenance work that has been carefully planned and carried out will give any golf club the jump on next year's operations. A golf course superintendent should know more about the working ability of his club now than ever before. Now he is not only looked upon as a man to carry out orders from various committees but as an executive whose foresighted action can carry the club through war conditions. There is no short cut to a finely groomed golf course. If a course has been maintained properly in the past no doubt it will stand the strain for a number of years, providing the greenkeeper of that course is on his toes.

Wartime shortage of manual labor, supplies and machinery and budget reduction will test the ability of any greenkeeper.

Here at Edgewater we are within walking distance of many of the members' homes and near all city transportations so we have not experienced any slump in play.

It has been a practice with me to make notes through the year on maintenance problems and at this time of the year to make recommendations to the chairman of the green committee. I never have made recommendations in such trying times as we have today. Yet it is my belief that

we must maintain a fine course for the condition of the course will have a bearing on getting the membership to use the course for essential wartime recreational balance.

In our fall program we have planned to enlarge the practice tee due to more play there than ever before. Many of the men in war production do not have time to complete a round of golf. We are to close three large traps on the course. This will reduce the number of hours of labor. We will continue a program of improving our drainage system. Fertilizing of greens and tees and seeding where necessary, the storing of a compost pile, which will be much larger than in the past, due to the curtailment of high nitrate fertilizer, are other items on our program. All machinery and implements will be given a general overhauling and be in readiness for next season.

A greenkeepers work does not end with his fall program completed, but this year especially accents the winter months when the greenkeeper must guard his greens against snow mold as this can be one of the greatest handicaps in the spring.

Be Ready to Change Plans If Conditions Warrant

By JOHN L. COUNSELL
Supt., Salem (Mass.) CC

I believe that long-term planning is out for the duration. We are living in an unbalanced world today, with a pendulum swinging as uncertain as the tail of a kite. We can plan to some extent, but the picture is apt to change so rapidly that we must be open-minded enough to alter our plans quickly to meet new conditions.

New construction and extensive renovation work on the golf course will be reduced to a minimum. We do not expect to keep the course as well groomed as in the past, but we shall provide the members with good playing conditions. We have no special plans for this fall except to keep the turf as healthy as possible, with one eye on the budget. We have changed some of our operations and by cutting corners we have reduced our maintenance costs, but we must be on the watch for any cumulative effect on the turf, resulting from the curtailing.

The labor shortage has been a problem this year and it is reasonable to suppose that it will be worse in 1943. We can help to solve this problem by providing as pleasant working conditions as possible and by being prudent in handling the men. I am planning to purchase as much of next year's necessary supplies as my budget will allow, providing they are obtainable. Under present conditions, shopping around for better prices is a waste of time; in many cases, we consider ourselves fortunate if we can locate and purchase the merchandise we want.

It will be necessary to discard some of the generally accepted good greenkeeping practices for the duration, and substitute other methods that will suffice, even though they may appear to be the product of a brain storm.

I believe golf clubs will continue to operate on a program of rigid economy and the vital part of golf, the golf course, will survive where the greenkeeper employs intelligent management, ingenuity, and the courage to carry on.

Managers' Menu: Headaches for Breakfast, Dinner, Supper

MANAGERS of country clubs not distant from residences of their members have been surprised by this season's volume of house business. Higher costs of feeding at home, domestic help shortage, inability of members to get out of town on vacations, and women's activity in Red Cross and other war organization work, account for the volume.

What has given managers plenty of trouble is the help shortage and the members' expectation of service-as-usual at the clubs. Members also yowl now and then because of increased menu prices at clubs despite the club-women's knowledge of higher food and labor costs.

Laundry also is giving the managers concern. In some cities near army camps or navy posts the government has taken over laundries and the clubs find themselves short of clean linen notwithstanding emergency laundry work done by cooks, waitresses, et al.

Strain of long hours and problems has begun to tell on some older managers who have been hospitalized.

Ingenuity in planning affairs for war service organization benefit has been outstanding in golf club managers' performances this season.

GET THE RANGE

Golf Practice Range at Camp Croft, S. C., Popular With Soldiers

CAMP CROFT, S. C.—One of the most popular centers of recreation for soldiers here following the wind-up of the day's work, is the Camp's newly installed golf driving range and miniature golf course, located in the center of the reservation and adjacent to the station hospital.

Opened a few weeks ago, the driving range has met with great response from Croftites, as has the miniature course. Shortage of golf balls has been a problem confronting First Lieut. William Carpenter, special service athletic officer, in operating the recreation project.

A sizeable stock of pellets was obtained for the driving range through a hole-in-one benefit tournament, recently sposored by the Camp at Shoresbrook CC, Spartanburg (S. C.), the city nearest the cantonment.

Col. Howard Donnelly, commander of Croft Ninth Infantry training regiment, cuts loose on a drive. Teeing a ball (back of Col. Donnelly) is Sgt. Cummings.

However, due to the large number of golf-enthusiasts in the military personnel of this infantry training replacement center, the supply realized as a result of the ace tournament failed to cover the requirements of the many soldier-patrons.

The range is in direct charge of Pvt. Fred Johnson, former Philadelphia Cricket club pro, who took over the assignment after he completed his basic military training here. The miniature course is operated

Pvt. Fred Johnson, formerly at Philadelphia Cricket Club, on the golf practice range at Camp Croft. In the background is the range golf shop being built by soldier-carpenters.

under the direction of Staff Sergt. Mark Cummins of Chicago, who, in civil life, managed Olson's Hollywood (Fla.) Inn.

Photos taken on the golf range by the U. S. Army Signal Corps photographers of Camp Croft for GOLFDOM include the illustration on this issue's front cover. Tuning up for the time when they'll hit the real thing with something more potent than golf balls, Camp Croft soldiers aim at Hitler's caricature on the post's new driving range. To make sure he doesn't miss, Corp. Peter Lasiewski of Fort Benning, Ga., formerly of Croft, has moved up real close for a crack at Adolph.

PRES. C. F. ROBBINS, of A. G. Spalding & Bros., together with Vice-President L. E. Coleman entertained a group of company employees at a golf tournament and dinner at Rock Spring CC, West Orange, N. J., Aug. 16.

Salesman Ken Smith won the kickers handicap. George Dawson, New York district sales manager, and Lyle Thomson, with scores of 72 and 77 respectively made on a wet course, revealed the playing qualities of the new Spalding Hurricane golf ball which was used by all the contestants. Other players were Advertising Manager Harry Amtmann, Store Managers Frank Heery and Bill Hellawell, Salesmen Howard Till, Bill Tollner and Phil Darcy; Walter Roberts and George Roth of the golf pro department and John Tapoosian of the Brooklyn factory.