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# Foresight Paying Out

Brookline's Planning, Begun in '26, Puts Club in Prime Shape to Meet Today's Operating Problems

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**G**OLF club operation in wartime is subjecting clubs to appraisals of previous administrations that are disclosing impressive cases of the value of looking ahead. Some clubs have slumped badly in physical conditions of their plants during only two years of war. Other clubs, despite reduced maintenance, seem to have plants in far better condition than during good years before the war.

Unfortunately for the conduct of golf clubs as a business, the lessons of failure to get the plant in shape probably will have no lasting effect, although such lessons have been striking during the war. Administrations will change and the men who carried on during the war will be glad to be relieved and forget their former worries. A current opportunity for golf to do some postwar planning will be muffed, and the postwar club officials will begin all over making mistakes of omission.

One of the brightest examples of looking ahead to get a golf club in condition to withstand eventualities is at the famed Country Club of Brookline, Mass.

The Country Club could have gone on in the lush years figuring that every day

was going to be smooth. There was no pressure on it to prepare for sharp reduction of maintenance facilities. In the days when money was the answer to the majority of golf club problems, The Country Club members had plenty of money. But it also had something that is paying off rewards that money alone have assured it. It had the capacity of looking ahead.

In December 1926 when Hal Pierce became chairman of the club's golf committee he formed this Committee of five people, including himself, which he divided into sub-committees. He and Herb Jaques (both of whom have been USGA presidents) were the ones responsible for the remodeling and up-keep of the golf course. They immediately laid out a program of renovation to be completed over a period of years, placing in order the jobs to do in accordance with their importance.

They remodeled many greens, paying especial attention to the water sheds so as to obviate winter kill. They used a great deal of sodium arsenite throughout the fairways to eliminate plantain and dandelions and spent a large amount of money eliminating crabgrass in the

greens. Over ninety traps were filled in on the old 18-hole course which saved in labor not less than \$30 per trap per year. They motorized the entire equipment even to green cutting and, sensing the coming troubles in 1941, they bought a lot of new equipment and a three-year supply of repair parts.

In 1934 they installed a fairway water system at a cost of approximately \$55,000. Last year Brookline did not water the fairways and saved approximately \$600. In 1940 the club bought 1200 yards of loam. In 1938 the old sand was removed from every trap and new sand of coarser texture put in.

During this period the boulders and stumps were blasted out of the rough so that there would be no delay in cutting the rough with a power unit. In September 1942 the club closed nine holes on account of lack of labor. Last year the Country club's golf play fell off 21.2%, principally due to the ladies who were doing war work and therefore not playing in the mornings.

#### Green Budget Shaved

In 1929 the club had 18 men and a greenkeeper and an appropriation, in addition to golf fees, of \$18,000. Last year it had six men and a greenkeeper and an appropriation of \$6,000. This year the appropriation is \$2,000 in addition to the green fees. For a long period of time the Country Club has been fertilizing fairways with milorganite at a cost of \$900 per year. Last year it did not do this and can get along for a few years without having to spend money on this item.

The club previously had two skeet fields; now it has one. Due to labor it has eliminated one of the children's hockey rinks. In the house the club reduced help, cut down on the variety of foods and as it cannot today get the best cuts invariably, cost of food has been reduced. Buildings through the last few years have been thoroughly repaired so that there will be no near expenditure of any amount for major repairs. A central-heating system was also installed at a saving of about \$3,000 per year in fuel costs.

The Country Club allows Army and Navy Officers to use its facilities and pay the same charges for golf, etc. as the members. If any officer is stationed nearby for any length of time he is allowed to take an individual or family membership at the rate of \$10 per month. The club

also collected a fund so that British and Canadian Officers while temporarily in Boston can use the club and all its facilities free.

Brookline is not able at the present time to use its indoor tennis courts at night due to blackout and there is a saving here in the electricity bill.

An interesting side light is that in 1933 the Country Club's gains from operations were \$52,000 and 1942 \$9,700. This is accounted for by the fact that it had many resignations in 1938. It also had a big waiting list and each new member that came in had to pay \$150. The waiting list today is not anywhere near as large as it was then although there are a great many members' sons waiting to come in who, of course, are now in the Service.

#### Keno Program Boosts Off-Season Patronage

**N**ORTHLAND CC, Duluth, Minn., set new records for play week-ends in April. The club, on a bus line 10 minutes from the city, had a net gain of 26 members opening this season.

The club's pro, Harold Clasen, is one of the liveliest business men in pro golf. During the winter, Clasen operated his own bowling alleys. That's out for future winters during the war as his bowling establishment was destroyed by fire Jan. 22. Loss was covered by insurance.

For the first time in the club's history the clubhouse made a profit during the winter. Keno games, started last May and run through the winter, were the reason.

In telling of this clubhouse attraction Clasen says:

"We sell the boards for \$2.00 each and that entitles the player to ten games. We start off with a buffet dinner and have served from 30 to 150. Cash prizes ranged from \$8.00 to \$25.00. Here is the secret of getting them out. Each week we take out of the total sales a small amount which goes into a "Pot of Gold". This can be won the first week if some one kenos in the first eight numbers called. If no one kenos the game proceeds until the winner comes through. Each week the Pot of Gold gets larger and the chance of winning is greater as the numbers are increased one. Our Pot of Golds have been won on the average of every six weeks and they average about \$200. There are ten chances at the Pot of Gold each week."