

Better Get Those Balls In!

W. C. (BILL) GORDON, pro at Tam O'Shanter CC (Chicago district), who wrote on wartime planning and operating in May **GOLFDOM**, stirred considerable discussion with his article. Among those commenting favorably on Bill's piece was John Sproul, sales mgr. of US Rubber Co. golf ball sales dept. John suggested that if Bill could stir up as much talk with some expressions on the ball crisis he would be doing pro golf a timely turn.

So here is what Gordon has to say on the ball situation:

"A strong, immediate effort must be made to impress men who make a living in golf that unless they now apply themselves intensely to getting the balls in they will have difficulty in hold their jobs. There won't be any jobs for them to hold if there are no balls for play.

"It must be realized that getting balls in for reconditioning is something on which the buck can't be passed. If the pro neglects this work, thinking somebody else will do it, he is going to be out of luck soon.

"I also think that a forceful educational job must be done by pros in convincing their members of the honest truth that a properly reconditioned ball is near enough in performance to a new first-class ball that the great majority of players wouldn't be able to tell the difference.

"It is fast becoming plain that ball rationing must begin if the game is to be kept alive for the duration. Selling reconditioned balls to players who do not turn in a like number of balls for reconditioning is hastening the development of such a ball shortage that many courses will have to close down for the lack of play sufficient to support the establishments.

"Manufacturers, having more at stake than any other investing interest in golf except the clubs, probably will have to take a firm stand on ball rationing and insist on receiving a satisfactory number of balls for reconditioning before they ship to the ordering pro the quantity of balls that he wants.

"This part that the leading manufacturers will have to play in the ball rationing plan of course will open up a field for black market ball concerns but that situa-

tion will be met with a sharp publicity campaign that will make the buyer of black market balls show himself up as the sort of a guy who would cheat on the score, and in general be an undesirable fellow for any other golfer to play with.

"By Labor Day it will be too late for the pro to get in enough balls to make certain the fairly extensive continuance of golf next year, and to provide the war workers and the uniformed men on leave with the recreation of golf. So if the pro doesn't go after balls now and keep campaigning despite indifference or stalling by his members or public course patrons, he will wake up at summer's end and find it's too late for him to get action.

"Even after the war it may take some time to get ball production in shape to supply the demand of the boom the game probably will experience. If pros don't keep the present supply of balls constantly being reconditioned, they may find themselves short of ball stock when peace comes and there is a great chance for foresighted pros to welcome many newcomers to the game.

"The Lord helps him who helps himself' applies to the golf ball situation just as much as it does to anything else. The pro must help himself in the critical problem of increasing turn-in of old balls. Taking command in this ball shortage emergency can give the pro the best chance he's ever had to prove that he is the keystone of golf's preservation and progress."

Recalls Old Days to Show Golf Will Survive

CONFIRMED crabbers who complain about the still relatively inconsequential inconveniences of wartime golf, might get straightened out by reading Walter Prichard Eaton's piece on **Cow Pasture Golf** in the June issue of the **Atlantic Monthly**.

Eaton, a distinguished writer, drama professor and veteran of 50 years of American golf, tells about the old days of golf. The courses weren't so fancy but the golfers had a lot of fun. Like standards of almost everything else, the standards of course design, construction

and maintenance and of clubhouse facilities, have become higher in the past half century. But there is plenty of room for temporary sacrifice of the progress without closing courses for what, in actuality are minor inconveniences and don't destroy the inherent interest and refreshment of the game.

Eaton says: "Confronted with a shortage of all three (machinery, gasoline and manpower), at any price we are told that many golf clubs will have to close up and let their expensive fairways go back to hay—a completely unmarketable commodity these days. It is a gloomy picture, especially for the middle-aged men among us who rely on the game to keep us fit."

Some of Prof. Eaton's suggestions and criticisms are open to controversy, but his

main theme that golf could be kept through the war in healthy condition by reverting to simpler standards of its growing days, looks to be air-tight.

As a matter of fact the hale and hearty performance of a lot of veterans now in senior golf associations indicate that the old breed of golfers may have been a much more rugged bunch than some of today's flock who find current mild inconvenience too much for them.

It has been interesting this year to see how many of the senior golfers are back in business harness working hard at important war industry jobs. They still keep in great shape by taking some of their recreation time on a golf course that they have to reach without using their rubber and gas to drive virtually to the first tee.

Wartime Economies Preserve Varsity Golf

By JACK PHILLIPS

THE Stanford University GC is not alone in being faced by the task of trying to continue operations in a satisfactory manner under difficult conditions. Its annual income for the 1942 fiscal year dropped \$3,000 below that of the previous year, however operational costs showed a corresponding decrease of \$5,300. Since most of the large overhead figures—rent, taxes and water charges—remain fixed, the greatest part of this reduction had to be made by cutting costs in course maintenance.

This was partly taken care of by the lack of available labor, which reduced the amount spent for wages. During the summer of 1941, 14 men were putting in a full 48-hour week, while in the summer of 1942 only six men were working full-time and a seventh just part-time. Wages had to be substantially increased, however, to hold these remaining key men with the idea that a few experienced men were worth the cost. This factor brought a new headache to E. W. VanGorder, course superintendent, who had to figure out a new routine which would provide a way to keep the course in suitable condition with the necessary economy of labor, and still cut expenses further.

His new plan called for a reduction of expenditures for equipment maintenance, including gas and oil. Previously the fairways had been cut twice a week right up

to the edge of the tees. Now they are cut three times every two weeks beginning about 75 yards in front of the tees and are narrowed.

The greens are mowed three times weekly instead of four. The cups are changed less often than in normal times. Reduction in the use of equipment saved wear and lowered repair costs as well as expenses for operation, and produced much of the needed labor economy.

No equipment was purchased during 1942. VanGorder had to cut down on the use of fertilizer and seed. Although reduced use of water did not reduce the fixed water charges, it helped keep grass from growing rapidly. Now watering is only done once a week in the evening, while previously it was done on two and three nights.

By limiting the maintenance of sand-traps to a bare minimum, VanGorder has saved considerable money previously spent for sand, as well as reducing the amount of time required for upkeep.

Despite all this maintenance reduction, the course still remains in good condition. The narrowing of the fairways makes it even more testing. The fact that winter rules need be used only during two of the very wettest months of the year speaks for itself.

Decline in the number of yearly memberships was a hard problem to face. In