

JERSEY GEARS ITSELF TO WARTIME COURSE MAINTENANCE JOB

THIS season has put state golf associations to a tough test, but it's been one that has been ably met in demonstrating the emergency value of these organizations.

With few exceptions, state amateur associations have had more demands for their services than ever before. Especially by investigative and advisory work have the state association staffs been kept abnormally busy.

In New Jersey, where some clubs were practically knocked out by gas restrictions, the state association has been having one of its most active years.

Dr. M. E. Husted, chairman of the New Jersey State GA Green Section, highlights work of the organization in saying:

"We feel that the New Jersey State GA has served its member clubs to a greater extent this year than ever before. In addition to the green section work, we held all tournaments as scheduled heretofore and a new one called the Triangular Matches. This brought together eight pros, eight amateurs and eight women and a gallery of 1,000 people. All admissions from this and other tournaments have been donated to the Red Cross.

"These matches and the recent PGA Championship in which Emery Thomas beat out Vic Ghezzi, were all played on the rules set down by our green section.

Argue "Preferred Lie"

"I cite this because we have had inquiries from as far west as California as to how clubs received the 'preferred lie' ruling. Of course, some clubs will resent a ruling of this kind but with a shortage of labor and equipment together with a bad year on turf, have soon realized its advantages. To those who complain that preferred lies is not golf, might we suggest that we should be very thankful to be able to play the game at all under these wartime conditions. In my travels through New Jersey and New York, I have seen several courses closed entirely; some of which will never open. Some others are just cutting enough to save the grass.

"In general, weather conditions in Jersey have not been too good; we started the season with a cool, wet spring but hit

three weeks of drought in June just at the time to discourage the growth of the good grasses and give the budding weeds a chance. This no doubt accounts for the terrific amount of crabgrass encountered later in the summer. This dry season lasted through the summer and even this fall we had very little moisture. In contrast to this the course I visited in the Eastern New York PGA section from Albany to Oneonta had an abundance of rain even to the extent of having wet places on fairways that could not be cut and with practically no roll on the ball whatsoever."

Plan in Advance

The New Jersey association started early to plan its 1943 work and found that arranging in advance for the inevitable pinches was much better policy for its member clubs than the policy of meeting emergencies as they came up when nature took its course.

Prior to the opening of the season the association's green section, over the signatures of Dr. Husted and Gilbert H. Ahlgren of the agronomy dept., New Jersey State Experiment station, wrote green chairmen and superintendents of every club in the state:

"Perhaps you know by this time that Dr. Howard B. Sprague is temporarily away from Rutgers, serving with the Army Air Corps. John Stephenson is now connected with the Rhode Island State College. In addition to this reduction in personnel, it becomes increasingly difficult to travel in the state by car due to the serious shortage of tires and gasoline. The war has made it necessary that the golf clubs in the state maintain their expenses at a minimum. In view of these changing conditions it appears desirable to place certain suggestions regarding our turf advisory service before you for your consideration.

"The Agronomy Department of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment station at New Brunswick has maintained the turf advisory work, whereby soil samples were taken from the greens and fairways of each club taking the service, by a specialist from this department. Chemical tests for the various fertilizer elements and for lime

were made, and recommendations based on the results of these tests were sent to each club by the turf specialist. In addition, advice was given on watering, topdressing, reseeding, disease control and other problems. This service has been maintained in the past by charging a fee of \$50.00 for 18-hole and \$25.00 for 9-hole golf courses, providing said golf clubs were members of the New Jersey State GA. Non-members were charged a higher fee.

"We feel that the service during this period of emergency is more important than ever to the golf courses of the state. Every means whereby expenses can be reduced and yet good golf service maintained should be investigated. For example, limitations on fertilizer and disease control materials for golf course usage are only two of the many problems facing us. Substitutes must be found and the information generally disseminated. You will want to apply only those fertilizers which will give good results based on careful soil tests to reduce expenditures for unnecessary or unwarranted materials.

Hire Soil Analyst

"It is proposed that we maintain the laboratory service by means of the greenkeeper mailing soil samples to this department. Detailed information on the best method of taking soil samples will be sent out. The greenkeeper will take the samples from the greens and fairways, label and forward them to this laboratory for chemical analysis. Recommendations based on the results of the soil test will be mailed back.

"In addition to the soil testing, the Agronomy department will continue to function as a center of general information on lime and fertilizer recommendations, disease control, topdressing, and other problems which confront the greenkeeper. The Agronomy department will also maintain turf tests and experiments at New Brunswick to meet whatever problems arise.

"Carrying on the soil testing laboratory service necessitates the hiring of a qualified worker to run the chemical analysis. Laboratory tests conducted by a trained man are vastly superior to those of the small soil testing kit. Greater accuracy and more uniform results are secured on adapted laboratory equipment by a man specially trained for the purpose. To meet this expense it is suggested that 18-hole golf courses pay a fee of \$25.00 a year, and that 9-hole courses pay \$15.00 yearly,

if they are members of the New Jersey State Golf Association; and that non-members pay \$25.00 for 9-hole courses and \$40.00 for 18-hole courses. Any money collected over and above that needed to pay the soil analyst will be used in the maintenance of turf experiments as related to golf courses here at the Experiment Station.

"May we have your indication of interest in the above proposals as soon as possible?"

Send Economy Tips

Recommendations for general practice in the season's maintenance were made in a bulletin headed "Golf Course Management During Wartime" which the association requested its member clubs to post.

This bulletin read:

"Many problems are facing golf courses as the 1943 season opens. There is a shortage of labor, equipment, gasoline, fertilizers and fungicides. These shortages are real and unavoidable but they can be partially solved by adopting certain management practices.

"The height of cut on greens can be raised to 5/16 inch. The greens can be cut on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, instead of the usual 5 or 6 times a week. Increasing the height of cut and reducing the number of cuts per week will favor improvement of the grass.

"The fairways can be cut at 1 1/4 inches rather than 1 inch or shorter as in the past. Two cuttings a week in spring and perhaps only one in summer, would be needed if improved lies are established for the entire season. This height of cut not only reduces labor, gasoline usage and wear on machinery, but will result in a healthier, denser turf, which will be more drought-, disease-, and insect-resistant and capable of competing more strongly with weeds. During periods when the grass is dormant, the longer cut will provide a cushion from which to play the ball.

"These suggestions will not only save on current shortages but will give healthier greens and better fairways. Improved lies for playing golf are very strongly recommended for the duration of the war. This means moving the ball with the club head only, on the fairways only, within a distance of twelve inches, not nearer the hole.

"Will you please cooperate with your State Golf Association in this all-out-attempt to conserve manpower and equipment, and to secure uniformity of play?"