

Asks Understanding of Course Care Problems

J. PORTER HENRY, green-chairman of Algonquin GC (St. Louis district), and his fellow committee members, Burt G. Close and Claud L. Harrell, have sent to the club's members a letter telling what problems there are in course maintenance these days. By tipping off the members and asking their consideration and cooperation, the letter has greatly eased the strain on turf and temperaments at a club where there's a great deal of play.

The letter:

Fellow Member:

The maintenance of our golf course this season has been far more difficult than at any time in the history of our club. Members who are somewhat acquainted with the problems have been very cooperative and helpful and patient with apparent shortcomings. The time has come when we must ask the full cooperation of all members and to that end this is written to acquaint everyone with the difficulties under which your Greens Department is working.

Maintenance of greens in the summertime depends upon expert experienced help. So simple a matter as watering can ruin a green if not properly done. Too much water or too little, depending upon weather conditions, may prove disastrous. Delayed treatment of the various fungus diseases, over doses or under doses, may cause trouble. Fertilization and topdressing require expert handling.

Before the war we employed eleven men in the summer season—six or seven of whom were trained in every department of maintenance. Now we have five, occasionally six, with only four of them experienced. This crew must keep the putting greens and fairways cut, watered, fertilized, topdressed, weeded, occasionally tined for aeration, ball bruises corrected, traps attended to when time permits, etc., etc.

All our men are required to work overtime—two of our most experienced men often give us twelve to fourteen hours a day.

Because of these circumstances it is physically impossible to keep our course and all its appointments in the shape we would desire to have it. So if the grass is too long in the ditches, the trap too full of footprints or too short of sand; if a ball bruise or a clump of goose grass causes you to miss your putt; if the drinking fountain is not iced, the ball washers not in A-1 condition; if the benches are out of place; if sticks or leaves clutter the greens too long after a wind, or if any other obvious condition needing cor-

recting disturbs your sense of order, please do not attribute these things to neglect, nor assume that they are unknown to the Greens Department. Above all, please do not complain to the workmen or greenkeeper. They are taking a licking as it is and need encouragement rather than criticism. Take it up with the Greens Chairman and give him hell if it will ease your pain. He is used to it, and, because he has been a complainer himself, will understand it. Usually there are satisfactory explanations for most complaints. Rest assured that suggestions are always welcome because often helpful.

We are doing everything possible to give you the best we can, but we are forced to put first things first. This necessitates an apparent neglect of secondary items.

Because of so many young and inexperienced caddies, members are particularly requested to read and heed the do's and don'ts hereafter set out. The observance of these will help materially. Some of these are especially important because of the hard use our course receives—twice to four times the play of the other five comparable clubs in the district.

You can help by correcting your own ball bruise. Don't just tramp it down. Take your tee, loosen the soil in the bottom of the bruise, insert the tee about half an inch from the edge of the bruise and press the turf towards the bruise. Do this at about four places surrounding the same, then step on it lightly.

The letter concludes with a list of Do's and Don'ts for players, which appeared in a recent GOLFDOM.

ACE CONTEST GETS BALLS—Gene Root, pro-mgr. at the Ross Rogers muny course, Amarillo, Tex., recently conducted a hole-in-one contest that brought 444 used balls as entry fees. Local merchants and Root offered \$100 in merchandise in prizes to anyone making an ace. Nobody collected. Gene plans another ace tournament with a larger hole to follow-up the success of this initial ball collection project.

Miami Open, Dec. 7-10

Miami open will be played at Miami Springs muny course Dec. 7-10 for \$10,000 purse. This will be the 20th annual Miami open. The event now is billed as "the oldest consecutive annual open in the country." Steve Warga, Jr., airline radio operator, was a surprise winner of the 1943 Miami open.