

Experts Tell Answers to Wartime Problems

Difficulties Many and Tough But These Men Kept Golf Clubs Serving Members

Last Year Showed Us How to Get By in 1944

By JOHN ANDERSON

Supt. Essex County CC, West Orange, N. J.

THERE is no doubt that greenkeeper resourcefulness had to be keyed to a high pitch during 1943. The golf courses were not kept in playable condition the past season, by any hit or miss methods. Maintenance was a carefully thought-out program.

We planned during the winter months of 1942-43, and after much deliberation and inquiry came to the conclusion that labor was to be our biggest worry. Fortunately we were fairly well equipped with machines, as we had been installing labor saving machinery for the past two or three seasons, as finances could afford.

After seeing to it that all machines were in the best possible shape, we studied the labor situation and found that the best we could expect would be three of our 14 men to stay with us. The others were either in the army or in defense plants. However, another three who were on night shift volunteered to work at least three hours a day. That was equal to another man's full time. The remainder of the crew had to be school boys, but April 1st is a long way to school vacation, and about April 1 began the season for grass to grow and work to be done. I contacted many school boys and at length settled on four to come to work immediately after school, 3:00 P. M., and work until 6:00 P. M. That was almost equal to another man and one-half. Five and a half men for two 18 hole courses.

We were able to keep the greens and fairways mowed, and sometimes the trees. More often the tees would be missed for a week. Our sand trap brush harrow, which I mentioned in a previous GOLFDOM article, came in very handy, and we were able to keep the sand smoothed about once a week.

But the grass around the traps and bunkers was getting so long and dense by the time school vacation came around that some of the players were wondering if we could burn it off. That was out; green grass won't burn, and we had no gasoline to spare. However, after school vacation released the four boys for whole days, we gradually began to see some im-

provement in the condition of the courses, and we were able to do a few of the jobs that had been omitted, such as topdressing, weeding and scything.

That was our experience which probably set the procedure for 1944 too. I must take off my hat, both to the public links and private club golfers. They were very cooperative and appreciative at times when they had plenty of reasons to grouse.

Tough Years Are Good for Us

By CPL. WARREN ORLICK

(Formerly pro, Monroe (Mich.) G&CC)

GOLFDOM's request for information about operating ideas to keep golf clubs lively and helpful in wartime was forwarded to me at camp. Charles Stevens is taking my place at Monroe for the duration.

A pro in the Army doesn't forget his attachment to his club. He wants the club to keep going strong, not selfishly because it's postwar employment for him, but because of the very pleasant relationship he has enjoyed with club members and because he sees from a good perspective now how important an attractive club can be in maintaining the wartime zip and health of members.

In my case, the club is far more than a job that I always tried to handle to the best of my ability. When I entered the Army last year the club gave me a wonderful dinner and a very substantial purse. When I came home on a furlough the club gave my wife and me an open house dinner that was very well attended. Those things sure make a fellow feel like fighting twice as hard to make sure that those wonderful times at the clubs go on all over the USA after the war's over. I'm counting the days until I can get back and start in where I left off.

Our club, since I left Grosse Ile and Joe Devany and went with it in 1940, has had outstanding presidents who have operated it in the black every year since its re-organization. I think the most essential factor in successful wartime management of golf clubs is able presidents. Our heads have built up a \$10,000 fund in war bonds that will be used for improvements after the war. It is entirely debt-free.

One affair that has helped business at our club is something that might well be

copied by other businesses at the solicitation of golf clubs. Every Tuesday the River Raisin Paper Co. holds a dinner for its office staff at the club. There is golf before dinner in the summer, and in the winter they play cards. After dinner there is a business meeting.

This company has one of the smoothest-running, energetic and able organizations you ever saw, and it is plain, if you happen to overhear part of its sessions at the club, that the weekly meetings at the club have helped a lot to develop a wonderful organization spirit, knowledge and close teamwork.

Wednesdays I used to run a league, and it's an idea I can recommend to every club and pro. I paired every member in the club and sent out cards on Mondays advising of the pairings. There was one point given the winner of the match in whatever game the contestants decided to play: golf, tennis, cards, dice, drinking, or anything else. Most of them played golf and the competitive interest made business good for me.

Rules were:

In golf three-fourths the handicap difference applied.

6 P. M. is deadline to wait for opponents.

Player had to be at the club to win a point if other player was out of town or could not be there for the game.

Team with highest number of points received dinner from losers.

Competitive season was 18 weeks.

I also gave a talk on golf rules and golf in general to our club's ladies, at one of their weekly golf luncheons each month. I conducted all men's, women's and junior tournaments at the club.

We have great golf spirit at Monroe, and it's the kind of spirit that, when applied to war effort, makes us a cinch to win, regardless of how long or tough the war is going to be. And I know that this sort of spirit, once it's crystallized, won't weaken, even though the pressure of war work and worries is heavy on our members.

Necessity Taught Us How to Solve Wartime Problems

By WM. H. JOHNSON

Greenkeeper-Mgr., Municipal Golf Courses,
Los Angeles, Calif.

DURING 1943 at Griffith Park we maintained the courses with 60% of our normal crew mainly by using power equipment such as three-gang Overgreen mowers and other power greens mowers. We built a couple of trailers, using midget auto racer wheels, hooking them on to tractors to transport from one green to another.

During the growing season we practically forget the traps. We work on them in the off-growing season.

The crew was organized into one unit which could double up on any maintenance problem that came up. Fairway mowing we skipped from the tee to a point about 150 yards out from the tee.

After talking with many superintendents at the recent Los Angeles Open Tournament, I have come to the conclusion that the biggest single item has been in the handling of the workmen on the course. It has really made the men in charge of maintenance use every ounce of their ingenuity. For example, one course has two men; another three; another six. Another gets out every morning and rounds up any transients who might work only one day.

From the equipment side of the picture; to keep their present machines in operation, some work over their scrap piles using discarded parts and remodeling or disregarding standard parts. By using a welding torch or maybe turning out on a lathe just anything to keep their equipment going, some are getting by.

An Old Master with New Ideas

By WILLIE OGG

Pro, Worcester, Mass. CC

WE had to curtail, like most other clubs in this vicinity. The question arose in February, 1943, whether we would try to operate at all during the season and it was decided to cut the dues and operate just enough to keep things from going to ruin. Remember, this was decided upon when things looked their blackest and the gas ban stopped our winter activities.

We tried the horse-and-buggy idea but without success but when the gas ban was lifted play picked up quite a bit but still much below normal. Many in this vicinity had the suffering complex and many still do; the idea being that it was wrong to participate in sports or enjoyment of any kind. The harvest is now being reaped in the form of sudden deaths and all kinds of ailments. The industrial plants are now going to insist that their employees take time off the coming year for fear that everybody will crack.

The Wilson broadcasts are doing a lot of good in making people see the light and they are to be congratulated in their advocacy of a physical fitness program as this surely will save lives and many many hours of production. Absenteeism is caused more by the employees feeling out of sorts than by anything else, according to my observations in this industrial city that is working night and day on war orders.

Our golf course took it on the chin like many others owing to the budget being cut. We did not suffer from lack of materials nor spare parts but we did have a labor shortage because the money was not forthcoming. We had to chisel on our topdressing, mowing, gardens and rough

to get by, but on the whole we held things together pretty well. By using winter rules we avoided any squawks about the fairways but many players did beef because conditions were not pre-war.

We are now operating our diningroom on a concession basis and this includes the locker room as well. This may be the answer to the catering problem, although in the main this will probably always be for each individual club to solve according to their own particular needs.

We had a shortage of caddies during week days but on the whole there was enough boys to go round week-ends. Doubling up had to be resorted to most of the time with the result that Sunday bags became of general use. This may have caused some slight inconveniences but I am sure that if this was not done we could not compete in the labor market. It is either increase the caddie fees or double up.

Getting back to the golf course, I wish to say that we are blessed with loyal employees and that we are equipped with a small machine shop in which we are able to do most of our own repairs. We have not found any short cuts in our operation but just concentrated on the greens and tees and spread out what we had left on the fairways and rough. The traps were left more or less unranked and unsickled but teeing up was allowed to offset this.

About the only new development that I have worked out is a machine which may cure the packed condition of grounds. This machine has other varied uses but mainly I have been trying to get something that would be better than spiking. Spiking or punching holes does put a green out of play for a while and packs still more the areas which the spikes does not enter so that, on the whole, spiking did not do much good.

The machine we build has knife steel discs and the principle used is the same as the disc harrow excepting that the cuts are verticle instead of an angle. The depth of cut is governed by the weight used on a tray directly over the axis and the condition of the ground; the wetter the ground the less weight needed for penetration.

To prevent the turf from lifting I have skids riding between the knives and the pressure of the skids on the turf is regulated by spring tension. The cuts made in our own case were about three inches deep, and, as the knives are quite thin, it does not put the green out of play. We do the job on each green in 15 minutes as we use the Overgreen for motive power.

Naturally, many greenkeepers would be horrified at the idea of slicing up a green, but I can assure you it works. Topdressing is immediately available to the roots and there are no puddles after a rainstorm. Inasmuch as the space between the cuts is regulated by whatever width of collar

or spacer is used, this machine is invaluable for cutting grainy greens.

I look for more play this year and a more generous budget, even though I am now caddie master along with my other jobs and work seven days a week I still love it. I have golf balls and other merchandise and I do not complain.

Beyond "Hello with a Smile" Is Hard Work

By EM BRAAK

Em Braak, who has been a golf pro for 23 years, and for the past five years lessor of the Minnetonka CC, Minneapolis, prior to the time it was sold, gives tips lessons from his experience in successfully conducting a golf club on a wartime basis.

Braak's statement shows the importance of having men with savvy on the job. He says:

Five years prior to leasing Minnetonka I acted as pro-manager. I feel that the past ten years' experience has left me capable of handling any situation that may arise at a golf club.

I set up my budget during the winter months, so when spring did arrive I was ready to go. I never overlooked the fact that a golf club's main income was from those who played golf, and therefore I made every effort to see that the golf course got the largest share of attention, although I kept the dining room and locker rooms up, and always presentable to members and their guests.

During the winter I would contact all the business revenue in the dining room. I always maintained a rule that "a hello with a smile" would pay big dividends. Operating a club is no easy job, it means hard work and long hours during the playing season.

The past two years the golf professional has been called upon to take over many duties he never before experienced, and has had to keep the ball rolling with his knowledge of golf.

First among wartime needs at many clubs is easing playing conditions by eliminating bunkers and widening fairways. That gives the player a better chance to score and he derives more pleasure and relaxation out of the game. This method will prevail after the war if the clubs expect to maintain a membership, and get on a paying basis. Public courses have proven this point in all sections of the country. The fellowship we get out of golf we are willing to pay for if we enjoy our games. I have seen several players quit golf just because they loose too many balls, and a few dollars in bets, due to the condition of a course. The maintenance of a course is cut considerably by the elimination of heavy rough and unfair bunkers, making conditions more unpleasant for every one.

Keep Club Atmosphere from Getting Gloomy

By HAROLD SAMPSON

Pro, California GC, Colma, Calif.

This article is from a letter Harold Sampson wrote from a sickbed to which he was sent as a result of overworking himself in providing wartime recreation for others.

It's that sort of fidelity and enthusiasm of pros, greenkeepers and managers that has been generally unappreciated but essential factors in keeping golf going through the war.

Sampson, the amiable and smart veteran, is a fine representative supplier of the unselfish service that first class professionals give to the game.

THIS is a tough time to be asking me about my efforts to keep golf going as a wartime service to our country. Between trying to get over a bad case of the flu which slapped me down twice, lending efforts in promoting Open tournaments, playing in them, promoting a bond sale for which the S.F. Open will get credit for selling \$6,500,000 aided greatly by Hope and Crosby, trying to keep out of jail by filling out and complying with the many tax returns and tending to promoting golf on my own club, I find darn little time to write.

To be frank, if the doctor hadn't ordered me to bed again to cure a touch of bronchitis, the result of getting out of bed too soon after the flu took me down, I wouldn't have been able to answer Golfdom's request. Of course like all ardent golfers I got up to play in the tournament.

In keeping going in 1943 and learning the lessons we'll again apply this year, we tried to keep the course in as good play-

ing condition as possible so that the players would enjoy playing.

Naturally that was difficult with the lack of fertilizers and chemicals and shortage of labor, with men incapable of heavy work. It has been necessary to work plenty of overtime so the work would not be too strenuous. We also provided space, free water and fertilizers so our grounds crew could grow their own vegetables and that was an attraction to some of them.

Then we made every effort to see that members coming to the club would get the greatest enjoyment possible out of their visit to the club. Efforts were made to see that all members were acquainted with each other and games arranged so that no one would find himself neglected.

It has been my observation that while all golfers are concerned with how they play they often continue to play despite high scores because they enjoy good fellowship. When this condition prevails at the club its members look forward to going to the club where they can find needed relaxation from the many worries which beset everyone today. When a person's thoughts associate a place with pleasant reflections he is apt to frequent that place more often. And during these times people have a real need of a place to go to escape and find happiness and rebuild health and spirit, so we feel that we are helping do our part by helping to provide such a place.

You will note that I say we. I say that because such conditions could not have prevailed unless there is harmony between the inside of the club and the outside. I have had the utmost cooperation from those working under me and from other employees and officials.

Complete harmony always has existed between myself and our capable manager,

Nature helps relieve that tension at the California Country Club.



Freeman Bassett, and we can point proudly to the fact that whereas when we came to the club four years ago it had a large indebtedness, worn-out machinery on the course, the club house in need of repairs, and some outstanding bills, we now have a club which will very soon be completely out of debt, no outstanding bills, a substantial cash balance in the bank, good equipment on the golf course, one of the finest golf courses in the country in playing condition, a limit put on the membership and the initiation fee almost tripled.

Of course like many other pros throughout the country I am constantly looking for the member whose game may be sick. When a member resigns from a club or stops playing it is often due to the fact that his game is sour. Correct his trouble and he again becomes an enthusiastic, active member.

There should be a reasonable amount of golf events and social activities. We were provided that and will continue to do so in 1944.

I will say the key to keeping golf alive is to do everything to cause players to find happiness when they come to the golf course.

You take it from there. I had no intention of writing that much when I started and the doc would give me hell if he knew. He said "rest."

One of the main points in our 1943 success was in seeing that members were acquainted to promote good fellowship and so that they could get together and pool their cars. That is the toughest thing we have had to buck here and we expect it to get very much worse as the drive in the Pacific steps up. However, we are fortunate in that no matter how tough it gets we still have street car and bus service to our club entrance. Right now we make every effort to see that everyone has transportation.

Keep Members Hot for Golf and You'll Help Victory

By JERRY GLYNN
Pro, Park Ridge (Ill.) CC

AT Park Ridge, members have continued to play considerable golf during wartime, as the club is conveniently situated near the homes of many members who are intensely engaged in war work and need outdoor exercise and change of pace.

We have kept play up by seeing to it that golf interest has not been allowed to sag. I try to have a few soldiers and sailors playing at our busiest times, and to have a few WACS, WAVES, SPARS or Marine women playing on ladies' days so our members will be reminded that golf is legitimately and logically associated with war effort. I know that the presence of these people has a good ef-

fect on our members, as well as being hospitality keenly appreciated by the uniformed men and women.

Help has cost me more but I've made it worth more. A club-cleaner, for instance, cost me \$125 a month instead of the \$50 that used to be the usual price in the Chicago district. But I bought plenty of wax for the wooden clubs and saw to it that the members had better club-cleaning and maintenance service than they had in peacetime. If the members ever got out of the habit of keeping their clubs in the shop it might be hard for pros to re-educate them to this service, and the loss would be heavy to pros.

I never have hesitated about the price I've paid for balls and have been discreet but always on the job in collecting used balls, as I didn't want a member to get to feeling that because he happened to lose a few balls he might have to quit the game. I also worked the used ball trade-ins on the basis that if members ever get into the habit of using a ball until it is hacked to pieces and absolutely worn it may be hard to re-educate them to be frequent buyers of good balls, when peace returns.

I pushed the sales of golf apparel. That can still be secured and no pro's members can be said to be so smartly, comfortably and completely dressed for the game that pro shop apparel sales possibilities are diminished in wartime.

At Park Ridge we pushed war bonds and stamps as prizes on a lively competitive program. Our club also was high in the Dime-A-Round list of contributors in the Chicago district. In my opinion, it is very important to emphasize these war help affairs for the psychological effect in giving golfers assurance that their golf during wartime is not a run-out on war effort but is just as close and necessary association with war work as is the soldier and sailor recreation out of battle zones.

We have secured the Women's Western Open for June 19-25 and I am sure that this event will further enliven the interest and pleasure of our members in the game as wartime recreation.

The club is going to give its part of the gate to a war relief organization and hopes to establish a new record for Women's Western gates. We are going to invite servicemen as partners for the Women's Western contestants at the dinner dance the club will give during the Open.

My deep conviction is that our club, and any other alert and active club, demonstrates its value to war effort by helping to keep its members in better mental and physical shape by providing them with attractive club facilities, atmosphere and programs.

Lively Publicity Protects Against Slump

By L. J. (Dutch) McCLELLAN
Pro, Topeka, Kan. CC

THE coming season is going to be the real challenge to the golf pro, and he is going to need all the ideas that he can get.

We were in a rather enviable position with two large Army installations in our town. Our losses to the Armed Forces were pretty well replaced by members secured from the Officer personnel of these two installations. Actually our traffic was heavier than usual.

I do feel that we were extremely fortunate in having an alert and cooperative Board of Directors that made the Military memberships possible, and made any regulations that were necessary to make the club attractive to these men. I also feel that the heavy traffic from the Military forces acted as a magnet to the regular members, and soon they were using the club more than they normally did.

I equipped my shop with a number of better-than-ordinary sets of clubs for rentals, and made available inexpensive balls. I made it a point to greet each of these men where I could and gave freely any advice I could about their games. I tried to make them aware of me as pro and that I was interested in them and their games. It paid off in lessons, as 1943 was the best lesson year I have had at the club.

At the start of the season I had the same problem as all of the pros, and that was how far I could go with publicity. Some of the members thought that they would be criticized and called unpatriotic if their names appeared in golf articles, and while I did not subscribe to this thought I did have to consider it.

After some thought I decided that if I were to abide by their opinions I was going to be in for a pretty poor season, as I felt this was a year that I was going to need all of the outside help I could get. So with this thought in mind I set out to get all the publicity I could get and to use my own judgment as to whose names I could use, and the ones I could not. With this problem settled in my own mind I contacted a new sportswriter on one of the local papers and cultivated him.

We decided to use all of the pictures that we could run, and were very successful in this despite the shortage of space. These pictures proved so popular that we decided to go a little farther and run a column of golf incidents that happened in the every day golf games, other than tournaments. The column was called "Down the Fairway" and proved so popular that I began cutting it out of the paper and posting it on the bulletin board.

I might mention here the incidents and gossip that we used in this column were so commonplace that the average pro doesn't give them a second thought, but we found that the members were just as interested in what John Jones was doing as they were in Nelson, McSpaden and other bigs. After getting into this we ran into a number of oddities, some of which were picked up and carried by the A.P. In one instance the party named in the article received mail from all over the country. It is needless to say that he and his pals got a hell of a wallop out of that one.

I would like to suggest that the boys cultivate the sportswriters as they can do them a lot of good at this time, and if they happen to have one like Don Pierce, of the Topeka Daily Capital, it will be worth the effort.

My report wouldn't be complete if I didn't mention the part our greenkeeper, Ray Whitlow, played in making 1943 successful at the club. Despite the shortage of help and the inexperience of the help, Ray put his 27 years' experience to work and kept us playing a course that was in just as good condition as during normal times. I want to take my hat off to a fellow that can do that in face of the handicaps that he was faced with. In addition to this he planted and maintained a five acre Victory Garden for the club.

Pinehurst Tournaments Survive Another War Year

THE annual North and South golf championships will be held at the Pinehurst (N. C.) CC as usual.

The 42nd annual North and South open will be played over the championship course on March 14, 15, and 16. There will be no restriction on the age of entries. Last year only players over 38 years of age, or in the armed services were eligible. Old-timer Bobby Cruickshank was the winner.

The prize money will be \$3000, which will be used for the purchase of war bonds with a maturity value of \$4000.

The North and South Amateur championship has been set for April 10th through the 14th. It will be the 44th renewal of the event. The North and South Women's championship will be played from April 17th through April 21st.

Pinehurst golf officials believe that the North and South championships are now the oldest golf tournaments in the United States which have been held annually and without interruption.

The Pinehurst Seniors' championship, for golfers 55 years old and over, will be played from February 29th, through March 3rd.

TURN IN THOSE UNPLAYABLE BALLS