

# WAR FORCED US TO fill

## OUR USELESS TRAPS

By HERB SHAVE

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★ I wish I could forget 1943's troubles in course maintenance, but in this business a man is tested by troubles beyond his control and he either keeps hoping against hope that nature will give him a break or he loses his health and temper worrying. So you're bound to remember troubles of the job as a reminder that you got through some tough times.

Last year I started out with one man. Three weeks later I had one more. Then I got two more on part time. On June 11th I got eight high school boys.

We have 36 holes; the south course being our private course on which the National Open championships of 1924 and 1937 were played and the north course being our daily-fee operation.

In May last year we had rain 26 days out of 31, and *I do mean rain*, not gentle little showers. I couldn't get at the rough and some fairways we couldn't mow for three weeks. You can imagine what I was up against with 36 holes to maintain. All we could do was to keep up with the absolutely essential work and eliminate most of the work to which we ordinarily gave a lot of attention, especially sandtraps.

The severity of the situation got club officials realizing that something had to be done about the traps.

Consequently the officials and Al Watrous, our pro, and I got together and planned filling in certain traps so we could cut them with our fairway or rough mowers.

We had a bulldozer for three weeks and filled in 39 traps on our south (championship) course and 68 on our daily fee layout. Whenever possible we left the traps as grassy hollows contributing to the natural beauty of the courses but so designed that they didn't provide additional problems in surface drainage.

Now these grassed-in traps can be maintained during our fairway or rough mowing. They require shots that in most cases are about as exacting for the play-

ers as the sand shots. In the instances where the filled-in traps may be visited by the long hitters the courses aren't going to be any easier, but the 95-and-over shooters will not be discouraged by vast areas of sand, and their golf will be more pleasurable.

I figure our filling in of traps may save us as much as \$3,000 a year, which is about the minimum amount that could be budgeted to keep these traps filled with sand that blows or washes away and to keep the sand raked and weed-free. To put the needed amount of sand in traps on the championship course would have called for about 2500 yards, and next year we would have needed 700 or 800 yards, at the minimum, for replacement.

Of course it costs, to convert the unnecessary traps to grassy hollows, but the expense is soon offset by the saving and the eyesore of unmaintained traps is eliminated.

Naturally on a historic course such as our south layout which is rated as one of the finest tests of golf in the country, there is a tendency to regard every feature of the course as holy land and not to be altered under any circumstances.

But in going over the trap situation, Al Watrous and I who have seen many thousands of golfers of all scoring classes play the course, were reminded that we seldom had seen any but very high handicap players in numerous traps. At one time there was an inclination in golf course architecture to spot traps where they would further penalize somebody who'd already lost a shot because of lack of distance or because of wildness. To the more advanced way of thinking in golf architecture there is no sense to putting an alleged test of golf in a location where the player will be only because he has not been able to pass the test of getting the ball a reasonable distance and

with fair accuracy off the tee or from a fairway lie.

Spotting of traps as additional penalties to duffers is not good golf, good business, or good treatment of the dispositions of the care-burdened businessmen or factory workers who deserve fair consideration for the money they pay in supporting the courses.

Far too much of the trapping of American golf courses is the result of attempts to imitate the appearance of Scotch seaside courses where many traps were made naturally by the effect of the gales from the sea blowing in onto areas that had been denuded of turf by countless divots. Thus those traps were correctly placed. Now we spend a small fortune—or would if we could get labor—in maintaining traps that catch only unusually wild or short shots.

One of the great golf architects, whose name I do not recall, said some years ago that he would like to be able to trap his courses after watching golfers play his courses for two or three years. Then, he said, he would be confident of almost perfect trapping.

Now, at Oakland Hills we have achieved that practical ideal of trapping based on experience of players.

So we are convinced that a necessity of wartime maintenance has actually improved the design of our courses while reducing maintenance expense and relieving the less proficient golfers of a penalty that curtailed their enjoyment without providing them with hazards, which if avoided, added nothing to their satisfaction or thrill of better scoring.

## Sandy Herd Dies

★ Alexander (Sandy) Herd, Grand Old Man of British golf, winner of the 1902 British Open and twice winner of the British pro championship, died in a nursing home at London, Feb. 18.

Herd was born at St. Andrews, April 24, 1868. He worked as a baker's apprentice and turned pro in 1891 when he went to the West Lancashire club to assume duties as "superintendent of greens, charge of caddies and within certain restricted limits to play with members at two shillings, sixpence per round." He later was pro at Portrush, Huddersfield, Coombe Hill and Moor Park.

Sandy won his Open championship with the Haskell ball, being the first Scotch pro to adopt the new type ball which was proving popular in the United States. He finished second in four British Opens, his last second place being in 1920 when he trailed George Duncan's 303 by two strokes.

He made a brief tour of the United States with J. H. Taylor and on that trip endeared himself to American golfers.

## Ideal Power Lawn Mower Holds Distributor Meetings

Distributor meetings to chart postwar planning are being conducted by the Ideal Power Lawn Mower Co., in cooperation with the parent organization, Rogers Diesel & Aircraft Corp., 1120 Leggett Ave., New York 49, N. Y. Ideal, purchased by the Rogers organization in March 1943, now has the same executive headquarters as the parent organization.

The first meeting, in New York, was attended by Atlantic seaboard and mid-west Ideal distributors. R. E. Bradley, Ideal's gen. mgr., directed the meeting. Fred L. Hall, Rogers' v. p. in charge of sales, reviewed the history of the Rogers organization and explained the corporation's intention of devoting engineering, research and development facilities to the development of Ideal postwar products. Rehabilitation and expansion of the Ideal distributor group for complete and intelligent sales and service is planned.

Mr. Hall also announced the establishment of an equipment proving ground in the south where accelerated, year-round proving and testing work will be carried on under the direction of competent engineering and maintenance specialists.

Mr. Ralph B. Rogers, president of the Rogers Corp., declared the parent company's intention to build a strong cohesive distributor organization based on a mutual understanding of the problems confronting both the dealer and the manufacturing organizations. A comprehensive market study is being completed which will result in full line coverage in the mower, power brush, snow plow and garden tractor field with a minimum number of models and maximum interchangeability of parts in the interest of lower selling and maintenance costs and longer service life.

## Club Managers Act to Prevent Accidents

Managers are taking extra precautions these days to make certain that the limited time their members have for war strain release at golf clubs is free from accidents, according to Bert Warford, pres., Melflex Products Company, Akron, Ohio, manufacturers of heavy duty non-slip safety step treads. Certainly, no golf club wants to be charged with taking a risk with war's urgently needed manpower. While golf club orders are unusually heavy for the beginning of the year, Warford reports their stocks of safety treads are in better shape than in 1943, although in fairness to all they are shipping on a "first come, first served" basis.