

# Efficiency is Keynote of Better Course Management

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Joseph Valentine

Greater efficiency is the keynote of better golf course management. The trend toward more efficient maintenance practices was begun some time ago. I can remember that prior to World War I it was general practice to use temporary greens during the winter months. We used temporary greens on our East course, and removed flags and equipment from the West course so the golfers would not play there.

However, I noticed that despite the absence of flags, the players preferred the regular greens and played the West course. I brought to the attention of the Green Committee the fact that the golfers were playing the West course during the winter and that no harm was done to the regular greens. Since then we and others have used regular greens all year.

Since World War II the trend toward greater thrift in maintenance is being advanced by the employment of more mechanized operations. The utilization of new chemical and mechanical developments does much to increase efficiency of golf course maintenance. Appropriate equipment to do the job is of utmost importance, and whenever it is possible we employ implements in gangs in order to cut down on the amount of time required for the operation.

Seventy per cent or more of the budget at practically all golf clubs is spent for wages. We are maintaining a 36 hole course with the smallest number of laborers that is possible. With mechanized equipment our men can accomplish 50% more work than could otherwise be done. For instance, with a gang of power mowers three acres of tees are cut in about six hours. We cut tees twice a week.

During the war we learned of necessity to be stringently economical of time and labor, employing shortcuts and quicker methods whenever possible. At that time



Fairway of Merion GC, Ardmore, Pa., after aeration and before matting gives an idea of treatment Joe Valentine, grnkpr. is giving the entire course.

we began to mow greens only three or four times a week instead of every day as had previously been done. This became possible simply by educating the membership to it.

Fairway watering still involves some unsolved problems. I feel that water should be used only when the plants demand it. Water should at all times be applied judiciously; the frequency and the amount being determined by the type of turf.

#### **2,4-D Reduces Rough Mowing**

During the past year we have learned a little more about where and when not to use 2,4-D. We applied 2,4-D in dry form in the roughs and have subsequently been able to reduce mowing since we have gotten rid of many fast growing weeds such as buckhorn and other plants of the same family.

A gang of implements known as Aerifiers has been used to improve the turf. I believe this is a type of implement we have long needed in order to provide the good turf conditions demanded by our critical golfers. This fall our turf improvement program included aerification of all our fairways and tees. Through this program we expect to obtain even better turf than was previously acquired.

The Aerifier gang was set to cultivate to a depth of two and a half inches. After aerifying we permitted the soil plugs to lie on the surface to dry for a short time. Meanwhile, we applied insecticides, using a dusting machine that operates with a blower through tubes under a large canvas. The duster is sixteen feet wide. On some fairways both DDT and lead arsenate were applied, on others DDT was used alone and on a third group lead arsenate alone was applied. The type of poison used was determined by the type of pest prevalent on the fairway; lead arsenate for the control of beetle grubs, DDT to combat chinchbugs and sod webworms. By applying the insecticides after aerifying we were able to put the materials down into the soil and also lessened the chances for these expensive materials to be washed away.

Following this operation we reseeded in the existing turf, giving especial attention to the approaches by being more liberal with seed. We also applied more of the chemicals and more fertilizer on those areas.

Organic fertilizer was applied to supply an average of one unit of nitrogen per thousand square feet. About five units of phosphorus per thousand square feet were used. Potassium was eliminated at this time in order not to increase the growth of legumes in the turf.

We then broke up the soil plugs with a wire mat. Matting was done in the oppo-

site direction from aerifying. The crumbled soil served as a light top-dressing. The mat we use consists of a ten foot square of cyclone fence. We made it ourselves at moderate cost. We've found this the best type of mat for working in materials and seed and for breaking up the soil plugs laid upon the turf surface by the Aerifiers. To finish off the job the fairways were mowed and rolled with a gang of rollers.

We try at all times to perform our maintenance operations in a rapid and efficient manner so the course will be in a condition to give satisfaction to the golfers. Operations are completed and equipment removed from the course as promptly as possible so as not to create an inconvenience for the players. I believe the task of keeping the golf course in a tidy condition begins with the greenkeeping superintendent for in appreciation our membership gives us their complete cooperation.

#### **FLORIDA'S 1948 WOMEN'S TOURNEY EVENTS SET BY CLUB OFFICIALS**

Florida club officials have succeeded in arranging a closely co-ordinated schedule of Women's events for the early 1948 season.

Credit for lining up the winter schedule without conflict, thus avoiding transportation difficulties and assuring full participation not previously experienced in past seasons goes to Elmer Rich, Chmn. Golf Com., Everglades CC, Palm Beach; Ralph Y. Poole, Miami CC and L. C. Haines of the Florida East Coast Hotel Co.

Definite dates for the Women's events have been set with the exception of the week of Feb. 23 to 28 which may be taken by the Orange Brook CC, Hollywood, for their Women's Four-Ball tournament or by the Biltmore Hotel Course, Miami. Events and dates for the 1948 Florida Winter season already scheduled are as follows:

Tampa Women's Open Championship at Palma Ceia GC, Tampa, Fla.—January 15 to 18.

The Doherty Tournament at Miami CC, Miami, Fla.—January 26 to 31.

Annual Mixed (Scotch) Foursome Tourney at Dubsrd CC, Orlando, Fla.—February 4 to 8.

Women's Championship of Palm Beach at Palm Beach GC, Palm Beach, Fla.—February 10 to 14.

Annual "Invitation" Mixed Foursomes at Everglades Club, Palm Beach, Fla.—February 16 to 20.

Women's South Atlantic Championship at Ormond Beach GC, Ormond Beach—March 2 to 6.

Women's Florida East Coast Championship, St. Augustine Links, St. Augustine, Fla.—March 8 to 12.