

# Making A Team of Green-Committee and Greenkeeper

By JAMES E. THOMAS

A few years back at a Club Relations Day meeting held in one of the golf centers of the country, a prominent speaker made the following remark: "The most expensive official around a golf club is the chairman of the grounds and greens committee." This statement is indisputably true if the chairman and his associates are newly appointed and are not familiar with modern course maintenance, nor have any inkling as to the problems involved in the conditioning or care of a golf course.

This very important group if properly qualified to do the work called for should be kept on the job as long as they are willing to serve. To appoint a new unseasoned body annually is extravagant administration. Those who are entrusted with this key post should be selected from both high and low handicap players. There should be new blood on the committee from time to time, but never a complete change and turnover; even then the new members should be in a minority until they have thoroughly learned the ropes.

The greenkeeping superintendent should be an ex-officio member and consultant as he is the man who has to understand and carry out the committee's plans. The president of the club is usually responsible for the appointment of the green-chairman and his co-workers. He would do well to consult with the club's greenkeeper as to what qualifications are desirable for the personnel to be appointed. After this committee has been selected, it should hold a meeting and decide upon a constructive program of sound maintenance plans that can be followed for several years, keeping in mind that the success or failure of the job is the responsibility of their superintendent. He has to put the plan into effect as money is provided, with the grounds committee serving as a connecting link with the club's membership.

The golf course superintendent of today is the hub of the maintenance wheel, and the committee and board of governors represent the spokes, while the rim is the entire membership. Nor should the golf professional be left out of the outline, his ideas and knowledge are very vital to all three of the units. He is also part of the wheel's center.

Too many committees and superintendents cater to the fancies of the par shoot-

ers yet most of the bills are paid by the duffers. The fact that one plays in the low 70s does not qualify him as an absolute authority on all matters pertaining to the golf course. His suggestions and comments should be heard along with those of the rest of the membership, and heeded if of a constructive nature. The course should be a fair test of skill for a good player, but never to the point where it is an ordeal for the ordinary golfer.

The average business man plays for pleasure, relaxation, and to enjoy the companionship of his friends. His game is soon spoiled if there are too many traps and hazards, heavy deep roughs, tricky putting greens with sharp undulating surfaces and angles, and to finish off the picture, long tiresome yardage. All of this often causes many a good and substantial member to go where conditions are easier.

The genius of greenkeeping lies in making the course conditions enjoyable. It must be borne in mind that for major championships courses are altered to such an extent as to make them utterly impossible for the average man to enjoy his play. The likes and dislikes of the majority should have first place in the minds of those who are responsible for the upkeep of the grounds but there must be wisely balanced representation given to both the par and the high-handicap shooter.

It is often advisable to eliminate traps that are poorly placed yet are considered landmarks. A walk around the course on a Monday morning would show that bunkers have not been played out of. Why not eliminate these unused hazards? To do so would bring about a substantial saving in the cost of sand and the release of labor for other vital work.

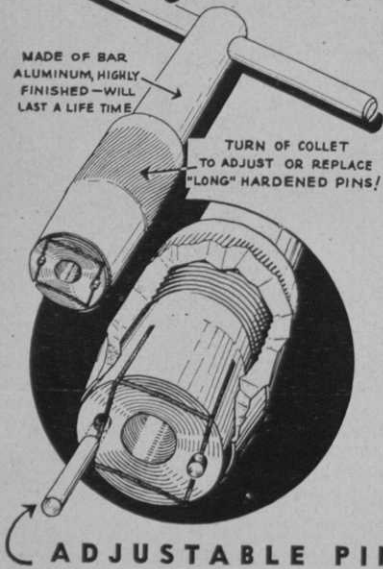
Heavy, deep, uncut grass in areas parallel to fairways need no longer exist with the special built mowers that are now available for mowing roughs. They cut at a height which permits the easy finding of a ball yet retain rough as an architectural feature. This in turn means faster playing, takes care of more golfers and relieves congestion on busy days.

Greens with steep grades from front to back, which cause a ball to gain momentum on a down hill putt, along with sharp undulations, also upset many a round.

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**W. D. RICHARDSON, NY TIMES  
GOLF EXPERT, DIES**

William Duncan Richardson, 62, sports writer for the New York Times and widely known golf writer and editor, died at Cornwall (N.Y.) hospital Aug. 8. He had been stricken Aug. 6 while covering harness races at Goshen, N.Y. He is survived by his widow who was Genevieve Elizabeth Deming of Algonquin, Ill.; a son, William D., Jr., who served with the Marines, and a daughter, Judith, 12.

Bill Richardson was a grand fellow and a top authority on golf. He was a tremendous worker, having compiled and edited various golf guides and magazines, the latest job being the 1946 Golf Guide he compiled and edited for A. S. Barnes & Co. He wrote many magazine pieces, on golf especially, and was rated by his colleagues as a model in the interest and accuracy of his sports coverage. His work on horse racing, football and other collegiate sports was outstanding.

He was born in Milwaukee. His debut in college sports was as coxswain of the University of Wisconsin crews in 1909 and 1910. While doing post graduate work at Wisconsin he was on the Cardinal, the campus newspaper. Later he worked on the Milwaukee Journal and Wisconsin State Journal. He went to Bermuda and edited the Bermudian and Trinidadian. He served in World War 1 as a field artilleryman and left military service as a captain. He joined the New York Times Jan. 31, 1921 and early in 1922 he began covering sports for that paper.

Bill will be missed greatly at golf tournaments by players, veteran galleryites and his pals in the press quarters.

**Making a Team**

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But when the chairman and the green committee consider alterations of greens or tees then is the time when the superintendent is wise to suggest consultation with a competent golf course architect before seemingly desirable alterations are made.

The filling in of an unused trap may be only part of the required job. Perhaps another trap should be built to add interest to the course and the earth from that construction job used in filling in the trap that is serving no purpose.

The greenkeeper knows that millions of dollars have been wasted in ill-advised alterations and he, if he has the standing he should have with his committee, can advise them to get expert advice that will enable them and him to work toward a definite goal instead of being distracted by far too frequent and futile construction jobs.