

Park Ridge Scores With Long Range Planning



The water supply for the Park Ridge course is obtained from the city of Park Ridge which in turn gets it from Chicago. Peak demands sometime result in curtailed use for the course. Installation of complete facilities for watering tees, fairways and greens has helped prevent any serious damage during a period of limited supply.

At the turn of the century Park Ridge was hardly more than a whistle stop on the outskirts of Chicago and the land which now comprises the Park Ridge Country Club could not be considered as a good cow pasture. An energetic group of young men however were not to be denied the opportunity of enjoying the wholesome recreation of a game that was fast becoming popular in other nearby suburban communities and in 1906 organized the Park Ridge Country Club.

Today a large number who were members when the course first opened are still playing. Whether or not the zest for the game the original nucleus had accounts for the playing activity of the membership today, more than 90 per cent by actual count play golf regularly and at least 50 per cent of the members' wives play. It's the kind of membership that lends itself readily to the support of any program of course improvement and especially a long term program of permanent improvement.

The inroads of war made their mark at Park Ridge as in other clubs but an able Greens committee realizing the need for immediate attention to the problem of adequate course maintenance did not wait for the war to end to start a comprehensive improvement program. Steps were taken to set up a long range plan that would ultimately bring the course up to the

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standard desired and do it within the limitations of a wartime budget. Accordingly the Greens committee prepared an analysis of the grounds and greens problem and presented it to the membership in November 1944. This was not a casual analysis made from a few pencilled notes nor was it presented orally or haphazardly to an interested few. The committee had made a serious study of the club's needs and felt that every member should give the same serious consideration to the problem at hand, consequently the analysis and recommendations were put into printed form and placed in the hands of each member.

Briefly, the analysis was broken down into three sections: (1) The Standard Greens Program — presented so that any Greens chairman in future years might have a guide of minimum requirements necessary for the proper maintenance of the Park Ridge course; (2) The Rehabilitation Greens Program — to show the immediate problem of putting the course back in top playing condition; and (3) The Equipment Greens Program — a listing of needed equipment to be purchased as soon as funds and wartime conditions permitted.

How effective this presentation was is attested to by the results that have been obtained over a five year period — a five-

year program realized under the guidance of three different Greens chairmen but all members of the committee for a period of several years. F. Ray Bowen who was made president of the club after several years as chairman is credited with launching the long range program under which the Park Ridge course is maintained today. He was followed by George Semple who served two years as chairman after a long term on the committee. Today, George is president of the club and Leslie P. Aggerbeck is guiding the program as chairman of the committee.

Fred Grau, Director of the USGA Green Section recently made the statement that one of the worst practices in golf club management today was that of changing the Greens chairman every year. The long term membership on the Greens committee as practiced by the Park Ridge Club overcomes the fault Grau refers to and results in a more effective operation.

The rehabilitation program mentioned above was of prime concern in 1944 and the committee made a start in carrying out the recommendations outlined in the analysis presented to the members. First step was the resurfacing and reshaping of seven greens followed by reconditioning all sand traps—93 altogether. Actually renovation of the sand traps had been started before the plan had been put into effect but transportation difficulties stalled the program. In 1945, 15 carloads of sand were purchased and about half of the work contemplated was completed.

Graham Johnson, well known greenkeeper, who had guided the maintenance operation at Park Ridge for many years passed away just as the major course improvement program was getting under way and further work was halted until the club was able to get whom they considered the right man. Club officials will tell you they

have been fortunate in their selection of Bertram Rost, a comparative newcomer to the greenkeeping profession who got most of his training with Globe Machinery and Equipment Co. in Des Moines.

Soon after Bert came to Park Ridge the work program continued. Another 15 carloads of trap sand were purchased in 1946



Green chmn. Les Aggerbeck (L), pres. George Semple and greenkeeper Bert Rost (kneeling) discuss budget expenditures set up for 1949 maintenance operation.

to complete the job of rehabilitating the sand traps.

A weed eradication program, one of the first, due to the fact the course was used as a test plot for experimental work when 2, 4-D first came on the market, has been successful to the point where today the course is free of weeds.

Standard fairway maintenance follows the pattern laid down in the original program. Work starts in spring with fairways and roughs, followed with fertilization pro-



Mechanical equipment used for course maintenance at Park Ridge, lined up on 5th green, is only part of total inventory anticipated as long range plan materializes.

EQUIPMENT		WHERE USED		DATES			COST			
PRESENT	NEEDED	MAIN	AUXILIARY	PURCHASE	LIQUIDATE	EXPECTED LIFE (YRS)	PRESENT	REPLACEMENT OF PRESENT	NEEDED	PER YEAR
Tractor-Toro-Short Coupled 1937 Model	Tractor-Toro-Short Coupled-Bullet	Fairways	Traps	1937	1947	10	900	1075	1075	90
Mower-Toro-7 Gang - 1933 Model	Mower-Toro-7 Gang	Fairways	Rough	1945	1955	10				107.50
		Fairways		1937	1952	16	800	1050		50
		Fairways		1945	1960	15			1050	70
Tractor-Rosenman-Dump-1928 Model	Tractor-Toro-Jumpbox-Dual tires	Rough	Miscellaneous	1933	1943	10	600*	1000		
Mower-Rosenman-5-Blade-1928 Model	Mower-Toro-5 Gang-4 Blades	Rough	Miscellaneous	1945	1955	10			1200	120
		Rough		1930	1945	16	800*	900		50
		Rough		1945	1960	16			800	50
Scythe - Jari - Power		Rough	Bunkers	1945	1955	10	175	175		17.50
Mower-Locke - Power - 1937 Model	Mower-Toro-Professional	Tees	Greens-Aerons	1937	1947	10	650	750		65
		Tees	Greens-Aerons	1945	1955	10			750	75
Mower-Power-Jacobsen		(Obsolete - Held as Insurance)		1935	1941	7	210*	375		
Mower-Power-Jacobsen		(Obsolete - Held as Insurance)		1936	1942	7	210*	375		
Mower-Toro-Duplex		Greens		1941	1947	7	375	375		54
Mower-Toro-Duplex		Greens		1941	1947	7	375	375		54
	Mower-Toro-Single-24"	Greens		1948	1954	7			210	30
	Mower-Toro-Single-24"	Greens		1948	1954	7			210	30
	Mower-Toro-Single-24"	Greens		1948	1954	7			210	30
	Mower-Toro-Starlawn - 24" - Rubber Tire	Bunkers		1945	1955	10			200	20
	Mower-Toro-Starlawn - 24" - Rubber Tire	Bunkers		1945	1955	10			200	20
	Scythe - Jari - Power	Bunkers		1945	1955	10			175	17.50
		Rough								
	Rake drag	Traps		1945	2044	99			125	1.30
Spray Wagon	Compost Machine - Moyer - Electric motor	Miscellaneous		1943	1958	16	800	950		50
Rosewagon-Ford-Model A (1930)		Miscellaneous		1945	1957	13			650	50
Car - STUP - Ford - Model A (1930)							5*			
							25*			

* 2nd. Hand

Original inventory sheet showed equipment on hand, additional equipment needed for complete mechanization, date of purchase, age, life expectancy, estimated date of replacement, original cost, replacement cost and yearly amount to be budgeted for purchase at time of need—a valuable record of information and guide in budgetary planning.

gram in April, milorganite in July and mixture of fertilizer and organic in fall. The Aerifier is used in spring and fall along with this program.

Completion of the early rehabilitation program and carrying on the maintenance program led to the third step in the long range program, namely the setting up of a maintenance equipment inventory program. Bert and members of the committee prepared a table showing equipment on hand, date of purchase, age, life expectancy, depreciation, and date of re-

placement. A check of the inventory sheet could tell at a glance dates when replacements would have to be made. Using the table as a guide reserves to make equipment purchases could be planned over a period of years without disrupting a stable operating budget—an important item in any club operation. Equipment purchased since inventory was set up includes a Roto-tiller and an Aerifier.

The establishment of a tree nursery started in 1947. Approximately 160 trees were set out in the first planting to be used

later in a program of replacement and improvement. Twenty-five new trees are to be added each year. It is anticipated that at the end of five years the nursery will be self sufficient, providing a constant source of trees for replacement use.

Snap valve sprinklers have been installed in the middle of each tee, pathways of heaviest traffic have been paved, some secondary bunkers raised and evergreens planted, traps reshaped, etc. in the continuing program of improvement.

The Greens committee of the Park Ridge

Country Club or any country club initiating a plan of permanent improvement and creating a program of work to follow in carrying out that plan makes a lasting contribution but doing the actual work, getting the job done, falls to the lot of another group, the greenkeeper and his ground crew. Too often these men are only a means to an end. It is therefore not surprising to learn that a committee that has been so thorough in its planning of a course improvement program would also be as concerned about the welfare of the men who are doing the work for them. The basic crew at Park Ridge consists of five men employed on a year round basis with three to five extra men being employed during the peak summer months. The conditions under which they work a best told in the following letter written by George Semple at the time he was chairman of the committee to the club president

Dear Mr. Heckel:

Our permanent grounds crew consists of men including the Greens Superintendent, Bert Rost, also our Mechanic Joe Wojciebowski. Oth members and their duties are as follows:

Bill Guelzow, Tractors; Ed Schief, Trimm Paul Bloethner, Gardener; Ted Ody, Green Mower and Night Sprinkler.

We wish to deal in this proposal with the importance of the crew other than the Superintendent and Mechanic. These men represent long

years of service, Bill Guelzow having worked with us on our golf course for twenty years, Ed Schief seventeen years, Paul Bloethner thirteen years and Ted Ody one year minus. Over such long years of service these men have developed into duties of a highly specialized nature and this fact together with the long, loyal years of service plus economical advantages to our club, prompts me as Chairman of the Grounds and Greens Committee to propose the following:

1. That we establish a vacation with pay for these old employees of one week. Time to be extended during the winter months and exact dates left to the discretion of the Greens Superintendent.
2. It is also proposed that we establish one week sick leave and the time not consumed as such be applied to the vacation period during the following year.

Insofar as our present crew is concerned the above applies this year to only three men as Ody has not completed his first year service.

I would very much appreciate your giving the above matter such consideration as you deem advisable and notify.

Yours very truly, Geo. E. Semple

Members of the Park Ridge committee and Bert and his men take pride in what has been accomplished in a comparatively short time. It is an economical operation that gets maximum results from a comprehensive maintenance program that avoids a hit or miss policy with no goal.

Parker "Springfield" fairway sweeper

A maintenance "must" — adds weeks to fall play and income. Economically collects and bails leaves, twigs, trash, etc. Promotes healthier, more abundant turf growth. Controls spread of dandelion, buckhorn, and other obnoxious weeds. Useful every month of the year. Write for details.

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