

many years. They operate much as our golf clubs at public golf courses—being groups of golfers bound together by a commercial, club or fraternal tie, who play on various golf clubs. They usually have a home course and in that capacity operate as a public links golf club in America—but they travel more.

In groups of from 20 to 200 they charter buses and visit other golf clubs, stage a tournament there, eat lunch and have a gay time. This added business is welcomed with open arms by any public golf course operator and the country clubs really get out the plush red carpet for this added business. It is a grand thing, both for the members of the golfing society, who are getting to play on the famed golf courses, and the cash register of the hard-put course operator and club secretary.

While green fees on public golf courses are low by American standards, so is membership and initiation fees at country clubs. At one of the better clubs near London annual dues run around 15 to 20 pounds a year, roughly \$75.00. Many others around the three guinea figure which is around \$10.00.

Courses Far Out

The golf courses around London range from about 12 miles from downtown London to around 50 or 60 miles to the ones far out which try to get golf trade from metropolitan London. Hill Barn is 58 miles from London—a good 90 minutes by the fast train. Hollingsbury Park, Brighton, Sussex, a famous course built in 1908 and liked by far traveling public golfers, is 53 miles from London, or roughly an hour by fast train. This is about as far out as Londoners go for their public golf. But even a trip to a relatively close in golf course is a problem. First you have to add to the train time the time needed to get around and across London by underground or bus. By the time you do this and reach the golf course you've spent almost a half-day in getting just to and from your golf course.

Typical Trip to Course

A typical trip is one to the Addington Court Public course, Addington, Surrey—one of the best public layouts. You are living near Russell Square which is almost down-town London, so you take the bus to Victoria Station where the trains run about two times an hour, maybe three times during crowded periods. You won't have to wait long for your fast train to East Croydon which is the first main stop after you leave London. This takes about a half hour. Then, you catch Bus 130 marked for New Addington. After you get off at Gravel Hill Garage station you start walking up Featherbed Lane toward the golf course. They will tell you it is a short walk—but there are no short walks in England. This one is about a four-hole walk up hill to the club house—and all five paces!

So, you play your eighteen holes and then repeat the performance and get home. And as the British say "you've 'ad hit."

The Addington golf course is operated, by the way, by the Hawtrees. Fred Hawtree is a well known golf architect who was associated with J. H. Taylor for many years. He is now a member of the Golf Advisory Committee, chairman of the public course organization and president of the greenskeepers group. In a semi-retired capacity he, with the able assistance of his son and daughter, operate the course.

In looking over data on public golf in England you may run onto one of the most interesting statements in existence on the theory of municipal golf green fees. The statement is found in the rules and regulations of Chapham Commons, a golfing society founded in 1873.

The statement reads: "Being on a public commons, it is, of course, open to any member of the public who may choose to use it, but, owing to the expense to which the club is put to provide playing facilities, it will be understood that some annual charge must be made and this is regulated by year according to the number of members subscribing."

With that theory of establishing green fees still on the books the low green fees are understandable.

Yes, things are getting tighter on the "tight little isle" and the hazards are terrifying but, "There will always be golf in England."

COMING TURF EVENTS

- Aug. 7—Turf Field Day. Rutgers Univ., New Brunswick, N.J.
- Aug. 22-23—20th Annual Greenskeepers' Field Days. University of Rhode Island, Kingston.
- Aug. 27-31—American Society of Agronomy Annual Meetings, Pennsylvania State College, State College, Pa.
- Sept. 5-7—Turf Field Days. The Pennsylvania State College and USGA Turf Advisory Committee, State College, Pa.
- Sept. 10-11—Turf Field Days. Purdue University and Midwest Regional Turf Foundation. West Lafayette, Ind.
- Oct. 7-9—National Turf Field Days. Beltsville Turf Gardens, Plant Industry Station, Beltsville, Md.
- Oct. 24-26—Turf Conference. Central Plains Turf Foundation and Kansas State College, Manhattan, Kansas.