

FEBRUARY • 1951

Act Now, Course Equipment and Supply Dealers Warn

These comments from dealers were received before price freezing was announced by Washington. Now the advice to buy before prices get higher doesn't apply. But the shortages are getting more acute. In none of the reports from dealers did **GOLFDOM** get any indication that orders for the same equipment and supplies had been placed by clubs with several dealers in the hope of securing delivery from at least one dealer, but inaccurately magnifying the demand.

Golf course equipment and maintenance supplies are showing the war and defense situation to the extent that some golf clubs are going to get caught short.

That summary comes from the dealers who are in the middle between the manufacturers and the clubs. According to the dealers who are well acquainted with the clubs' needs, buying practices and financial positions, the most urgent responsibility of club officials now is getting what they'll need before the material shortage is acute and the manufacturers are switched to defense work.

In some cases club officials nearing expiration of their terms of office hesitate to commit succeeding administrations to purchase obligations and don't want to incur bills at a time of the year when club income is low. Those are conditions that'll have to be faced and acted upon promptly, say the dealers, or clubs will be out of luck.

Course equipment and supply dealers are in close contact with superintendents and club officials and know that in many cases foresighted purchasing is prevented by directors' reluctance to act upon recommendations of superintendents and green-chairmen. The dealers also know how tight the material situation is in some respects. Their information about supply and buying is authoritative.

Here's a round-up from dealers that

might well be heeded by all golf club directors:

THE CLAPPER CO. — It's an immediate duty of club directors to raise necessary money for payment of equipment, supplies and repairs if the money isn't already in the till. There is no need of greenkeepers waiting until March and April to buy standard expendable items as routine purchases. Foresighted clubs are ordering what is available and credit is tightening. Action right now probably will be the answer to standard of course maintenance and economy of operation for several years.

GEORGE A. DAVIS, INC. — There is no aspect of hoarding in a club looking ahead and protecting itself against inevitable shortages in equipment and supplies. It is simply "first come, first served" and the investment in essentials must be promptly made. The club whose directors are slow in acting can't expect dealers to do the impossible for it.

WOODWORTH BRADLEY, INC. — Clubs now should let the greenkeepers do the buying of what experience dictates will be needed for the season's use and the long haul. Officials need only to see that the greenkeeper stays within a reasonable budget and is helped with financing of wise emergency purchases. Greenkeepers are so well practiced in thrift officials don't need to worry about the greenkeepers doing any panicky buying.

H. V. CARTER CO., INC. — Members of the Northern California Golf Superintendents' Assn. are especially troubled by the buying problem as, due to their 12 months operations, needs of courses are greater and more varied than in other sections. Manufacturers we represent have been very cooperative and have acted with foresight. However the problem right now is one of allotment of equipment we can secure from manufacturers. When equipment was plentiful we found instances where it was abused, neglected and worn beyond repair. Equipment operators must be impressed with necessity of giving

proper attention to operation and maintenance of equipment entrusted to their care. Because of a probably heavy turnover in course labor that job of education and supervision will be another heavier load on the superintendent.

SYDNOR PUMP & WELL CO. — Many club officials are professional men who seldom are in the market for merchandise other than that required to operate their own households. Informing them of the acute situation in golf course equipment and supplies is urgently necessary. When they learn how course equipment and supply shortages are looming they'll press for buying.

TROY FILE WORKS — Every club should make a complete inventory of course equipment and supplies, and an examination of condition of equipment. Then order immediately, allowing plenty of time for delivery. The situation is being complicated for dealers by inability to get some equipment and supplies, necessity of limiting acceptance of orders to clubs having solid financial condition, and problems of determining sizes of stocks to carry.

DRAKE-SCRUGGS EQUIPMENT CO. — At least minimum needs of clubs should be determined and ordered at once as, in our opinion, there will be a shortage of golf course equipment before the 1951 season ends.

C. F. ARMINGER, INC. — Shortage of raw materials and government restrictions already are pinching course equipment manufacture. It is certain that lawn and golf course equipment can not be officially rated as defense items. One equipment manufacturer whose product is sold mainly during late summer and early fall will ship our entire allotment in January. It now is not a case of golf clubs being able to get all they may need; it's a matter of the greenkeeper, chairman and others concerned with ordering course equipment and supplies determining their requirements for the entire season and give their suppliers at least a tentative schedule of their needs in order to have a good chance of obtaining minimum requirements. The prospect of shortages in so many fields is being so overworked that in the golf field the actual seriousness of the situation may not be appreciated by club officials.

MINNESOTA TORO CO. — The picture of major items now is:

Mowers — Short supply and going to be worse.

Tractors — Very short and will get worse.

Fertilizers — Available but prices rising almost weekly.

Sprinklers — Fair supply but getting critical.

Hose — Short supply and getting worse.

Seed — Supply fair; prices probably will get higher.

Tee and Green Equipment (cups, poles, flags, etc.) — Short supply and will be very critical.

Fertilizers — Supply good but will be critical in not too distant future.

Parts — Good now but several price raises and will be more. No idea of how long factories will be allowed to make parts. Possibly manufacture will be permitted on short percentage basis as during World War II.

KENNEY MACHINERY CO. — Many clubs could use commonsense and review their experience with mowing and other equipment, figure life expectancy of this equipment, then buy with idea of protecting themselves for at least half the expected life of the equipment. We have one Indiana club which bought Toro mowers from us 15 years ago. The club cannot afford, without assessing member, to buy new equipment, and with the best break of the factory in obtaining materials we couldn't promise delivery sooner than 90 days. In talking over this situation with the club we gave them alternatives of buying new equipment or complete rebuilding of mowers. On this particular set the rebuilding cost was about 60% of the price of new equipment. Another club just purchased a new engine to put in its 10-year-old tractor.

Now, if a lot of the clubs had followed such policy there would not be the present scarcity of equipment and supplies. Look ahead and see what may happen in 1952 with clubs bought ahead to that time and the manufacturers and dealers scrambling for orders.

Nobody can control this situation in which panic or greed overrules sane saving for a rainy day. It is certainly good business for any club to protect itself and we certainly are not businessmen who would recommend that clubs buy little, but fix up the old stuff instead. However it seems obvious to us that a buying rush isn't the entire and wisest answer to protecting course maintenance and a calm survey of the balance between new equipment buying and reconditioning is the right policy, and the only policy for clubs that are close to the financial line.

JACK D. MANSUR — Experience of World War II is fresh enough in greenkeepers' minds to provide sound buying policies, but only a few officials were in club clubs then and now, hence the lessons of that experience rarely will be applied. As far as possible without interference with defense clubs should lay in two years' supply of supplies that won't deteriorate. The materials will keep as well

in club warehouses as in warehouses of suppliers and the financing load will be kept off dealers. Financing is an increasingly important factor in the present situation.

OHIO TORO CO. — Don't buy in excess of normal requirements and stockpile heavily. This makes it too tough on the smaller clubs. But anticipate needs well in advance and take delivery whenever material is available. Expect substitute materials as the situation gets tighter. Dealers have to buy at the price in effect with the manufacturer when equipment or supplies are shipped, hence golf clubs must expect changes without notice on prices of what they are able to get. The manufacturers and dealers expect to be in business long after this emergency has ended and the nation is in a strong peaceful condition again, so there'll be no gouging on the necessary price increases to the clubs.

GUSTINE'S SALES & SERVICE — Standardize on one line of equipment to take advantage of interchangeability of repair parts. Don't go hog-wild but get your equipment in shape and supply your club so canny management will take you through a couple of years.

CHARLES G. KRUCKEMEYER — Not a moment should be lost in making necessary purchases of equipment and supplies. Green-committees and other officials should be informed in writing by the greenkeeper of the details in which each club is affected by growing critical shortages. In some cases orders for spring delivery will assure needs being met and billing dates at times when the clubs are active but if the club has the money it had better order for delivery at first possible date. It is wise to have spares of mowers and parts; not going overboard in ordering but making use of past experience to make certain that a carefully planned economical program can be carried through.

BARTELDES SEED CO. — We don't look for shortages in grass seed nor do we expect acute fertilizer shortages. It looks to us that clubs would be smart if they'd buy soon and with foresight any items made of metal. More homes since end of World War II will have lawn requirements that will affect golf course maintenance needs.

ROSEMAN MOWER CORP. — It is highly advisable for clubs to place equipment orders well in advance of actual need. It now is necessary for manufacturers to order material far ahead of their need to be somewhat certain that material be available at time of production. This places an additional burden of financing, storage of inventory, etc., on the manufacturers, which could be somewhat reduced to the benefit of club buyers as well as

manufacturers, by steady maintenance of production schedules.

D. R. NIEDERLANDER — The unpredictable future calls for the course supt. and chairman getting in touch with his supplier, learning present prices on what's needed, and buying it if it's obtainable and can be afforded. We all have to go along from day to day. A day that's lost may mean equipment or materials lost.

HECTOR SUPPLY CO. — Due to golf clubs being operated by committees of frequently changing personnel, careful study of present buying situation is needed. There is no need of hysteria buying but normal yearly requirements should be ordered without delay. There will be many shortages but if good judgment has prevailed in keeping equipment in good operating condition clubs should not be caught short. Soundly conservative action with foresight should be exercised in the event that there may be wartime restrictions on golf.

GOLDTHWAITE'S TEXAS TORO CO. — Demand for golf course equipment in numerous items exceeds production and in instances shipment of equipment scheduled for delivery is held up by lack of some small but vital part. However most courses have replaced badly worn equipment since World War II and with proper care this equipment should carry through. Club officials and greenkeepers who didn't order before the shortage became acute will be lucky if they are able to supply some urgent needs.

BOB DUNNING-JONES, INC. — We find greenkeepers and club officials as a group to be unaware of the rapidly tightening shortage of all hard goods and chemicals required for golf course maintenance. It is difficult to account for delay in buying as the warning of increasing prices has been repeatedly given. One chemical preparation which is almost standard in course maintenance increased from \$2.33 to \$4.95 a pound in a few months because of factors beyond the control of the manufacturer. The current situation has placed us in the position of having to put our money on the line for clubs that should be buying now and having to order merchandise in larger quantities than normal to have something on hand when clubs finally get around to ordering it. Golf clubs can't expect supply houses to cover up for delay and lack of knowledge of needs, and smaller supply houses wisely won't take any chances.

Late in January our availability of equipment, which we are certain was greater than that of most dealers, was:

Toro tractors — One left.

Gang mowers — Oversold on allotment, hoping for few more that will sell almost immediately.

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of warning in his talk on the spread of "Dutch Elm Disease and Oak Wilt," which concluded the educational program of the conference. He dwelt at length on the inroads being made by Oak Wilt showing colored slide closeups and aerial views of park areas in southern Wisconsin where most serious damage is centered. Unable to discover how the disease is transmitted, effective control work has been stymied. Details of both diseases and steps to follow when either is discovered will be outlined in an early issue of GOLFDOM.

ACT NOW, DEALERS WARN

(Continued from page 29)

Power greensmowers — Only a few left.
Hand greensmowers — Still available.

Whirlwinds — Probably will be sold out of larger sizes by March 1.

Sprinklers — Available. Only one small price increase. Supply will be critical by April. Brass couplings and fittings higher and scarcer.

Power sprayers — Still available but slow.

Hose — Big shipment of Goodyear Emerald Cord expected Feb. 1. Prices up but quality still good. Rubber shortage will rule here.

Aerifiers — Still available. No price increase. Good buy.

Cups, flags, poles — Up but available.

Lawn sweepers — Little production expected after April.

ZAUN EQUIPMENT CO. — To avoid "scare buying" that only adds to the golf course supply problem we suggest that orders be placed for at least a year's supply of parts and equipment and that other orders be placed for the foreseeable future. Club officials of business experience, realizing the inevitability of further government restrictions and difficulties of getting materials, should have by now a complete list of what their club needs either for early or later season use and buy without further delay — if they can get it.

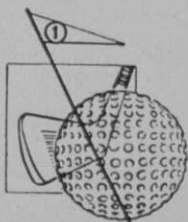
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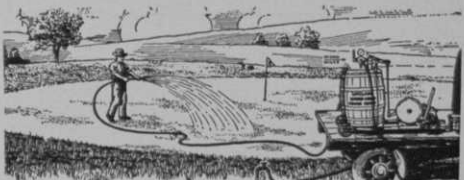
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