

Golfers Learn to Appreciate Superintendent's Work*

By PATTY BERG

ALL GOLFERS love a beautiful course with heavy turf that seems to set the ball up where it can be easily hit. All love the turf that allows a good long run on their drives. Everyone prefers a rough that is not a hayfield, but is cut to proper length, greens that have a good base, and not grainy, and will do a good job in holding the ball when backspin is applied.

All of us like large tees on which are maintained a good covering of turf by changing the position of the markers; and of course, traps that are not cellars, and enough loose sand so that explosion shots can be made.

All of these things the golfer wants, and even more. He wants a landscape studded with beautiful trees and shrubs, groomed like a lady's permanent; flowers around the clubhouse, and all utility buildings and unsightly things screened by shrubs and bushes.

The wants of the golfer are varied and many as supts. already know by their experience with us.

We know of course that the golfer's demand for Utopian courses can only be satisfied by the work of experts who have the know-how of golf course management and maintenance.

Golfers Can Help Supts.

I realize that we golfers can be of considerable assistance to you by very little effort on our part. Along that line, I would like to tell you of a man who told me years ago, that he had two homes; The home in which he lives, and the home where he plays, which in this case was his golf club. He also stated he tried to be just as careful of things at the club, the grass, the traps, the trees, etc. as he was at home. That it was as important to him to have his club and course looking as nice as his own lawn and home.

I have observed this man picking up bits of paper and stuffing them in his pockets to be put into the waste containers for that purpose. Suggestions to others to do likewise would be helpful to all concerned.

I think this little verse I read some time

ago, written by Edgar Guest, perfectly sets forth the policy of a true golfer:

*A golfer is more than a ball-driving brute,
He is more than a mug-hunting czar
To be known as a golfer you don't have to shoot
The course of your home club in par;
But you do have to love every blade of the grass,
Every inch of the fairways and greens,
And if you don't take care of the course as you
pass,
You are not what "a good Golfer" means.
You may brag of your scores and may boast of
your skill,
You may think as a golfer you're good,
But if footprints you make in the traps you don't
fill,
You don't love the game as you should.
For your attitude unto the sport you enjoy
Isn't proven by brilliance or force;
The proof of a golfer—Now get this, my boy!,
Is the care which he takes of the course.*

Patty Sees the Courses

In the 22 years that I have played golf, I have traveled all over this country, and I have also played on several golf courses in Canada, England and France. During 14 of these years I have worked in golf promotion for one of our large manufacturers of golf and other sports equipment.

I have visited every nook and cranny of the United States. In these travels I have had the opportunity to observe the turf, the landscaping and general beautification of many golf courses, private and public, and I cannot refrain from telling you of the compliments and the expressions of appreciation for your efforts and advances in golf course maintenance.

These laudations of golfers mean that your knowledge and work in their behalf have given them increased pleasures in all phases of their most favorite game.

Some time ago I read an article deploring that the golf course superintendent was the "forgotten man". This might have been true some years ago, but things have changed. Today those who really know golf consider the supt. one of the most important men on a golf course. All know the tremendous task he renders in maintain-

(*1954 GCSA conference address)



MIDWEST HOLDS GRASS DISEASE CLINIC

Midwest Assn. of Golf Course Supts. held a two-day plant disease clinic in a conference room fitted up as a botany laboratory. Here, discussing some problems of turf disease are: (L to R) Jack Kolb, Wm. Daniel, Wm. Klomprens, Ray Gerber, Don Strand, Wm. Kraft and Bert Rost. Klomprens of Upjohn Co., Ralph Voight of University of Illinois, Wm. Daniel of Purdue and James Watson of Toro Co. were turf scientists associated with Midwest supts. in presenting this initial study of turf grass disease. Microscopic study of grass diseases, study of their causes and prevention in this two-day session in the opinion of John McGregor, veteran in midwestern golf course management, logically promises to save midwestern courses an annual amount equivalent to a substantial percentage of salaries of supts. attending the clinic.

ing a golf course which allows the golf players to perform at their best, and the non-golfers to feast their eyes on the beautiful landscape.

Condition Determines Score

I feel satisfied that the quality of any golfer's game is directly hooked up with the course supt., through the condition of the tees, fairways, rough, traps and greens. It would not be true to say that golfers play better on ill-kept golf courses.

There is another element that I am sure will affect most golfers. I know it has to do with my playing. I speak now of the beautification of the golf course as a whole. I believe I am much happier playing where landscaping and cleanliness prevail than on a littered, poorly groomed course, and with the happier condition, my game will comply and also be happier, and I will play better and score better.

As a touring tournament player, last year I played 65 rounds of medal play, and several match play tournaments, besides many rounds of exhibition matches, as well as all my clinical work. I know from this experi-

ence the grooming of the course, both in good turf to play on and beautiful landscaping to look at, had much to do with my state of mind and enjoyment.

I know also that supts. have to meet and remedy many situations. I recall that some years ago the course where I first started golf had a green that set in a cluster of large elm trees. On one side there were four large trees which happened to be within a few feet of the green. This half of the green was always in poor condition. When the tree root spread was controlled the green condition was improved.

I recall also that this golf course had considerable land in plots, one of bent for repairs and new greens, also plots of flowers for the clubhouse, and quite a considerable plot for trees, and shrubs to be set out on the course when needed. I mention this only to show how this club planned for the future and how I have remembered the foresight of the supt. and Green committee.

This course has sprayed both rough and fairways quite regularly in the past several years, as a result I would call it as

near free of weeds as I have observed anywhere. The rough on this course is very heavy until along in August and for that reason is kept quite short. The fairways have a splendid turf.

The fairways contain bent which came in when the sprinkling system was installed and some bent sod was used in covering of the trench. The grass is mowed to something like $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch, is very heavy and a ball sets up well.

Recently I observed an article about how a golf instructor not only gave golf instruction to his students but gave them a fair knowledge of turf as well. He seemed to feel that the knowledge of good turf is also a part of golf instruction on the basis that turf affects the game and the game affects the turf. I believe there is something to it.

Winter Course Improvement

At the club where my father and mother play in the winter time finances are usually a problem. However, the members help with much of the landscaping. Many young trees, shrubs and bushes have been set out according to the planning of the course supt. This has resulted in considerable beautification of the course, and has been accomplished mostly by the efforts of the Membership.

This course had had very little or no feeding for more than 10 years and was practically starved out.

The whole course was infested by mole crickets and cut worms. Three years ago they decided to do something about it. A heavy dusting of chlordane mixed with some grain meal was applied. Two other applications by airplane and one ton per acre of dolomite was also used. Then Bermuda clippings were disked in, along with a heavy application of fertilizer. Each year since, a heavy application of fertilizer has been put on this course, so now it is in very good condition, except of course, that we still have many weeds but they are diminishing each year.

Two years ago this club was fortunate in procuring the services of a new professional who also had knowledge of maintaining and upkeep of the turf. He has revamped many of the greens, rebuilt tees, and added several traps, and in a general way has made the entire course much better. Roland Wingate has made tremendous improvement and bettered the playing conditions as well as cleaned up the course.

As a result of this, the containers for litter are being used, and no one thinks of throwing refuse around the course or club-

house grounds. All of this had made a much better atmosphere in all departments.

I believe that golfers as a general proposition, can be educated to keep the grounds free from litter, if a few containers are properly placed.

I believe if proper attention is given to cleanliness, on and around the course, the members will get the idea it's their course, and clean it up themselves.

Quite often I see neglected tees and I think most golfers will agree that if a golf course has good tees and good greens one can wait on the fairways to improve. I suggest tees large enough so that the turf can be maintained, by changing the position of the markers as often as possible.

I wish to say something for the people we call golfers.

They are the backbone of everything connected with golf. Without them there would be no need of turf, other than that which would be considered a lawn.

These people are the folks that pick up the check and they are numbered in the millions. They are great people, good, friendly, patient, patriotic,, generous and honest.

I have met many of them through this great game called golf. They are my friends and I love them all. The nature of this game seems to breed long and lasting friendships.

I wish also to call your attention to the golf professional. Here is the person that starts the people in this game. His constant observation and alertness is always at your disposal. He suggests, counsels and demonstrates. He cries with them, and over them. He supplies the correct implements and the know-how. He is practically indispensable.

And now last but far from being least, comes the golf course superintendent, an essential man in good golf. Here is a man who, by the nature of his work, must be skilled in many endeavors. He must be an agronomist, a mechanic, landscaper, artist, gardener, scientist, architect, road builder, painter, carpenter, plumber, electrician, bookkeeper, and labor relations expert. He must provide a good turf and maintain it despite all kinds of weather and insects and players.

He isn't the "Forgotten Man", he is the "Miracle Man" of golf.

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