

# Supts. Give Good Advice to Golfers on Course Care

**T**HIS year golfers who show consideration for other golfers and for the course are to get deserved recognition.

The Worthington Mower Co., in collaboration with course superintendents, green-chairmen and other club and public and semi-private club officials, is awarding certificates of honor to "The Worthy Foursome" on each course. These awards will be made on the basis of nominations made by players at the various courses and turned over to the greens-committee or others designated at the courses.

The award idea, a follow-through on the notably successful course care educational campaign conducted by Worthington Mower in 1954, came out of the investigation made by Richard La Fond, Inc., Worthington Mower's advertising agents. More than 600 superintendents, chairmen and other club officials cooperated in a survey on the problem of educating golfers to an awareness of their responsibilities in minimizing the preventable expenses and difficulties of course maintenance.

Specific faults of course carelessness common to golfers were cited in abundance by the superintendents and officials in providing Worthington Mower Co. and its advertising agents with the material on which the 1955 educational campaign is based. But, in the majority of instances the superintendents and officials pointed out that the 1954 Worthington campaign had been effective because it avoided scolding and encouraged golfers to do their own thinking about what was sensible in the golfer's own use of the course.

## **Faster, Neater Play**

It also was frequently noted by men in charge of the course that a major problem of course use, while not a maintenance factor, was unnecessarily slow play. This problem has been getting attention from the USGA but with not especially encouraging response, so the superintendents and chairmen suggested that this playing time element of golf etiquette logically could be tied in with the educational campaign.

The core of the educational campaign is double-page spreads monthly in *Golfing*,

the National Players' Magazine, with its extensive readership among the most active members of leading clubs and the most informed and influential players at smaller clubs and pay-for-play courses.

Reprints of the advertisements are provided to superintendents and club officials for display on clubhouse bulletin boards and mailing to members.

Newspaper golf writers and sports columnists gave strong local focus to the 1954 Worthington campaign and are doing a valuable job this year in spotlighting the educational work in their respective circulation areas.

Reports and suggestions from superintendents and officials were candid inasmuch as the survey was made on a rather confidential basis, due to the delicacy of diplomacy the course department generally has to observe in its educational work. But the general benefit of the initial campaign was significantly noted by Walter W. Cosby, supt., golf and grounds, at the famous Greenbrier courses at White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., which, during a season, has players from the majority of the first class clubs east of the Rockies.

## **Respond to Education**

Cosby said that his maintenance men reported that last year there was a definite improvement in players repairing ball marks on greens, replacing fairway divots and smoothing sandtraps. He credits the 1954 campaign with having had valuable influence. However, one place where plenty of education is needed, Cosby commented, is lack of consideration for tees.

That observation was almost 100 per cent among the cooperating superintendents. Divot-taking practice swings on the tees, failure to heed the tee markers, and failure to use pegs on the short hole tees, account for considerable expense at good courses during a season and, in addition, require repair time that lowers the attractiveness of the course.

What puzzles the superintendents is that players who will play winter rules under almost any conditions and move the ball over to a good lie in a rough, will play a ball from the turf of a short hole tee.

Tommy Armour, in his book "How to

Play Your Best Golf All the Time," and in his newspaper instruction articles, has remarked that the expert tees a ball every time the rules allow, unless there is some short hole shot under conditions beyond the finessing of average golfers. Armour, too, says he can't understand why the average golfer ever neglects to use a tee on a short hole.

### **Sloppiness Expensive**

Next to the tee damage, the superintendents responding to the Worthington Mower Co. survey said that carelessness—or downright sloppiness—in the disposal of litter usually was the biggest source of preventable expense, nuisance and deterioration of course appearance.

Cans and bottles thrown on fairways and in rough were a cause of complaint at courses where you'd not expect that trouble. Cans in the rough accounted for mower repairs and time out of operation.

In a number of instances the superintendents and officials said they had to accept some responsibility for the waste paper, cans, bottles, paper cups, candy, cigarette and ball packages and other debris being around the course as there hadn't been enough waste receptacles conveniently located.

Failure to repair ball marks in greens was listed high among causes of preventable expense and damage.

### **Preventable Greens Damage**

Other carelessness on greens involved deep scuffing with spikes, mishandling of the flag, bag carts on greens, cigarette and cigar burns on greens, marking ball location by digging scratches with tees or, surprisingly enough, by knocking a dent into the green with the toe of a putter.

Damage to approaches and other areas adjacent to greens and tees by bag cart and golf car tracking was often reported.

Many superintendents said that there was more caddy training needed in handling of the flag. Several noted that small caddies jumping up to hold the flag and keep it from flapping was a common cause of green damage around cups.

The hot-tempered golfers who pound clubs into greens, tees and fairways after missing a shot also came in for painful mention.

Golfers definitely are improving in replacing divots and smoothing traps, although there are plenty of places where the golfers still haven't learned it isn't right to climb out the steep side of traps. Again, the superintendents say part of the trouble in trap care is that often there

aren't rakes provided for players and caddies at the traps.

### **Need Pro Good Examples**

Many of the superintendents and officials say that the pros, and especially tournament pros, haven't given conspicuously good example in replacing divots or smoothing out traps. If the caddy doesn't do those jobs, the pros don't seem to care, according to a number of men responsible for course condition. Several club officials remarked that the PGA could do a good job for golf and improve public relations of tournament pros if they'd get tournament pros to give courses the consideration that dues-paying members are expected to show.

Bag carts in hazards and on trap banks account for plenty of avoidable maintenance work, superintendents say.

Loose spikes that come off shoes and damage mowers are another cause of expense that could be avoided. Superintendents wish that players would check up on their spikes before they leave the locker-rooms.

The superintendents and officials agree that educating golfers in course care is pretty much of a continuous job but the progress made during the first year a campaign was organized on a nation-wide basis by Worthington Mower gave high hope that the work would definitely reduce unnecessary expense in course maintenance and help keep courses in better and more attractive condition for all players.



AP Wirephoto

### **AFTER A DUST STORM**

Dust storms are among the sources of trouble for course supts. in the southwestern states. Elmer Fugate, supt., Lakeside GC at Ponca City, Okla., got nationwide publicity for his ingenuity in plugging a vacuum cleaner into a portable generator and cleaning a layer of dust from his greens.