

	Yes	No	Same
Has supt. fared better budgetwise?	6	2	4
Has course labor situation improved?	4	6	2
Have supt's management techniques improved?	10	2	0
Has weather helped the supt.?	2	8	2

The above consensus is based on a survey made by Golfdom among equipment and supply dealers. It covers the maintenance situation for the last two years.

Supt's Situation Improves But It Isn't All Roses

THE above chart gives a fairly concise summary of the course maintenance situation throughout the U. S. by persons who know the supt. best, equipment and supply dealers and their sales representatives.

Simple "Yes," "No," and "No Change," replies, of course, don't tell the complete story. The equipment men, for example, in reply to queries concerning course budgets, point out that while there has been an average increase in allotments for maintenance in the last two years of probably less than five per cent, they have been largely offset by increases in the costs of labor and materials.

The labor situation generally has not improved because supts. cannot employ enough year-around help, and have to put too much dependence on inexperienced youngsters who are interested in working at course only during summer vacations from school. The resurgence of the nation's economy in the last year also has restricted the source of competent course labor since higher industrial wages again are beckoning potential club employees.

As for the weather, practically every section of the country was hard hit during the winter of 1958-59 and this spring. That supts. have been able to cope with it and

bring their courses back to playability is the result of their own competence plus an assist from the healing powers of nature.

Supts. Expand Knowledge

The competence of the supts., it will be noted, is the most consistently cheerful observation that the equipment dealers make in the above chart. It is almost generally agreed that through study, observation, use of research tools, monthly sectional and annual national meetings, etc., the trend to the upgrading of the greenmaster's ability, that started more than a decade ago, is still growing. Many dealers put in a favorable plug for the GCSA in conjunction with this.

Sectionally, the trend of the dealer's opinions and observations generally follow the national pattern. Budgets, it is reported, generally are higher now in the Far West than they were two years ago, but in other parts of the country they are no higher than they were in 1957. The labor situation has improved somewhat in the Southwest but in other sections it is no better than it was two years ago or has slipped back. About the only part of the country that wasn't hit hard by poor weather last winter and spring was the South. New England and the Northeast,

dealers say, saw more damage to turf last winter than in perhaps 30 or 35 years.

Jack D. Mansur who operates a supply firm in Fryeburg, Me., remarks that because of the havoc wrought by the weather during the winter and spring months in his part of the country, clubs on small budgets wouldn't be operating now if poa annua wasn't thriving. Many greens in the area were almost completely denuded and in quite a few cases there weren't funds available to replace them.

Hampered by Lack of Funds

Less than 10 per cent of Maine's 68 clubs have ample budgets, Mansur continues. In many locations there is no treatment for disease until the disease occurs and at some clubs fairways haven't been fertilized for years. The equipment replacement situation is no better.

The big drawback, as Mansur sees it, is that dues at many clubs are still pegged at a pre-war level. About the only thing that has kept many courses going in Maine is that there has been a substantial increase in daily fee play.

Other reports from the northeastern section of the country, one from T. L. Gustin of Philadelphia Toro, and another from E. B. Skelton of Krebs Equipment Corp., Buffalo, are divided as to the status of the supt's budget but agree that the weather in 1958-59, and even in 1957-58, hit courses in their areas very hard.

Labor Situation Only Fair

In the Midwest sector, dealers report that the labor situation is probably as good as can be expected in view of the prevailing wage scale. There undoubtedly is too much dependence on high school and college help and older persons who are available are only mediocre employees. As for weather, W. F. Riley of Riley Lawn & Equipment Co., Indianapolis, and Leon Short, of Short & Son, Keokuk, Ia., says it has been about the same as usual in their areas in the last two years. However, J. Paul McGee of Minnesota Toro, Minneapolis, says that the effects of the recent severe winter were still being felt this summer and that the spring of 1959 was the worst one experienced in at least 10 years. Similar weather conditions prevailed in Milwaukee and Chicago, according to R. G. Howe of R. L. Ryerson Co., Milwaukee, and C. O. Borgmeier of George A. Davis Co., Chicago.

There is divided opinion as to how supts. are faring in the budget dept. One dealer says that supts. complain because almost unlimited funds are set aside for operating swimming pools, clubhouses, etc.,

Refner Observes Two 50th Anniversaries: Wedding and Tenure as Hillsdale Pro



Frank and Clara Refner, the bride and groom (Aug. 3, 1909) are flanked by Michigan pros, Ron La Parl, Frank Syron and Al Waitrous and Robt. Simpson, of the Hillsdale (Mich.) G&CC.

More than 300 members and guests attended an outdoor barbecue dinner and ceremonies in the Hillsdale clubhouse celebrating the 50th wedding anniversary of the Refners and Frank's 50th anniversary as the club's professional.

The club presented the Refners with a \$2500 check, wrist watches and announced that it was to stage a new event for a trophy named in Frank's honor.

Michigan Section PGA presented Frank with a plaque commemorating his 50 years of fine service as a professional.

On Aug. 10 Frank had his 74th birthday party with a dozen boys and 18 girls from his junior classes.

only to have the clubs skimp on course maintenance. Another opines that larger club supts. aren't suffering from a lack of funds but those at the smaller clubs are. Perhaps, the situation is pretty well summed up by Borgmeier who says that course maintenance funds probably are ample if not overwhelming.

Recommends Forceful Requests

Discussing budgets, Paul M. Jones of California Toro, San Francisco, declares that many supts. handicap themselves by not being forceful enough in going after the equipment and supplies that they need. "Economy," says Jones, "is a word that is rarely heard so far as course maintenance is concerned. Apparently, the clubs aren't pinching pennies, so the supt. should take advantage of this within reason." Budgets in the Los Angeles area also are quite adequate, according to Bob Adams of Pacific Toro.

Both men agree that the labor situation
(Continued on page 71)



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Operating Costs Increase

(Continued from page 26)

all groups was higher than in the preceding year, but only in medium size clubs was it evident in the ratio to total food and beverage sales. Food and beverage costs in medium clubs were down but the rise in payroll more than offset these. The opposite substantially was true at smaller clubs. At large clubs, food and beverage profits showed improvement due to cuts in cost of goods sold per dollar sale.

Course Maintenance Costs

Only small clubs showed an increase in maintenance cost of course and grounds as measured by average ratio of costs to dues. However, gross maintenance costs at larger clubs were up about five per cent. For medium clubs there was a decrease of 1.7 in the costs to dues ratio and a reduction of \$1 in the average cost per course hole. Expenses increased \$94 per hole at small clubs and \$138 per hole at large clubs.

Greens and grounds payroll constitute generally 70 per cent of costs at all clubs. They rose 10 per cent at large clubs in 1958, 8 per cent at small clubs and only 2 per cent at medium size clubs. Fixed charges against the course and grounds borrowed capital or insurance are not

charged against the course and grounds dept. in the Horwath figures.

Supt's Situation Improves

(Continued from page 24)

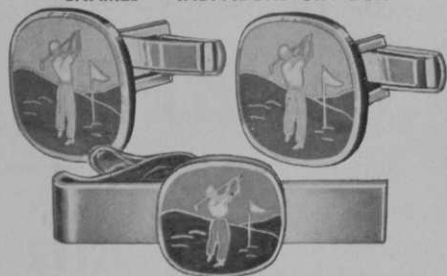
in the Far West is a long way from being what it should be. Strong regional CCSA organizations are exposing more and more greenmasters to advanced methods of turf management. Monthly meetings are well attended and supts. generally are showing avid interest in the research that is going on in their field.

Along with the labor situation, the biggest drawback to maintaining a course in California has been the weather, particularly in recent months. Last year there was ample rain but since March or April abnormally dry conditions have prevailed.

Old Budget Story

"Budgets in the Southeast," says E. J. Smith of E. J. Smith & Sons Co., Charlotte, N. C., "are being continually squeezed. We have heard as many complaints on this score in the last two years as in any similar period since the end of the war." The labor situation is only fair because clubs are not using a farsighted approach in getting and training efficient help. The weather, too, has made its inroads. In

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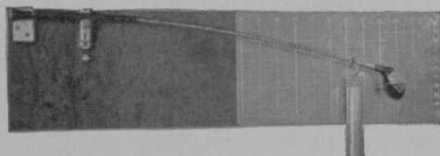
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1957-58, Southern supts. had to contend with the "big freeze" and courses were slow coming into shape. This year, abnormally dry weather has done considerable damage to turf.

In the Southwest, according to Goldthwaite's Texas Toro Co., budgets have inched up in the last two years and, while they probably are adequate, increased costs of labor and materials require that the supt. watch his appropriation quite closely. Labor, too, is slightly more efficient and plentiful, probably because wage rates are up a little over what they were two years ago and employees are getting better training. Weather conditions, says the Goldthwaite people, have been conducive to better courses than have been seen in the Southwest for some time. Rainfall has been adequate and usually timely and in mid-August most courses in that section were in peak condition, considering the season.

Public Course Clubhouse

(Continued from page 33)

Mohawk clubhouse since it has been in operation. That is the usual thing in new clubhouses. At Mohawk the lockerrooms and shops are too warm in the summer and too cold in the winter. The demand for air-conditioning in private and public clubhouses in the South and Southwest is giving builders new problems.

The kitchen area at Mohawk isn't adequate. Unexpected demand on cooking and freezer capacity, dishwashing machinery and bottle storage suddenly was revealed when the clubhouse was put into operation. Steak dinners are popular with Tulsa golfing organizations but the kitchen facilities are too limited for handling fairly large affairs where hungry golfers demand plenty of red meat.

However, the clubhouse shortcomings that have become evident are, to a large extent, the result of the contrast with general attractiveness of the surroundings and can be corrected by addition of more kitchen and storage space and better heating and air conditioning. Otherwise, the new Mohawk clubhouse is declared by the Tulsa golfers, who use the facilities, and by the clubhouse operating staff, to be pretty nearly perfect for their needs.

R.I.'s 28th Field Day

The 28th annual Turf Field Day staged by the University of Rhode Island will be held in Kingston, Sept. 17-18. Jesse A. DeFrance will direct it.