

Lighted Practice Areas Should Be Integral Part of Private Clubs

Better planning by clubs, architects can prevent this irritating oversight

One night several years ago GOLF-DOM's editor stopped at a golf range to talk with the professional there. This range makes a larger annual profit than most of the fee courses in its district.

On a tee, working on his second basket of balls, was one of America's richest men. He belonged to at least six fine golf clubs.

He said the range was the only place where he got to practice. When he got a round of golf into his crowded schedule he felt he was lucky and that he should play with business associates rather than

club planning committees and golf architects will be blamed as long as the clubs are in existence.

The practice tee (or lesson tee or range — whatever you choose to call it) is a valuable American contribution to the game. There was an excuse for the older courses not having such an area, but newer courses have only one excuse for omitting an asset that has become increasingly popular at well operated clubs. That is lack of land.

Considering even this, founders of a new club had better think twice about a



Adjoining the Golden Circle lodge at DeSoto Lakes G & CC, Sarasota, Fla., is a convenient practice area. A golfer can step out of his cottage and walk a few yards to an 18-hole practice green or a driving range or a trap area. The first tee is about 50 yards from the practice layout, which has become so popular that the club is planning to install lights on it.

spend his time alone at the practice tee or taking a lesson. This man asked why none of the clubs to which he belonged had lighted tees where a businessman could relax after a rough day, get some exercise and polish up his game.

The question couldn't be answered. The lack of a few lighted tees at clubs where businessmen pay big initiation fees and dues and usually play only about 20 or 30 rounds a year is a mystery of the golf business.

At some newer courses the inadequacy of practice areas is a costly fault for which

range. When members eventually insist on having a practice area a high price will have to be paid. One metropolitan district club that built its 18 holes, clubhouse and parking space on about 105 acres later bought eight acres for a practice area and it cost almost half of what was paid for the original acreage.

There are numerous indications that a lighted practice tee has possibilities for increasing club dinner and drink patronage that haven't been considered by club management. Range operation isn't much more costly at night than in the daytime. Light-

ing installation and current and insect control are the only added expenses for night use. An important factor in the lighting installation is an arrangement whereby it doesn't become a neighborhood nuisance.

At the resort courses or at the real estate — golf course developments in localities where there isn't much evening entertainment the lighted range is decidedly attractive.

Women Benefit

One of the lighted range's best uses is for women's instruction and practice. Thousands of women would like to get into golf but are reluctant to learn on the courses . . . and are not especially welcomed on them. The range is the answer for them.

In a number of cases at new clubs in smaller communities ranges are constructed and put into operation as soon as possible after the club is organized. A little money and effort in providing a place at which golf interest can be stirred and new players educated in fundamentals, invariably prove a very satisfactory investment for the new club.

It often seems that small new clubs are making much better use of the golf range than are larger clubs whose members complain about the high cost of comparatively limited use of the club.

New Contract for Crane

Thomas W. Crane has signed a new five-year contract as executive sec. of the PGA. A former Chicago attorney, Crane is the only man who has held this post since it was created in 1943. During his 17-year tenure he has served at some time or other as counsel for the professional organization and editor of Professional Golfer and handled scheduling of the circuit tournaments. Since Crane came with the PGA, membership has increased from about 2,000 to 4,600. He still retains his position as counsel and, as executive sec., is chief administrator of PGA policy.

Massachusetts Winter School

Donald V. Waddington, recently appointed to the faculty of the University of Massachusetts, will play an important part in the 1961 Winter School for turf mgrs. to be held in Amherst, Jan. 16-Mar. 10. Waddington holds a B.S. degree in Agronomy from Penn State University and an advanced degree from Rutgers University. He will instruct classes in turfgrass physiology.

Fortner, Holland Appointed to Foundation Staff

Ernest W. (Ernie) Fortner and Roy Holland have been appointed to the staff of the National Golf Foundation and Vern Johnson has been transferred to the Midwest region.



Fortner

Fortner, a graduate of the University of Texas and a resident of Austin, Tex., represents the Foundation in the South. His territory includes Ala., Ark., La., Miss., N. M., Okla. and Tex. He is available for assistance to all groups planning development of new golf courses in the southern region.

Fortner has spent 14 years as a golf professional with clubs in Coffeyville, Kan.; Joplin, Mo.; Detroit and Sault St. Marie, Mich. He has played the winter tour for the past 12 years and is widely known in golfing circles.

Holland Succeeds Chlevin

Roy Holland, native of Sioux City, Ia., and a graduate of Northwestern University, is public relations dir. for the Foundation. He succeeds Ben Chlevin, now with GOLFDOM and GOLFING magazines.

Holland has been active in promotion and public relations work for civic and public organizations and is a former vp. of the U. S. Junior Chamber of Commerce.

Johnson, University of Illinois graduate and a former varsity swimming coach and athletic instructor there, has been a field rep for the Foundation's southern region for the last year. He has been reassigned to the Midwest region and will operate out of the Foundation's office in Chicago.

USGA Turf Award

The USGA is establishing an award to be given annually to a person who has made distinguished contributions to golf through work with turfgrass. The first winner will be announced on Jan. 27 in New York at the annual education session of the organization's Green Section. A nominating committee will propose candidates for the award and a selection committee will determine the winner from the list of candidates submitted to it. Persons in research, extension and maintenance work will be considered for the award.