

Battery Maintenance: BUYING ISSUE **1974 A WINTER MUST**

Following the tips by ROBERT A. BUESING presented here may save you downtime

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Because the golf car fleet repre-sents a major financial investment at any golf club, one naturally assumes that the cars making up the fleet are expertly maintained. Yet, the statistics compiled by the golf car industry tell a different story: One out of every four cars is delayed in getting onto the course at the beginning of the golf season, mainly because of dead batteries. Furthermore, the statistics reveal the reason why batteries fail. They have been neglected during the winter. Anyone with paper and pencil can quickly tabulate what the cost of losing 25 per cent of a fleet in downtime can do to a golf club's profit margin.

There's no mystery to taking care of batteries. Simple preventive steps can be taken during the winter to protect their longevity.

One step is to check the batteries at least once a month during freezing weather to make sure they are fully charged. If this procedure is not followed, a battery can freeze and die.

How the batteries are stored also is important to their good maintenance. Ideally, they should be

stored where they are accessible and on a stand, if possible, so they won't be moved around when they're checked.

Another step: Purchase good, heavy-duty batteries-the kind made with rubber separators. They can tolerate vibrations and a variety of temperature extremes. The heavy-duty batteries will cost more than their lighter counterparts, but they will last longer. And this will make up for the extra expense.

To keep golf cars working hard all summer, here are a few more suggestions for battery preventive maintenance:

1. Keep batteries fully charged;

2. Don't overcharge;

3. Keep water levels at the right degree, and

4. Check batteries monthly with a hydrometer.

Remember, proper maintenance throughout the golfing season will mean fewer battery failures. A fully-charged battery will last regardless of the weather and will give sun-up to sun-down service. Preventive maintenance during the winter will reduce expensive losses caused by battery failure.

