

Week Day Fee Play Takes Hold in Britain

SEVERAL English golf clubs are making their courses available for daily fee play during week days and reserving use of the course for members exclusively on Saturdays, Sundays and other holidays.

Although the idea apparently has its big interest for the English in its supply of golf playing facilities for those of the country's prospective and present players who are not club members, it also is worthy of consideration by many clubs in the United States as a source of additional revenue. Particularly in the case of many clubs in smaller towns can the week day daily fee idea be employed to get enough more revenue to put and keep the course in first-class condition. Despite the fact that some damage is done to the course by the daily fee players, it can more than be repaired by a very small fraction of the fee income.

Commenting on the playing facilities for those who prefer to pay spot cash for their golf, *Golf Illustrated* of London says:

"It is, at any rate, a more businesslike scheme than the ideal of free golf for small numbers of local people at stipulated hours; for presumably most of those who qualify to play in these circumstances occasionally pay something to go to the pictures or a billiards saloon and could just as well pay something for their golf. The Shooter's Hill Club, in the southeast of London, is now trying an innovation. It is a club of the kind that is usual round London. The members pay an annual subscription of seven guineas a year. They also have to take up a £5 share. As elsewhere in the metropolitan district, which, after all, is the hub of the British

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business world, the members—being mostly people in responsible positions—now play chiefly on Saturdays and Sundays. They are protected from overcrowding on those days by the usual restrictions as to green fees, but it has been decided that from Monday to Friday, inclusive, anybody shall be allowed to play on the course by payment of 1s 6d a round and without the formality of introduction by a member or the necessity of being a member of some other recognized golf club.

"In short, Shooter's Hill becomes virtually a public course for five days in the week. We are informed that the same freedom prevails at the Honor Oak and Forest Hill Club, which is hard by the station and within twenty minutes' run of London bridge. This scheme is worthy of consideration as a means of enabling golf to find the outlet which it is seeking—and seeking mostly in vain—as a game for the community in England. It gives would-be beginners a chance to take up golf; it opens up a new field to people who used to play, but who have been unable to continue on the score of expense, and it is far better than the principle of free golf as a charity. Club house staffs and greenkeeping staffs have to be maintained throughout the week. Where the courses are normally almost empty except at week-ends, they might just as well be populated."

Picking the Pro for Winter

By J. MARTIN WATSON

SOUTHERN clubs looking for the services of a capable professional for the winter months should take the matter in hand at this season of the year. It takes time to make a selection and it involves a good many details which should be given consideration from every angle. There are so many more worthy men in the profession today than formerly that the choice should be no longer a gamble if clubs will

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take the time and trouble to give the likely applications a thorough investigation.

If the Professional Golfers' Association of America would give their members a rating and keep on file a detailed history of the workings of its membership it would facilitate matters and be a dependable source for clubs to draw from and make for satisfaction on both sides. As this condition does not exist yet, except to a certain extent with some state P. G. A. groups, it makes it necessary to solicit applications.

There will be a flood of letters, but the business man knows which are for the discard and gives his attention to the few remaining. Before a man receives the stamp of approval the secretary should find out from the applicant's club what his ability, character and integrity amount to, the firms he does business with, and find out from them if he is in good standing financially. Then it is a matter of deduction. The selection of a professional is a serious matter. Clubs need dependable men who are always on the job. The professional's an important and responsible position to fill and should be treated accordingly by clubs that want desirable men. The better the man the greater the service and though it may cost a little more the returns warrant the expenditure.

What Maintenance to Determine Right Cost?

BY ED B. DEARIE, JR.

THE question most frequently asked is: "What should it cost to properly maintain an eighteen-hole golf course?" But so far it has been impossible to give a satisfactory answer and it is obvious an exact answer will never be possible.

No two courses are alike in construction, topography, soil and turf conditions. This is also true with regard to the attitude or demands of the members of a golf

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club, which are also very different from each other.

One course may have an elaborate system of traps and bunkers, while another may have natural hazards and ravines running through the course. One may be on a stiff clay and another on loose sand. One may require a great deal of artificial drainage and another may not require any. One course may have good top soil available for dressings and compost, while another, being on poor soil, may have difficulty in getting soil material.

There are so many uncontrollable factors that it is hard to set a standard of cost.

Members Variable

The least uncontrollable of all factors are the members. They seem to misunderstand these conditions. First it is one whine and then another. We have one course in mind where the greenkeeper is obliged, in order to satisfy members, to rake and manicure all the traps and bunkers three times a week, though they are built in natural loose sand and would be better traps if left to take care of themselves. More or less a trap without whiskers, like a son of David's, is not a regular trap. This brings us to the point that there can be no standard set for fair cost of maintenance until the essentials of good maintenance are agreed upon in some way, nor can there be a fair comparison of cost until costs are kept on the same system of accounting.

What are the essentials of good maintenance or what is good maintenance, or when is maintenance good or what must be done to have good maintenance and what can be omitted? For the present this question has gone unanswered.

Certainly good maintenance is not the variety exhibited on a few ultra courses which are kept in championship form every minute of the season. By good maintenance we mean such as permits and requires good golf to be played.

It is just as important to have conditions such as compel good golf to be played as it is to play the game itself. The game does not contemplate absolute freedom

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from bad lies, but it is expected that they shall be unusual or uncommon.

To make a start towards an answer to our most frequently asked question we have done little in the way of working up a system of cost keeping that has proven flexible enough to apply in various parts of the country. To go further we ask what, in the opinion of our greenkeepers, constitutes a proper course allowance for good maintenance.

Compost Characteristics and Its Preparation

(Continued from page 17.)

covered with from three to six inches of earth to prevent the escape of valuable ammonia. As to size and height of stack one must be guided by the local conditions and methods of handling. In some cases a low pile covering a large area that permits of frequent tractor cultivation is preferred, though such is wasteful both of material and of quality of resulting compost. Usually a heap ten to fifteen feet wide and five to seven feet high is the practice. This makes a very handy width to manage when screening and turning. When the materials going into the heap are dry a good wetting down should be given; in fact the heap should be kept reasonably moist at all times to encourage the most favorable bacterial action. A small amount of lime added to peat and muck is also advised. This will help the decomposition of the heap, though it is not enough to effect the character of the soil in the green.

While it is advocated that a covered compost heap is better preserved from washing rains and weathering, it is doubtful if such procedure is necessary or profitable. There are but few sections where the rainfall is so heavy that the leaching resulting therefrom is a really serious matter; actually in most cases the rains are helpful in keeping the heaps moist.



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This matter of moisture is too often overlooked and is of utmost importance. Where a farm is operated in connection with the golf course it would amply repay to install a tank for the liquid manure and pump this over the compost. The discharge from the septic tank disposal system, as mentioned before, is another means of getting a similar result.

A shelter from the men working at the compost is a valuable and workable proposition. Turning the compost over and screening are operations that can well employ the men during rainy days when work on the course proper is out of the question. For this purpose a shed may be used to which the compost may be carted or a light, portable shelter on wheels or skids that will cover screen and screening gang right at the stack. A well-braced wooden frame on four posts with canvas canopy and curtain on the stormy side is not expensive and would soon repay the cost. A more permanent affair with light angle frame and sheet iron roof could be moved to any part of the course with a tractor or horses without difficulty and would prove useful in a dozen different ways.

The prospective labor cost in turning the heap back and forth and screening, in addition to the work of putting the material on the greens looms large in the minds of many greenkeepers and green committees, and in consequence they tackle the top dressing in only a half-hearted manner. Spading the heap over will speed up the decomposition of the nitrogenous matter and will prepare the compost for use in a much shorter time than if it were left undisturbed. A stack made in the spring will, with a few turnings, be ready for use late in the season or even by mid-summer sufficient may be worked out to make it worth while screening. However, repeated screenings are not necessary unless the compost is wanted in double quick time. If left untouched for a year, but not allowed to dry out too thoroughly, the pile will have rotted far enough to screen out a large percentage of usable material and within that time practically all the weed seeds will be devitalized. The rough fibre and undecomposed substance may be thrown back for further rotting down. The screening operation will mix the various components together for all ordinary purposes. Successful practice entails at least three heaps: one in current use for this season's top dressing; one aging for

next year, having been built up last season, and one in process of building for use the year after next. It is not necessary to build the whole stack at once. It may be added to from time to time during the season as materials accumulate and opportunity affords convenience to do the work, the whole being covered with earth before the course shuts down in the fall. The heap may be used as a receptacle for any fermentable refuse, but care should be taken that material likely to become offensive should be immediately covered with earth or sod.

Watch the Weeds

One reason for composting is to destroy the multitudes of weed seeds that would otherwise find their way on to the golf course through manure and other top dressing material. The good work of composting is in a measure undone if the pile becomes a mass of living weeds that are allowed to flower and seed freely. The compost heap should be kept free of weeds entirely. It is sometimes the practice to send a man with a scythe to cut off the weeds when they grow high enough to be unsightly, but cutting them at this time does not ensure against living weed seeds, since many will produce seed quite close to the ground and among these may be classed the worst of our turf weeds, and further, many plants when cut green still have enough vitality within the stem and branches to produce germinable seed.

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