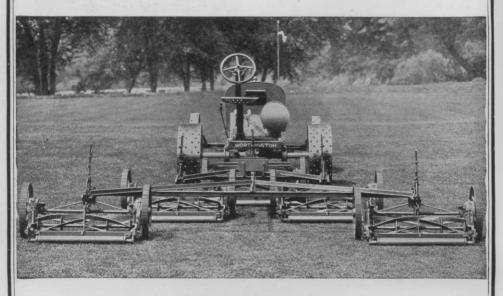
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THE BUSINESS JOURNAL OF GOLF

NOVEMBER, 1927



Skokie's toboggan slide, a major feature of the winter program.

# A Winter Sport Program Will Reduce Overhead

By JOHN W. FULTON JR.

NE evening about four years ago, a small group of members sat around the fire in the men's grill of a country club near Chicago. They were discussing the ever-present problem of operating a club on an economical basis and at the same time provide all the comforts and niceties that the members demand.

"One factor that makes annual assessments so common, as I see it," remarked one member, "is that we can operate only a little more than half the year. The rest of the time, because the weather is unsuitable for golf, we must close this elaborate establishment of ours, reduce overhead to a minimum, and sit back to wait for the

opening of the next season. It is too bad we haven't weather like Hawaii or some equally blessed spot, so our members could use what we have to offer all the year around. Golf would be less expensive under those conditions.

"Well, why not keep open all year?" suggested another of the men. "Why couldn't we make it worth while for our members to use the club every month in the year? We could put in a skating rink and a toboggan...."

Thus was the winter sport idea started at the Skokie Country club. It is located within the limits of a Chicago suburb, Glencoe. Most of its members live within a few blocks of the club property and even in the winter season find it reasonably easy to get to the club in comfort.

A committee was appointed to consider the winter sport idea. They decided it was worth a trial and started conservatively. The tennis courts were flooded for skating. It was felt that a toboggan was needed and to cover the cost of the equipment, the members were asked to contribute twenty dollars each, with the understanding that the club would reimburse them the following summer with an equal credit applied on their house accounts. Not all the members contributed, but enough money was raised to cover what purchases needed to be made. The toboggan was erected.

The response to the winter program was even more than the committee in charge hoped. Skating parties were organized particularly in the evenings. The toboggan was in constant use. There were always two or three bridge games in progress in the clubhouse. The dining room did a comfortable business.

At the end of the winter, the committee was able to report practically an even break between income and expenses, even with winter sports charged with a fair proportion of the cost of operating all departments except the dining room, which bore its own burden. And the innovation proved so popular that the board of governors included, for the following year, a generous budget for an enlarged program. Meanwhile, the twenty-dollar contributions of the members were returned to them.

Each year, Skokie's winter season grows in importance. It begins the second week in November and lasts until the fourth week in February and ranks very favorably in popularity with the summer activities of the club.

The program has been greatly elaborated. An artificial pond, which acts as a water hazard in summer and the skating rink in winter, has been formed near the clubhouse. A ski-slide has been erected next to the toboggan.

The committee noticed that a great many members came to the club, not themselves to take part in the activities, but to bring their children. Those members sat about the clubhouse with nothing to do. So a pool table was rented and installed in the men's grill-room. It was welcomed by the idle parents and used constantly,—whenever other members, at the club for outdoor play, did not beat them to the table.

Later, a ping-pong table and complete equipment for the game was added in the grillroom. It proved even more popular than the pool table, since the game offered more exercise. Ping-pong tournaments were organized and from six in the evening until ten there was hardly a night when the table was not in constant use.

About the third year the committee went farther and announced dinner dances, bridge tournaments and moving picture shows, to be held every other Saturday. Invitation announcements rather elaborately printed, were mailed the members in advance, outlining the event next planned. It was the committee's aim to offer at least one novelty on each of these nights.

Take the dinner dances for example. One night the party would be heralded as a "Chinese" dinner dance and the food, prepared by a Chinese chef specially imported for the occasion, would be oriental throughout. The dining room was decorated in appropriate fashion with lanterns and the like.

Another night was "Deep-Sea" night, with a well-planned sea-food dinner offered the members. Other dinners were called "Southern," "Italian" and "Spanish," with menus planned accordingly. The New Year's Eve party jams the clubhouse.

Obviously, not all the members of Skokie cared to participate in the winter activities. A number of them travel south This left room in the for the winter. club for additional members and accordingly 35 special Winter Memberships, carrying all privileges during the winter season, were created. Dues were fixed at The memberships were \$50.00 a year. avidly snapped up by desirable residents of Glencoe, most of them members of neighboring clubs with no program of winter sports in their schedules. Thus \$1,750.00 in dues, plus what these added members spent at the club, was added to the club's income with no overcrowding.

Guests are permitted upon payment of nominal fees. For use of the skating rink and toboggan, the charge is fifty cents week-days, \$1.00 Saturdays and Sundays. Guests are charged for at the dances at the rate of \$1.00 each, unless the guest dines at the club, in which case there is no charge.

Skokie's income from all sources, excluding the dining room (which is considered a separate department and self-supporting), runs in the neighborhood of \$6,500.00 during the winter season, according to William G. Lerch, who has been

chairman and guiding light of the winter sports committee since its beginning four years ago. The expenses run a trifle less, say \$6,000.00 a season, and included in these expenses are all general overhead items that other clubs must make up during the summer season. Thus Skokie not only offers its members a twelve month

that the announcements are printed and mailed the members. The third committeeman concerns himself with the smooth running of the bridge evenings and the moving picture shows, which consist, it might be mentioned, not only of pre-releases of regular program films, but also of moving pictures taken during the sum-

A WELL-PLANNED combination of winter sports outdoors and social activities indoors has given Skokie a winter season which ranks very favorably in popularity with the summer activities of the club.

club, but actually reduces the cost of golf. Nor do the advantages of a winter program stop with this point. There are a number of others. For example, Skokie avoids that bug-bear of most clubs, the annual dismissal in the fall of trained employes and the re-hiring of them, if possible, in the spring. Skokie keeps practically the same force the year around. The green-men who keep the course in shape during the summer are employed keeping the skating rink and slides in shape during the winter. The caddy-master, a Norwegian by birth, acts as skating instructor. The gardener makes himself useful keeping the walks and paths in shape, and tending to the shelter house built near the rink. The professional, who is also the greenkeeper during the summer, fits up the caddy house with a driving net and is busy with lessons. His sales of golf sup-

Obviously, employes within the clubhouse perform essentially the same duties during the winter as during the summer season, since all departments of the club remain open twelve months in the year.

plies to members about to leave for the

south are considerable.

The organization of the Winter Sports committee is simple. There are three members in addition to the chairman, who has general supervision of all activities. One committeeman, who lives very close to the club property and so can be on hand daily, is in charge of all outdoor activities. He keeps a close watch on the weather and the condition of the rink and slides, orders the equipment flooded or surfaced when needed, and keeps a weather eye on the work done by the groundsmen. Another committeeman is responsible for the bi-weekly dances, plans the menus, hires the orchestras and sees

mer of members of the club themselves. These latter films make a particular hit and the attendance on the nights they are shown more than makes up the expense of taking them.

Skokie's winter program is a sensible one, started conservatively, and carried out with an intelligent eye toward economies of operation and appeal to the members. There is no reason why hundreds of clubs, located north of the Mason-Dixon line cannot inaugurate a similar plan, modified perhaps to meet local conditions. In particular, it seems an eminently practical scheme for those clubs whose bondindebtedness or excessive ground rental is burdening them down with heavy carrying charges. It seems rather unbusinesslike to allow an investment of such magnitude to remain idle anywhere from four to seven months every year.

#### DON'T FAIL

as soon as your annual elections are over to notify GOLFDOM of the name and address of your new president and green-chairman. Also notify us promptly if your club has engaged a new professional, greenkeeper or manager.

We want a copy of GOLFDOM to reach the proper individuals each month and must depend on your cooperation to do this.

## "New South" Puts Business Ideas Into Its Golf

OMPLACENT northerns who used to visualize the south as lagging behind the rest of the country industrially have been jarred out of that mistaken idea some years past, and if there are any on the upper side of the Mason and Dixon line who think that the south may be slumbering past the dawn of business management in golf there is another revelation coming to them.

Due, possibly, to golf being a twelve month sport in the south there is the necessity of continual watchfulness and work on the part of the golf club officials in that section of the country. This year-around season has given southern golf club officials, even in the smaller southern towns, an opportunity to work out their clubs' destinies on a basis that provides many good ideas for northern clubs.

One shining example of how the south is putting its golf clubs on business platforms and facing about on the old idea of casual and costly policies may be witnessed at Columbus, Ga.

The Country Club of Columbus has 250 members. It owns its handsome and well appointed two-story clubhouse and the 120 acres on which its eighteen hole golf course is located. Four years ago the club was insolvent and, had it been a commercial enterprise, the property would have been sold for the bonds. dark time the club mustered Frederick B. Gordon into service as its president. Gordon undertook the strenuous rescue job when he was pledged the full support of the club's governing board of twelve. He was willing to work but insisted, as would any other successful business man, that his administration not be handicapped by dead timber. This governing board has a monthly dinner meeting at the clubhouse and all who are absent with excuse are so reported in the record. Continued absence without valid excuse means the member is dropped from the board.

Gordon has been re-elected three successive years so from this the success of his administration's methods may be judged.

#### "Strictly Business" Is Keynote

"Strictly business" is the slogan of the

Gordon administration that provides play for the members at notably low costs. The club has a paid secretary-treasurer with an office at the clubhouse and regular office hours. This official is the pilot who sees that the administration's course is followed precisely as planned. He gives his full time and efforts to the job.

With the exception of monthly dues of \$8 for active members, (the initiation fee is \$25), the club is run on a strictly cash basis for all golf, tennis, swimming pool, house rent and cafe charges. At annual meetings for the four years of the Gordon regime the president has been able to report that not a dollar is past due from any member. During this time the club's daily income has increased from \$50 to \$100. The club makes money on its cafe and on all other details of operation except course maintenance. Some evidence of the club's constant campaign to maintain and increase its business is apparent on club's letterhead which carries the line. "CIVILIAN AND ARMY SOCIAL HEAD-QUARTERS - GOLF, TENNIS, SWIM-MING, DANCING, CAFE."

There are only a few active members who do not frequently visit the club, these being the men who joined simply to help maintain what Mr. Gordon terms, "a semipublic institution."

#### Monthly Budget Checkup

Chairman are advised monthly as to their standing on their budgets. There are nine committees; finance, by-laws, house, grounds, membership, army, golf, tennis and swimming. The entertainment committee is a sub-committee under the house committee. Chairmen of each standing committee must hold at least two regular meetings a year. The by-laws state: "chairmen shall not expend for any purpose over \$50 at any one time, or make any contract, or adopt any policy of importance without the approval of a majority of their committee."

Members must register and buy tickets before playing. Each ticket is for three holes play. Tickets are sold for 15 cents each; three for 40 cents and six for 75 cents. Caddies are paid by these tickets only. Players without caddies must register and buy tickets which then can be cashed in after playing. This is for record-keeping.

Swimming pool charges are 25 cents for adults and 15 cents for children under 15 years of age. Reduced price coupon books are sold in \$10 and \$15 books.

Locker fee is 25 cents a month payable monthly.

When not in use by the club the clubhouse may be rented by members for private parties at a cost of \$25 a night. The use of the clubhouse for any money-making affairs of any organization outside the The club's directors are not called together often but all who are in the city at the time of the meeting show up. The directors are notified in advance as to the questions to be presented at the meeting.

#### Atlanta's Double Club

At Atlanta there is one of the few organizations successfully operating two clubs. The Atlanta Athletic Club has a city clubhouse at 44 Carnegie Way and a country clubhouse at East Lake. Both buildings are new. The city clubhouse furnished, cost \$1,364,623, including the land. The new country clubhouse cost,

A T Columbus (Ga.) they help keep the club out of the red by getting desirable rental users of the clubhouse. Atlanta (Ga.) has a "certificate of indebtedness" plan that helped to put the club in excellent financial position. These are two of the many good ideas that put southern golf on a business basis.

club itself, to which non-members are invited, is billed at \$50 a night and \$25 for day use, with the exception of organizations of Columbus women affiliated with the City Federation of Women's Clubs which are allowed the use of the clubhouse for afternoon card parties for \$15.

The Country Club of Columbus has an active and able committee of twelve women who give bridge parties and benefit balls, using the profit from these affairs, about \$2,000 a year, for club furnishings.

#### Simple As A B C

At Mobile, T. K. Jackson, president of The Country Club says they have found the simple principles of good management, faithfully applied, highly satisfactory. The club works on a budget system and has no financial difficulties as it "cuts the coat to the cloth." Post cards bearing the program for the week and the month and calling attention to the club's excellent cafe bring good patronage to the clubhouse. It is not the club's policy to operate the house at a profit.

After deducting from its gross income the club's fixed charges such as bond interest, taxes, insurance and similar items, the balance is divided between the house committee and the greens committee, the entertainment committee being part of the house committee at The Country Club of Mobile. This split gives the greens committee a budget of \$1,000 a hole for the course.

furnished, \$159,575. Atlanta Athletic Club suffered complete loss of its club-house by fire on two occasions, but was fortunate enough to be fully insured when the last fire occurred.

Each of the Atlanta Athletic Club establishments stands on its own bottom, and each department likewise. The club does not operate on a budget system, but its operations are so conducted and systematized that the club can tell each day what every department is doing. A monthly audit is made and if it doesn't check with the daily reports there is a prompt investigation and application of corrective methods.

#### Club Well Financed

Atlanta makes a strong point of operating on a business basis. The Athletic club's credit is fine and never abused. In the annual report of President Scott Hudson reference is made to the value of the club's certificate plan. Mr. Hudson stated, "the certificate plan was not only a wonderful help to us when we needed money but also in buying our furniture and equipment as a reasonable price for cash. It also is the best collecting agency I ever have encountered." This certificate plan involves each resident member depositing with the club \$100 for which the member receives from the club a certificate of deposit. Not less than 60 days after termination of his membership this deposit, less any amount due the club, will be refunded to the member or his estate upon surrender of the certificate of deposit.

It is the Atlanta Athletic club idea that if a club has popular prices it will draw the members. They state it like this: "You have a fixed overhead and if the members do not use the club the overhead is the same. Therefore the club can afford to sell for lower prices than a hotel or restaurant because the overhead has to be cared for, business or no business. We fight for volume and in getting the volume we manage to offset practically all the overhead together with the cost of the goods."

This club believes in a small directorate and in small committees. There are only five directors, one of whom is the president and another the vice-president and treasurer of the club. These small bodies have to function. Responsibility is too sharply defined for denial or side-stepping and only men who are workers will undertake to serve.

The Atlanta Athletic club is committed to a policy of every department being as nearly as possible self-sustaining. It is the executive aim to give each department what it asks for but if the requests seem out of line the judgment of the directorate rules.

#### New Members for Financing

At Austin (Texas) the country club worked its way out of the financing dilemma that confronts many clubs of high standards by taking in more members. Unavoidable higher costs due to the more exacting requirements of members have hit a number of the older clubs especially hard and the simple and sane relief, when practical, is to take in more members. There are comparatively few cases in the smaller cities where new members can't be handled with slight alterations in the locker-room and perhaps the addition of a practice area near the first tee to care for those who are compelled to wait for starting time. If enough ground is available put in an approach practice space, as well as the putting practice green, or if possible, allow wood club practice facilities.

Due to golf's great growth in the last several years older clubs generally will not have much difficulty in getting the number of good new members necessary to good financing and operation that escapes red figures.

A. T. Knies, president of the Austin

Country club outlines the organization's operations in telling GOLFDOM:

"We work on a budget having found this is the only sane way to operate our club.

"We have had financial difficulties like many other clubs. We try to maintain our club on a high plane and found this spring that we were operating at a deficit of about \$2,000.00, so we had a meeting of the Board of Directors, increased our membership by putting on a campaign for new members that secured about 70. This has put us in first class financial condition and we hope to operate during the next year without a deficit.

"We have some 400 members, and a great many who do not attend the club except at rare intervals but want to retain their membership so they may entertain their friends at their pleasure.

"I am glad to state that we very seldom call a directors meeting but what we have a full quorum, and generally a full directorate present.

"We do not try to make any money out of the house end of the club. This is a college town and we have a great number of sorority and fraternity houses, both giving many large parties during the year which generally are held at our club. We try to give a splendid entertainment and good food at nominal price at as nearly cost as possible, so that at the end of the year with probably from \$10,000 to \$15,000 cafe account, we make anywhere from \$500 to \$1,000, which does not more than cover the wear and tear on equipment.

"Regarding course maintenance, we are very liberal in the maintenance of our course and try to keep it up in first class condition. The golf playing members realize that the course itself is receiving all financial assistance possible from the club."

## Is New Building Fireproof? Ask Fire Department

BEFORE erecting the new clubhouse, or in fact any building on the grounds, take the local fire department into your confidence. Many valuable suggestions can be obtained from a wide awake firechief, suggestions that may save the club hundreds of dollars in insurance premiums later. Don't assume the building you are putting up is a fireproof structure—take the plans to the fire-chief and let him pass on the matter.

## Foreign Grubs, a Menace of the Future

By B. R. LEACH

Associate Entomologist, U. S. Department of Agriculture and Consulting Entomologist, U. S. G. A. Green Section

N last month's article I discussed the marked change in the status of grub control from a minor golf course maintenance problem to that of a major one due to the entrance into this country of three foreign species of turf feeding grubs from Japan. I stressed the fact that, as these three foreign species of grubs gradually spread over the country, they will cause pronounced changes in greenkeeping methods and practice and that grub control-instead of being the occasional annoyance caused by our native species of grubs-will be an ever-present. annual concern of all golf clubs situated in the rapidly expanding area infested by these foreign species.

In view of these facts, it would seem logical at this time to give in detail an intimate account of the history and doings of the most prominent of these three insects, namely the Japanese beetle (Popillia japonica) during the past six or seven years in its relation to golf courses; and in addition to describe its habits and behavior in fine turf. This discussion should provide a fitting background to subsequent discussion of control measures since the latter are, in a measure, based on the habits of the insects.

The Japanese beetle was first discovered in an ornamental nursery near Riverton. N. J., in 1916. Subsequent investigation pretty clearly demonstrated that it had gained entrance to the United States in the matted roots of Iris plants imported from Japan. It could not have been long in the country at that time because only a few specimens were picked up by an entomologist on an insect collecting trip through that section. He was immediately impressed by the unusually bright green and bronze coloring of the beetle and realized that it was not a native species. Identification by expert coleopterists disclosed its real identity, and the state and federal agricultural officials realized they had another unknown quantity to deal

During the next two or three years, the insect gradually increased in numbers and

spread out over a few square miles of country in the vicinity of Riverton. At that time and often since that time the technical men stationed on the Japanese bettle project were compelled to listen



The beetle deposits its eggs underground and the larvae, hatching, feed on the roots of the vegetation.

with superficial politeness to the vapid and querulous queries of the chronic neophytes who inquired, with all the sincerity of the mentally thick-headed, why didn't we get busy and wipe out the beetle during those early years when it was present in relatively small numbers and infested only a few square miles of territory. We were even accused of standing by and allowing the beetle to increase from the not disinterested motive of insuring the permanence of our jobs.

We usually silenced these self-appointed critics by asking for suggestions as to the best way of going about this job of wiping out the beetles. One genius advised that we screen all the infested land with fly-screening. Figure this out per square mile at 3 cents a square foot for wire cloth and then try raising, by public subscription, the millions of dollars required.

Another deep thinker advised soaking every foot of the infested area with keroland conditions the grubs did no apparent damage to the rough turf when present in numbers as high as three hundred to the square yard. The pasture grasses seemed to be about as presentable looking and thrifty, with all these grubs present, as they would have been with the grubs absent.

No intensive study of the feeding habits of the grub had as yet been made and in view of the apparent immunity of the farm

WHILE the problem of Japanese beetle control is of direct interest principally to eastern clubs, since only they are within the known affected area, the general subject of eliminating grubs from our greens is of interest to all greenmen. Indications point to local grub invasions in the middle west next season.

This is the second of a series of articles GOLFDOM is printing on the subject. Another will follow in an early issue.

sene oil and was quite annoyed when told that the grub of the Japanese beetle liked petroleum with its meals. I am absolutely convinced that Barnum was a keen observer of the human animal.

#### Jap Beetle Here to Stay

As a matter of fact the extermination of this beetle was a stark impossibility. In the first place, in 1920 there was no method known among entomologists, either in this country or abroad, whereby grubs could be killed in soil on a large scale. Furthermore, even today the methods for killing grubs in soil, as worked out by myself and assistants at the Japanese beetle laboratory will not give in practice a clean cut 100 percent kill of grubs. We are satisfied with 90 to 95 percent, and I seriously doubt whether 100 percent kill can ever be obtained in large scale operations regardless of the method employed. Hence, the unvarnished statement that extermination of the Japanese beetle at any period in its history in this country was an impossibility.

In 1920, the beetles were injuring the foliage of trees and shrubs to some extent by their feeding, and the grubs could be found in fair numbers in some of the pastures and other grasslands in the center of the infested area.

Up to this time, no golf course had experience of the grubs in their greens or fairways and the only indication of the grub's capacity to destroy fine turf was gained by observing their work in the rough grass of farmlands. Under the farm-

pastures, the entomologist jumped to the premature conclusion that the grubs fed only on decayed vegetable matter in the soil and did not eat the living roots of grasses and other vegetation. It was therefore felt, with considerable confidence, that the grub stage of this insect would not prove destructive to agriculture and that the beetle proper, with its foliage destroying tendencies, was the only phase of the Japanese beetle problem to be concerned about.

That this idea of the grub's innocuity to turf was premature and unfounded was shown by more detailed study of the grubs feeding habits conducted in 1921. These biological studies showed conclusively that the grub fed on decayed organic matter in the soil only for a very few weeks after hatching from the egg and that, during the later two-thirds of its life as a grub, the main diet was the living roots of grasses and other plants.

#### Country Clubs Become Alarmed

Thereupon, the golf clubs on the edge of the then infested area began to prick up their ears and to wonder just what they were to be confronted with in preserving the turf on their courses from the ravages of this grub. The golf clubs asked for assistance and I was detailed to find a method of killing the grubs in the greens.

It was intensely interesting to watch the steps in the gradual infestation of the Riverton Country club, the first golf course in this country to feel the weight of the