

Dealers Pick Flaws in Club Buying Policies

By JACK FULTON, Jr.

MARKED IMPROVEMENT has been in evidence in golf club buying policies during the last two seasons. The emphasis now is on buying instead of ordering. Clubs, course superintendents and manufacturers are benefiting from this improvement, which still has a long way to go before it may be classified as general.

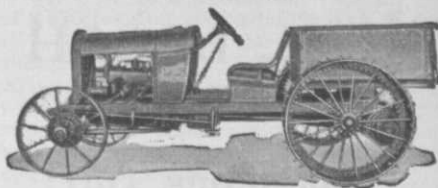
Recently GOLFDOM has questioned a number of the leading golf course equipment makers and distributors about what they think golf clubs could do to make buying wiser. The work has been timely for the golf club, as the next few months constitute the period during which most of the club budgets for 1932 will be made up, and the manufacturers, of heavy equipment especially, are burning midnight wattle trying to figure out their financing over the coming winter.

The remaining banks are not exactly tumbling over themselves to loan money for the manufacturing operations of a company that must make up a lot of mowers, tractors, etc., during the winter, ship on rush orders in the spring, and not collect for the equipment financed by the loan for five or six months at the earliest. The golf equipment business is not one of those rich profit fields that brings the bankers galloping in asking the boys to borrow even in those dear, departed times when today's bank troubles were being born.

A revision in the distribution of golf equipment and supplies will be fairly well completed by the end of this year. A golf supply dealer to warrant his existence and his cut of the margin the manufacturer has between cost and retail price, must spend lots of time and money in service work for which the clubs pay nothing. Some have been pretending to be distributors and collecting commissions that are merely scalped fees. There's not enough margin or volume in the golf business to justify a split between legitimate, hustling distributors and the folks who don't work to serve the clubs.

Longer Terms Helps Buying

One of the bright eastern dealers tags the short terms of green-chairmen as the greatest handicap to right buying. The almost annual changes that occur at many



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clubs result in purchasing practices that are not co-ordinated with the operating policy. Material and equipment is abandoned at great loss. Such abandonment has not been much of a feature during the last two years of intense thrift, but the error always is potentially dangerous. A decided trend toward longer terms for golf club officials is gradually eliminating considerable of the uninformed buying. The experienced official has an idea of what the superintendent wants and needs and can go to the front in battling with the board for the necessary money.

In this connection some of the distributors mention the delay in getting board action as a cause of expense to golf clubs. Stalling or passing the buck cost golf clubs plenty during the last season with its urgent requirements of brown-patch preventives that frequently ran into enough money to call for board action.

This brings us to the suggestion of one manufacturer who is widely acquainted with intimacies of golf club operation, and is a golf club official himself. This gentleman is terse and radical. He says: "Let's can the committees. The sum and substance of golf club mistakes in buying is that too many crooks spoil the broth. Let men who are competent and informed co-ordinate the buying requirements and the finances." He adds that some of the worst buying problems of golf clubs would be removed if the clubs would be more careful about buying from distributors who specialize in the golf business and are in proper position to give intelligent and prompt assistance.

One of the blind spots in golf club buying, according to a successful old-timer in the equipment business, is the failure to agree on definite terms of payment. Such an agreement would aid the manufacturers and keep the club accurately informed as to where it stood financially. In this sage's opinion, more attention to the elements of financing in the buying done by golf clubs would immeasurably better the standing of the clubs when they wanted to talk business with local bankers.

Golf clubs have been prime suckers for the "buy it at a discount" gypping, says one authority in the field. He states:

"There's usually some board member who prides himself on his ability to 'get it wholesale.' There are inflated list prices of some manufacturers made up just to handle this case, or some unqualified and irresponsible individual who acts as 'agent'

for a manufacturer who is careless about his future, will split his commission with the sharp shopper. The result is that when service is needed on the equipment, the margin of profit left the maker or agent who fell for the bargain-hunter is too small to permit any service operation. The hard use golf course equipment gets and the good-will importance of golf club emergency calls, make it certain that the club buying just so much assembled metal as equipment, eventually is guilty of a waste of its members' money represented by lost operating time and inevitable heavy costs of repairs."

HALLELUJAH! ANOTHER SOUL SAVED FROM CUT-PRICE HELL

Bill Curtis, vice pres., Schavolite Golf Corp., is a bright, busy young man who was cautioned by GOLFDOM that he would be given a burning this year by the price-cutters who would injure his price structure and relations with good dealers unless he kept the wrecking crew under control.

Curtis writes GOLFDOM'S editor:

"I am attaching a sheet outlining our policy concerning price-cutting. Now that you have been doing all this belly-aching about price-cutting for the last several moons I hope you are satisfied. Of course, I expect you will have another grouch on for the pros, but this will have to be fought out when I get out there next week."

The Schavolite bulletin puts it right up to the pros to squawk to company headquarters if there's cut-price competition, and jibes with the recommendations made by the Merchandising Committee of the P. G. A. The bulletin says:

"Since the inception of this company it has always been our policy to maintain retail list prices at all times, and we hasten to take this opportunity of confirming our belief that price-cutting is an evil that works unfairly, not only to the professional who is the legitimate builder-of-golfers, but

to all other high grade merchants as well. We ask you as a protection to both you and ourselves to please advise us of any unfair price-cutting on our merchandise by sending us copies of advertisements appearing in your local newspapers or other information which you may be able to procure, and we pledge ourselves to cooperate with you by immediately taking such steps as are necessary to stop same.

"Your support and co-operation in helping us to combat this evil will be personally appreciated by the writer.

"W. J. CURTIS, Vice-Pres."

ELECTRIC EQUIPMENT MAKERS HOSTS TO CHICAGO MANAGERS

At the invitation of the Public Service Company of Northern Illinois, over fifty club managers and officials attended a luncheon held on Nov. 2 in the employes' cafeteria of the Edison General Electric Appliance Co., Chicago. The purpose of the meeting was to demonstrate the latest developments in electrical cooking, ventilating and refrigerating equipment.

Cooperating manufacturers were: Edison General Electric Appliance Co., Chicago, showing a representative portion of their electric cooking equipment; Waters-Gener Co., Minneapolis, showing Thermotainer cabinets and kitchen units; Frigidaire Corporation, Dayton, Ohio, and General Electric Co., Schenectady, N. Y., showing refrigerating units and cabinets; and the Ilg Electric Ventilating Co., Chicago, showing several models of ventilating fans.

After lunch, which had been prepared on electric apparatus while the managers watched, Grant Call, house-chairman of the Riverside (Ill.) C. C., gave a short talk on the economies his club has secured by the installation of complete electric kitchen equipment. Following Mr. Call's report, the guests inspected the various displays and indicated by their reluctance to leave their intense interest in electrical apparatus as the probable answer to many of their kitchen miseries.

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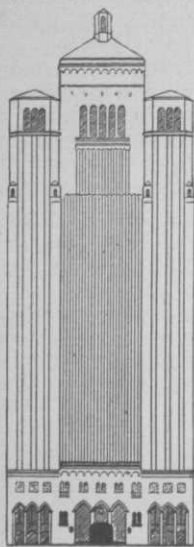
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Greenkeepers Show Is Next

(Continued from page 17)

of Wayzata, Minn.; Prof. Jacob Lipman of New Jersey's state agricultural school who is an outstanding international figure in turf research; J. O. Campbell, supt. at Wethersfield C. C., Hartford, Conn., and highly regarded as one of the practical aces of maintenance in the east; Herbert E. Shave, supt., at Oakland Hills C. C., Birmingham, Mich., and pres. of Border City Greenkeepers' ass'n.; O. B. Fitts, formerly of the Green section and now supt. of the famous Columbia C. C. at Chevy Chase, Md.; John Quail, sec. of the national association and in his capacity as supt. of the Highland C. C. at Pittsburgh one of the leading lights in western Pennsylvania course maintenance; John Monteith, jr., operating head of the U. S. G. A. Green section, who is pronounced by many "in the know" as the world's foremost golf course maintenance authority.

Ganson Depew, chairman of the U. S. G. A. Green section will be the principal speaker at the association's annual banquet. It was during Depew's initial year as the Green Section No. 1 man that the advisory committee of greenkeepers was appointed by the U. S. G. A. This recognition, for which GOLFDOM had been campaigning for some time, was of course primarily extended because of the good the greenkeepers could do in a closer working alliance with the U. S. G. A., but the simple act of granting it showed how Depew, Ramsay, Vanderpool and the rest of the ruling body's executives rated the progress of the greenkeepers. Depew is one of those rare performers who reconcile people to banquets. Bob Hayes and John Anderson will stage the banquet and are well qualified to assure the customers an entertaining evening.

MANY CLUB grills and dining rooms lack attractiveness and warmth due to the severity of the room's architecture and decorations. Where this is true, a simple method of brightening the room and giving it color is to adopt dyed table linens. Bright yellow and apple green are the most pleasing tints. Appropriate window and wall treatment finish the picture.

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JOBS

R. Otto Probst, Sec'y-Treas., Erskine Park Golf Club, 334 North Hill St., South Bend, Ind., wants a copy of O. J. Noer's "A. B. C. of Turf Culture" and Allison's "Golf Course Architecture." As no further publishers' copies are available, Probst hopes to buy a copy of each from some greenkeeper who is not maintaining a permanent library. He will pay \$5.00 C. O. D. for each book, which is a premium over its original price. Write before sending books. Mr. Probst has one of the country's prize golf libraries and needs these books to make his collection more complete.

Expert successful greenkeeper, college trained and with splendid record, desires change. Nationally known as authority on first-class maintenance at low cost. Young, but with extensive experience. Married, thoroughly dependable and hard worker. Moderate salary. *Address: Ad 1802, % Golf-dom, Chicago.*

Professional—Age 40, married. 20 years' experience as pro and greenkeeper. Nine years with present club. Good instructor, A-1 credit, and best of references. Open for 1932. *Address: Ad 1801, % Golf-dom, Chicago.*

Greenkeeper wishes position with small club located in central states. Experienced in construction and upkeep. Attended short course at Penn State last winter. Age 23. Best of references. *Address: Ad 1803, % Golf-dom, Chicago.*

Professional-Greenkeeper-Manager open for position; 19 years' experience in teaching, club-making, greenkeeping, club management, golf course design and construction and landscaping of golf courses. Eight golf courses designed and constructed. Age 37, married, no children. Unquestionable ability, references and integrity. *Address: Ad 9999, % Golf-dom, Chicago.*

Greenkeeper—Reliable, wishes position, age 46, life experience, nationally known championship courses. Qualified to architect and handle construction problems. Thorough knowledge of shrubs and flowers. First class references. *Address: Ad 1804, % Golf-dom, Chicago.*

Wanted—Pro or assistant pro who has the ability to build up an unusually fine public fee course into a profit maker. Pro to share in the profits. *Address: Ad 1805, % Golf-dom, Chicago.*

Professional Desires to Make a Change—Am 33 years old, have been connected with golf since 1914, serving in all capacities from caddy to professional-manager with clubs of large membership in Middle and Southwest districts. Have successfully handled shop and club operation as well as course maintenance. Have the faculty of getting results through inspiration rather than driving. Am a first-class instructor, with a pleasing personality and appearance, and make and keep friends. Am a total abstainer, a hard worker and a stickler for service to my membership; an A-1 credit rating. References from all former employers. *Address: Ad 1710, % Golf-dom, Chicago.*

Greenkeeper wanted for sandy course with fairway watering, in Middle West city. Give age, experience and salary expected. *Address: Ad 1809, % Golf-dom, Chicago.*

Professional—Desires to change to smaller town for 1932. Excellent references as to character and ability. Member P. G. A.; age 30, married. Past 4 years in Detroit district. Middle West preferred. *Address: Ad 1808, % Golf-dom, Chicago.*

Greenkeeper with 10 years' experience, 9 years at present course, desires position with good 18-hole course. Expert in upkeep and care of equipment. Understands fertilizer and all kinds of grass and their diseases and cures. Married, steady, sober and hard worker. Best of references. *Address: Ad 1806, % Golf-dom, Chicago.*

Mr. President or Chairman: Are you looking for a General Manager? One whose past years of experience in the successful operation of large city and country clubs has given him knowledge to put your club on a better financial basis, combined with business promotion and unexcelled food and service. *Address: Ad. 1807, % Golf-dom, Chicago.*

Manager with fine record at prominent, well known country club and successful hotel experience, desires change. Has held only four country club managerial jobs in long experience; each one has been an advance. House operation in each instance has made club locally famous. Metropolitan district location desired. *Address: Ad 1810, % Golf-dom, Chicago.*

Greenkeeper with 16 years' experience, past 9 years with nationally known championship course, wishes to locate in Middle West. Well qualified to handle any construction or maintenance problems, water systems, etc. Can furnish first-class references. *Address: Ad 1615, % Golf-dom, Chicago.*

Position Wanted—By experienced golf instructor to take complete charge club and course. Wife splendid caterer. Eight years with last club. No encumbrances; best references. *Address: Ad 1811, % Golf-dom, Chicago.*

Again We Welcome the Return of Our Pal, Santa Claus

GATHER around, boys and girls, while we all welcome Santa Claus, reports of whose demise seem to have been unfounded.

GOLFDOM'S gang knew that Santa Claus was alive, otherwise who would be sending us all those swell letters telling how our book helped golf clubs, their operating men and women, and the manufacturers? When, to our sorrow, we learned some of the Wall street mob had put Santa Claus on the spot, we were afraid that the slugs they banged into him would mean the end. But it hasn't proved so! And when folks in the golf publishing business in the winter still believe in Santa Claus, the country's spirit isn't sunk.

To all of you, whose generous teamwork and advertising dough has made it possible for us to have a good year and prospects of a better one, we send our best wishes for a merry Christmas and a great New Year. And to the fellows on the other golf papers, the same. We all never miss any meals and we have a lot of fun, so there must be a Santa Claus for the bunch of us.

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Joe — Jack — Carl — Albro — Dwight — Bill — Jim — Hal — Herb
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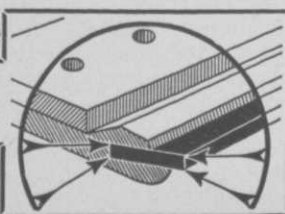
Greenkeeper—With over twenty years' continuous service at well known Chicago club, seeking position. Can furnish highest references. Will go anywhere. *Address: Ad 1707, % Golfdom, Chicago.*

Professional—20 years' experience as pro and superintendent of grounds; married, age 42. Unusual success as instructor. Seven years with one club, six years with another. Have 20 years' highest references. *Address: Ad 1702, % Golfdom, Chicago.*

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You whose children have food this Yuletide Give unto those who are starving

Scent of holly in the air . . . a gay tree brimming with holiday blessings . . . perfume from the kitchen where a generous Christmas dinner is being readied by you and yours . . . and a mother, her happy, healthy children in her arms, looking out upon the serene night, in which celestial candles gleam and glitter. Home . . . sanctuary . . . gifts . . . food . . . protection.

During good times or bad, the average American home manages to approach the Yuletide season with joyous anticipation. And the sympathetic urge to help those who are less fortunate, is, always, a national characteristic.

But today . . . the need for "having a heart" is more tragic, more urgent, more terrifyingly necessary, than ever in the world's history. American children and children of many nations, are STARVING. As the facts accumulate, this situation might well cause us to shudder with horror . . . "Starving Children" . . . not a pleasant thought!

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