

manufacturers are pushing forward the performance standards so swiftly that it would pay clubs to junk many pieces of substantial old equipment in favor of improved, speedier appliances. We have before us the operating figures of an establishment standardizing on one make of maintenance equipment. Although some of this equipment has been operated under severe conditions for seven years, the annual cost of repair parts for this constantly-used machinery is less than three per cent.

You might easily look at three per cent and be inclined to forget the tremendous labor economies that could be effected by junking equipment out-dated by manufacturer's later models. That extravagant mistake will be made by too many unless the budget for 1931 is figured beyond the end of the green-committee's and finance committee's noses.

This is the year of years for the thoughtfully operated golf club to bid farewell to the foolishness of straining at the gnat of purchases for maintenance and swallowing the mountain of cost for dispensable and unnoticeable trimmings.

Machine Cost Cutting Salvation of Budget

By "THE COLONEL"

FURTHER indication of response to the warning against blind blundering with the greens budget comes in the accompanying analysis of the conditions and the logical "out". The writer is one of the country's well known, practical authorities on course maintenance.

MAJOR R. AVERY JONES of Baltusrol contributes to a recent number of the Green Section *Bulletin* a very timely article on "*The Greenkeepers' Dwindling Budget.*" All will agree that it deals with a subject of growing importance to the golf clubs. Many of these, as we all know, are faced today with the problem of how to keep their expenses within the limits of their resources without detracting from the high standard of course maintenance members insist upon.

Major Jones remarks: "In these days, golf clubs are so numerous there is real competition and the one that falls behind in the standard of the golf course is apt to see a declining membership and declining income—a very serious situation for the club."

This situation resolves itself obviously into the question, how are these two apparently irreconcilable interests to be adjusted?

In reviewing this subject we are venturing to predict that the clubs will have to look for help in the direction of time-saving machinery. Perhaps many of them have not kept informed on the truly amazing advances that have been made more or less recently in this field, improvements which enable standard mowing machinery to attain a speed of operation never before thought possible.

It will be observed that nearly all manufacturers of mowers in this country are now exploiting new designs which are credited with the power to quicken greatly all major mowing operations. If saving time is also saving money, what would be more profitable than for our clubs to investigate these claims?

If it is true that the 40 to 60 minutes now consumed in cutting by hand an average putting green, has been reduced drastically, and the cutting time of the fairways at least two-thirds, does not this give the choice to a club with a "dwindling budget," of two ways out of its difficulty—either to dispense altogether with two-thirds of the men at present employed on these two operations, or better still, to transfer these men to other work upon the course, which has probably been heretofore somewhat neglected from motives of economy?

If the standard of upkeep can at least be maintained and all of this time thus saved in the several operations, what better way is there than this to settle this economic question?

Everybody of course has observed that the cutting operations, particularly of greens, are very expensive. But it has always been assumed that the fundamental importance of the work and its difficult character has forced upon the greenkeeper not only the employment of the best men but a full complement of them. Up to date, this has meant that about half of the entire maintenance force has been assigned to the mowing department. This suggested substitution of labor and time-saving machines will not only result in a reduced budget, but what is perhaps of equal advantage, a freer course for the players, since the operators can get off the greens and fairways much quicker than ever before. And all without in the least disturbing the critical labor situation.

How Four Leading Greenkeepers

JOHN MAC GREGOR*

Chicago Golf Club
Wheaton, Ill.

—carefully schedules in advance the work to be done and then sees that his men follow the schedule closely.

It is only fitting that some public acknowledgment be made of the remarkable work that your Second Vice President, John MacGregor, has done at Chicago Golf Club during the year just completed. His achievement is not only proof of his knowledge of grasses and ability to handle men, but is evidence of sound thinking and planning as evidenced by the unusual results obtained under the method of operation which for lack of a better term, we have called the MacGregor System of greenkeeping.

His system is adaptable to any club where the greenkeeper is willing to knuckle down and run his operations with the same degree of attention that a small manufacturer devotes to his plant.

The MacGregor system has had one year's trial. It has been a severe season—one of unusual expense. The system has demonstrated itself so well that there is no reason why, with the same application, it should not do equally well year after year. The club or greenkeeper not operating under this or a similar plan can not control cost with any degree of efficiency. It is inevitable that as knowledge of its operation grows, more and more progressive clubs will adopt it.

The continued bickering about greens appropriations is answered under this plan, because it cuts costs and maintains quality, and the one without the other means nothing. In discussing this matter, we will talk of the MacGregor system rather than the man. He originated it—he operated it—others will inevitably adopt it. The method was the result of long experience and an inventive mind. The

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*MacGregor method as described in address of I. R. Allen, green-chairman, Chicago G. C., at Midwest Greenkeepers' Assn. meeting.

A. E. ARNOLD

Masonic Country Club
Comstock Park, Mich.

—allots an equal portion of the grounds to each man and thus makes each man a complete greenkeeper.

I AM pleased to write what I can regarding our system of labor; how we operated at first, how we are doing now, and how it seems to work out for us.

First, I might say something of the kind of organization I am keeping greens for, the magnitude of our grounds and some of the conditions under which we are operating which, of course, would have some bearing on our system of labor management that might differ with the management of many other well-managed golf clubs.

We are a Masonic country club organization of approximately 1,500 members, operating on a nominal dues and fee-paying basis. The membership is interested largely in golf, although many are tennis players, some are bowling-on-the-green enthusiasts, and many are interested in all activities the Club is equipped to offer them. We maintain at present 27 holes of golf, occupying more than half of our 400-acre holdings, situated along the west slopes of Grand River Valley just north of the Grand Rapids city limits.

Our bowling green has six lanes. We have two professional clay tennis courts and two asphalt courts, a children's playground, about two miles of scenic driveways through our wooded areas. We have many other activities, such as indoor baseball, quoits, archery, all of which require maintenance labor of varied classes.

Our club has been organized about ten years, and during that time it has passed through the periods of construction, semi-construction and maintenance and on into the period of nearly all maintenance, at which time we have now about arrived.

Our golf grounds, both in its construction and its maintenance stages, has been our major problem; however, the many other things we have, have required their

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Organize Their Upkeep Routine

WALTER C. REED

Westwood Country Club

St. Louis, Mo.

—divides up his staff into crews with specific tasks for each, while a roving foreman supervises their activities.

WESTWOOD Country Club is located on a tract of 240 acres. We have 29 bent greens, 40 tees, 166 bunkers, a large nursery, a flower garden, 6 tennis courts, a swimming pool, a horse barn containing 40 horses, and a very large lawn around the clubhouse. There is also a Green Section experimental garden and various other appurtenances incident to golf course operations.

The best way to explain our labor management policy is to outline the greens staff during the height of the season. It is as follows:

- 6 men cut the greens, tees and approaches and also keep the greens weeded.
- 1 man with Toro "Park Special" mower cuts all grass around back of greens and tees and similar places hard to get at with fairway mowers.
- 2 tractor men cut all fairways and rough around fairways.
- 1 Fordson tractor man cuts all outside rough; sprays all greens and tees for brown-patch once a week, and also helps to topdress greens, fertilize greens, tees and fairways; and whatever is to be done in that line.
- 2 truck drivers do all hauling and cleaning up on golf course and haul manure from the horse barn. We have 40 head of horses and there is quite a lot of manure to haul. They also haul coal for the clubhouse (and at this time of the year we use 100 tons per month), ashes, rubbish and various other jobs.
- 2 scythe men cut the banks of our 166 bunkers, and also rake the sand in them.
- 1 man looks after cups and flags on the greens, also changes the tee markers, tee benches. In his spare time he rakes grass after the scythe man and also rakes footprints out of the sand in bunkers.

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CHESTER MENDENHALL

Wichita Country Club

Wichita, Kansas

—obtains cooperation of men by always explaining in detail the "whys" and "wherefores" of each job.

THE large per cent of golf course maintenance budget being spent for labor is becoming a nightmare to most greenkeepers. As soon as a greenkeeper begins modernizing his methods of work and keeps records of the time spent on each job during the day, he cannot help realizing how much lost labor motion is costing his club. And the greenkeeper is directly responsible for this lost motion.

If he sends a man to mow the greens at a time when the man is sure to interfere with the players' steady progress the greenkeeper is at fault, not the man doing the work. Similarly, if two or three men are allowed to work together when the greenkeeper is not around, there is sure to be time wasted in idle talk. Men who can talk and work at the same time are few and far between.

The greenkeeper who keeps books on the total hours of labor paid for will soon see that many important jobs are being slighted, and that many hours of work are being charged to other work of very little importance.

I think the first move in cutting down labor costs is adopting a good bookkeeping system, one that does not take too much of the greenkeeper's time and at the same time gives him a record of where the total hours of labor paid for are spent.

Then, have good equipment and keep it in good repair. See to it that each man understands the machine he is using and that he takes pride in taking good care of it.

No Relatives on Crew

In selecting your crew, always select men who are fairly intelligent, clean, neat appearing, and willing to learn; as a rule they can be taught to do most any work around a golf course. Generally it is bad policy to hire a man who is related either to you or to any man who is working for



Greens like this one, the eleventh at Wichita, explain why the club finds Mendenhall's work so satisfactory.

you; they will expect favors that another man would not. Never allow yourself to become indebted to any workman in any way.

After a man has been hired, his instruction period begins. Getting a man started off right is a very important part of the greenkeeper's duties. The first thing to be impressed on the new man is promptness; if you start work at 7:30 in the morning, impress on him the importance of being on hand at 7:15 and not at 7:35.

Then he should be instructed very carefully about the machine he is to use and about the work he is to do. The greenkeeper should be sure that he has made everything clear; let the man understand he is free to ask any questions about the work he may wish. I know greenkeepers who leave a man with the feeling that he is just there to work and that it is none of his business why he is told to do a thing a certain way. I always try to take time to explain to a man why it is necessary that a certain green should have a little extra care, or that certain other things have particular attention. I think it makes a man feel an interest in the work.

I use eight men on our course during the working season. My schedule is arranged so that each man has his regular work each day. I find it is comparatively easy to teach a man to do one or two jobs correctly in a short time, while it takes considerable time to teach a man to do all the work around a golf course. Then, one man may be able to do some particular job better than some other man. If a man falls down on one job he may be good at another.

I have one assistant who is kept on all year round. During the winter months the two of us overhaul and paint all the equipment, replacing all the worn parts. As a result we have very little shop work to do during the busy season. We also have a compost shed which holds 200 yds. of

compost. This we fill in early spring or during the winter if we have a favorable time.

During the working season my assistant runs the fairway mower and changes cups on the greens. We cut fairways twice a week and change the cups four



Chester Mendenhall.

times. He is also responsible for all mowers. He comes into the shop each evening in time to check over the mowers for the next day's work.

I use three men mowing greens; they finish by 11 o'clock in the morning, and after cleaning and putting away their mowers each man attends to little things on his own greens which need attention, such as filling ball marks, picking weeds, etc. In the afternoon, one man takes care of the sand traps while the other two mow bunkers, approaches to greens and such areas with power mowers. I also use three men, and any other men that can be

pulled from their regular work for a few hours, to topdress greens. We topdress our greens every three weeks during the playing season.

We have all bent grass greens which are mowed every day during the growing season. One man takes care of Bermuda grass tees; they are mowed four times a week. Clean towels are put out and tee markers moved every other day. All bad divots scars in the tee are filled at the time the markers are moved. This man also puts out ice every day for drinking water.

One man is required for watering greens and tees. Commencing about 7 o'clock in the evening he waters one side of the course one night and the other the next, thus a green is watered every other night, a tee twice a week. A few tees are watered each night along with greens. In this way one man is able to take care of all the green and tee watering.

One man is required for watering fairways; we don't have water enough to water fairways and greens at the same time, so we have to water our fairways in the daytime. During rainy weather the two men are used to cut weeds and do other odd jobs around the course.

As our course is built on prairie land we had to plant a quantity of shrubbery and trees. One man is required to care for this shrubbery and trees during the summer. We kept our labor costs down to about 65% of greenkeeping budget during the past year.

Managers' Convention in Pittsburgh, Feb. 24, 25

PRESSING problems of club management will be aired and discussed in detail late this month when the Club Managers' Association holds its fifth annual convention, February 24 and 25. Headquarters will be the William Penn Hotel, Pittsburgh.

Most of the scheduled meeting of the convention will be in the nature of round table sessions which are expected to increase the informality of the gatherings and permit an easier interchange of ideas. The convention hall at the William Penn will contain the latest exhibits of numerous concerns selling the club manager.

A theater party and supper-dance is planned for the 24th, and the annual banquet is scheduled for the evening of the 25th, with a luncheon and plant tour at the H. J. Heinz Co. the following noon.

"COME TO COLUMBUS" IS GREENKEEPERS' INVITATION

By FRED A. BURKHARDT,

Chairman Show Committee The National Association of Greenkeepers of America.

COLUMBUS is calling the greenkeepers to the fifth annual greenkeepers' convention and golf show.

Take heed and enrich yourself of the constructive educational program and also see the new golf maintenance equipment.

The game of golf has spread rapidly through this continent and has progressed in vast strides. So has advanced our golf show and convention to meet the demands of finer golf courses. We are having an exceptionally good educational program. Even if we had nothing else to offer, you, as a progressive greenkeeper, cannot afford to miss it.

On the speakers' program are men of national reputation in golf course turf and maintenance problems.

The show room will also be of interest to men who like to see the latest in machinery built to help you maintain your golf course. What better place could you go to compare the different manufacturers' equipment, than to one room containing it all, with fullest facilities for close inspection? Anyone thinking about buying new equipment or replacements should see the display before making a final decision on purchases.

The chairmen who are interested in turf work will find our educational program is very interesting and they also will have a chance to look over a golf show put on by greenkeepers for the benefit of anyone interested in turf maintenance.

Park and cemetery superintendents are always welcome because many of their problems are our problems and we would like to see everyone who is interested in turf take advantage of this show and program of ours.

The show is going to be larger and the educational program better than ever before. All we need to make them a real success is to have everyone interested in turf work in Columbus February 3 to 6, inclusive.

IN New York state last year, 16 public courses cost \$183,000 to operate and their income was \$304,000. That's the reason why municipal golf is growing.

EQUIPMENT barns, caddie shelters and parking spaces should be screened with trees and shrubbery. Emphasize the natural features of a golf course; conceal the accessories.

Pros Guard Market Against Avalanche of Junk Sticks

By HERB GRAFFIS

IF the pros live up to their opportunity 1931 will see them established stronger than ever before as the controlling element in golf merchandising.

Signs point to an onrushing flood of junk golf merchandise put out by makers who came into the field when the miniature golf craze was at its apex. These people did a rushing putter business—if you could call some of those clubs “putters”—and due to the established manufacturers' unwillingness to neglect interests of their steady customers, the newcomers didn't get a real taste of what competition can be in the golf business. Along toward the end of the capsule-course hysteria, the tyros in club manufacturing got a sniff of famine, but they didn't analyze the scent right. They believed that if they had a full line of golf clubs everything would be sweet, speedy and salubrious again.

In current issues of the sporting goods dealer papers you will find advertisements of some weird stuff to mark the first season of these newcomers with a full line. The acolytes figure there are between five and ten million golfers in the country and the picking is sure to be pretty; old-timers in the business know that GOLFDOM'S 1930 survey figures of a golfing market of approximately two million is right. Quite a gap in the figures!

It takes no seventh son of a gypsy seeress to forecast a headache of virulent character when these infant industrialists of golf come out of the daze and see red figures parked on the premises.

Even the kid pro having his first season at a nine-hole sand-green course at Palooka Siding, Okla., is bright enough business analyst to see that these newcomers will throw the stuff overboard at any price and, unless foresighted control methods are employed by the substantial factors in golf goods manufacture and production, there will be the saddest wreck of golf club prices the world has witnessed. The simple truth that most of these machetes that may be tossed onto the market at

distress prices will be jokes as clubs won't mean much to the bumper crop of suckers who buy from the stores. The store buyers will get the clubs cheap and advertise them in a big way as leaders, using the whole procedure to beat down the prices of the established manufacturers.

Wince at Storm Signals

The smart manufacturers of background in the golf business know this. Note Clarence Rickey, vice president of one of the older firms, quoting in *Sporting Goods Dealer*, one of that field's buyers:

“* * * * with every one starting in [*manufacturing cheap golf goods*], there soon will cease to be any meaning to price or brands, and yet he [*the sporting goods dealer*] needed the profit on his golf department. This same type of business [*cut-price*] takes his mark-up off so many items in his store which are now being offset by his profitable golf business, that if he loses golf profits too he may as well close the doors.”

Rickey earlier in his article told what happened to the golf bag business generally when the store buyers worked on the manufacturers so the competition developed into a murderous price warfare. It's taken many of the bag makers a long time to see how much better off they'd have been if they had made the pro shops their major outlets. Today they would be making a nice profit and probably selling more bags by having a margin of profit that would permit educating the pro in bag market development.

The warning is obvious. The good manufacturer's salvation is in the pros' merchandising betterment. The pro doesn't care how much the manufacturer makes, so long as the pro is given the right sort of a deal on competitive prices with other outlets, some protection against savage bargain sales, and can sell his shop merchandise at a price the players can afford to pay for good merchandise. You don't hear of the pros going wild on cutting prices so the manufacturer eventually suf-