

# Fall Is Year's Best Time to Fertilize Fairways

By O. J. NOER

Service Bureau, Sewerage Comm., Milwaukee

**T**OTAL COST OF seed, fertilizer or other purchased material is not a matter of great moment on greens, for their entire area seldom exceeds  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  acres. But on fairways these items involve considerable expenditures, for an average 18-hole course contains from 45 to 60 acres of fairway turf. Hence it behooves those charged with the responsibility of fairway improvement and maintenance to weight every possibility before embarking upon a definite treatment program.

In recent years it has been customary to depend upon lead arsenate for the control of earthworms. On greens, at five pounds per 1,000 square feet, the entire cost for this chemical ranges from \$75 to \$150 per application, but to arsenate all fairways at the same rate necessitates the expenditure of \$1,500, or more, for the chemical alone.

Several years ago fairways at an eastern club were sufficiently infested with worm casts to arouse officials. The orthodox lead arsenate treatment was prescribed, and no other procedure questioned until a controversy arose as to the most suitable carrier for its application. Careful inspection of the fairways disclosed these interesting facts, which completely changed the treatment program. Soil moisture condition and reasonably low organic matter content indicated a normal earthworm population, so the necessity of expending \$30 to \$40 per acre for arsenate was questioned. The suspicion became conviction when close inspection of the fairways disclosed limited areas of dense turf completely devoid of worm casts. For some years fairways had received no fertilizer. Attempts at turf improvement were confined to annual reseeding, with Kentucky bluegrass the principal component of the seed mixture. In spite of regular reseeding, Kentucky bluegrass was practically non-existent, for the turf consisted of a thin open stand of fescue, interspersed with numerous patches of bent. Obviously the soil was too acid, and possibly too low

in available phosphorus, to permit successful growth of bluegrass.

## Fairway Feeding Licks Worms

These facts were confirmed by chemical tests. Officials realized lead arsenate would control the earthworms, but they also recognized the need for a program of turf improvement. After considering all factors, it was decided to defer arsenate treatment in favor of a fertilizer program. It seemed logical to expect this procedure to remove player objection to worm casts, for fertilization alone should produce uniformly dense turf, the equal of the existing dense patches found in favored locations. Consequently, all fairways were tested for acidity and available phosphorus. Lime was applied to the strongly acid fairways at one ton per acre. This was followed by the moderate use of phosphate. Nitrogen was also applied at fairly heavy initial rates, and during the succeeding several years fertilization was confined to the use of nitrogenous fertilizers. This program produced turf of sufficient density to subjugate earthworms so casts ceased to become troublesome, and the club was saved the huge expense of arsenate treatment.

This example is not cited as a wholesale condemnation of lead arsenate treatment. Fertilization alone is usually effective on soils of normal moisture and organic matter content, but on dark-colored organic soils excessive earthworm population may necessitate their control with arsenate before proceeding with any attempts at turf improvement by fertilization.

In another instance a mid-western club suffered severe fairway turf injury following several successive years of unprecedented drought. The original course included only nine holes, but an additional nine was added during the affluent days of the boom. Curiously enough, injury was confined to the new nine. Officials were correct in their decision to re-seed the affected fairways. The seedsman consulted recommended the conventional Kentucky

bluegrass, red-top mixture without attempting to determine why turf loss was confined to the newer fairways. Investigation disclosed these facts. No essential major soil difference existed on the course, but turf on the old fairways was almost wholly fescue, whereas bluegrass was the only species on fairways of the new nine. These differences must have been due to differences in the original seed mixtures used. Phosphoric acid and nitrogen were applied before seeding, and the reseeded mixture was modified to include fescue. As a result, turf on the new nine is now the equal of that on the original fairways.

### Fertilize if You Water

Deficiencies in rainfall during recent seasons is responsible for widespread interest in fairway irrigation. This is most noticeable in Metropolitan districts, and as a result, the use of water has increased enormously in these districts during the past three years. Most playing members, and many club officials, express the conviction that an adequate water system is the sole solution of the vexing fairway problem. They see the turf turn brown and wither for want of moisture, and to prove their contention cite the immediate startling response obtained from the use of water on limited trial areas. To maintain green fairway turf throughout the entire playing season, irrigation must supplement even normal rainfall, but to avoid objectionable clover and troublesome weeds, fertilization must supplement irrigation. This truth has been amply demonstrated to the sorrow of many clubs, and is one reason underlying prejudice against fairway irrigation on the part of some. Unless a club is prepared to inaugurate a regular fertilization program, it is folly to install costly and elaborate irrigation systems.

Selection of a suitable source of nitrogen narrows down to a choice between the water soluble inorganic materials and the true organics. Among the organics there are a number of materials from which to choose, but cottonseed meal, activated sludge, dried poultry manure and castor pomace are the principal organics used. In the North, cottonseed meal is usually too high priced, and castor pomace, unless properly refined, may contain an irritating poison which is annoying to the workmen. In one instance workmen were incapacitated for several weeks due to the ill-effects produced by this irritant. At one time bone meal was the favored fairway fertilizer. It is high in phosphoric

acid, but low in nitrogen, and too expensive to deserve serious consideration as a source of nitrogen. In other words, it is primarily a source of phosphoric acid.

Where inorganic fertilizers are preferred, choice simmers down to sulphate of ammonia and one of the ammonium phosphates. On soils needing nitrogen only, sulphate of ammonia is the logical choice, but where phosphoric acid is needed in addition to soluble nitrogen, both can be supplied in a single material by selecting one of the ammonium phosphates.

Organic and inorganic sources of nitrogen both have their staunch advocates. The chief advantages claimed for organics are their tendency to release available nitrogen gradually over longer periods, and thus provide a more uniform and continuous rate of growth, together with the added fact that burning injury is less likely when heavy rates are applied. The champions of inorganics, such as sulphate of ammonia and ammonium phosphate, cite the startling immediate improvement in color and rapid rate of growth. They stress the marked decrease in clover and weeds effected by their continued use. But during dry seasons it has been observed that the turf fertilized continuously with sulphate usually suffers severest injury from drought. This observation has been confirmed by English investigators also. It is likely that the ill effects produced by sulphate can be overcome by the moderate use of lime. Rather than accept either extreme viewpoint, it would seem more sensible to recognize and take advantage of the virtues of both classes of nitrogen materials.

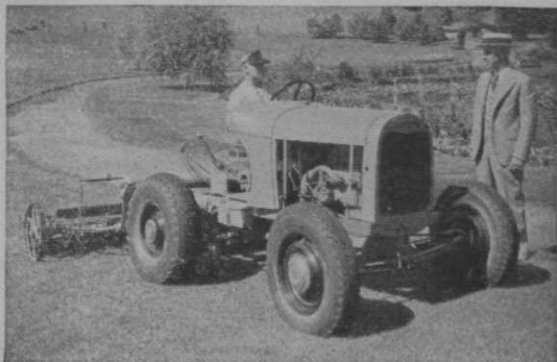
For fall use organics are increasing in favor, for loss of nitrogen during the winter is less likely. Then, too, generous rates can be applied in September with less danger of burning grass. The use of some sulphate of ammonia or ammonium phosphate with the organic is often advantageous, to stimulate quicker initial growth.

### Nitrogen Controls Clover

The consistent use of nitrogen underlies clover control on fairways, but success depends upon rates which are sufficient to check its spread, and promote growth of the desired grass. Suppression of many weeds likewise depends primarily upon nitrogen feeding. This is especially true of dandelion, provided the infestation is not excessive, for they can be largely eliminated by a proper feeding program. Nitrogen feeding is ineffective on heavily

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infested areas, because grasses have been crowded out by the broadleaved dandelions. In such cases, iron sulphate treatment to eradicate the offensive dandelion, followed by reseeding is the proper procedure.

In those districts where crab grass is a dangerous fairway pest the safe and wise procedure may be to apply most of the needed nitrogen in the fall, so major effects will disappear before crab grass starts growth during the following mid-summer.

In the feeding program on established fairways, phosphoric acid is secondary to nitrogen in importance. There are soils in need of this element, and when benefits are obtained they usually show in the greater ability of the turf to withstand mid-summer heat. Since phosphates tend to encourage clover, it would seem best to select rates which barely satisfy the turf's need for phosphoric acid. A determination of the soil supply of available phosphorus serves as an excellent guide in judging need for this element. Rate of application depends upon amount of available soil phosphorus, kind of grass, and type of soil. Obviously need for phosphate is greatest on soils containing only small amounts of available phosphorus, Kentucky bluegrass needs more phosphorus than fescue or bent, and heavier rates are warranted on silt and clay soils than on sands and sandy loams containing the same quantity of available phosphorus.

In order to obtain deeper penetration of soluble phosphates before fixation occurs, reasonably generous initial applications seem best, and since there is no danger of serious loss from leaching, two to four years can intervene between succeeding applications. During this period fairway fertilization becomes a simple matter of nitrogen feeding.

With the possible exception of sands, mucks and peats, potash is almost never a limiting factor on fairways. Where needed, it is probably best to follow the procedure recommended for phosphate, namely make applications every two to four years.

Many soils are too acid to permit successful development of bluegrass, and some may be too acid for best growth of fescue and bent. The safest procedure is to test the effect of lime by trial applications, but if time does not permit, need for lime can be judged by testing the soil for acidity. In order not to unduly encourage clover, minimum amounts of lime should

be used. The basis for establishing rate of application should be degree of soil acidity, kind of grass, and type of soil. For fescue and bent, liming should be confined to soils of marked acidity, but with bluegrass the use of lime is warranted even on moderately acid soils. Less lime is needed on sandy soils than on heavy soils of the same degree of acidity. It should not be necessary to repeat applications oftener than every two to four years.

### Outline of Fairway Program

Briefly, a fairway fertilizer program should be built around the following major factors:

To judge need for lime and phosphate, samples of the representative soil types should be collected for determination of acidity, and available phosphorus.

Where tests indicate need for either of these materials, excesses should be avoided so as not to encourage clover and weeds. Disappointing results are almost sure to follow the continuous use of lime, or fertilizers of high phosphoric acid and low nitrogen content.

On extremely acid soil lime and phosphate are both needed. Apply the lime first and if possible permit several months to elapse before using phosphate. This procedure minimizes the danger of the phosphate being converted into difficultly soluble compounds.

Annual applications of lime and phosphate are seldom needed. Intervals of two to four years can intervene between succeeding applications.

Potash is seldom a critical and limiting plant food element on fairway turf, but its use on sands, peats, and mucks may be necessary.

Nitrogen is the key to successful fairway management. On thin turf generous initial applications are needed to encourage existing turf to spread, and to discourage clover and weeds. Unlike lime, phosphate, and potash, nitrogen fertilizers should be used each year, and once turf of desired density is obtained, rates can be reduced to a minimum which will barely maintain the turf.

Those who prefer to use a complete mixed fertilizer should select one which is high in nitrogen, with moderate phosphoric acid and low potash content. If part of the nitrogen is derived from organic sources, it is obvious that longer lasting results will be obtained.

## PICKED UP IN THE ROUGH

By HERB GRAFFIS

**JIM NORRIS** and Wert Headley, both 8 handicap men, played one hole each on eighteen of the Pacific Coast's golf courses one day recently, with Norris shooting 87 to the Headley 89. Par for the holes was 73.

J. A. (Pat) Patterson, secretary of the Southern California PGA, selected the courses which stretched from Culver City on the south to Pebble Beach on the north. The players motored between the courses and played the 18 holes in less than 16 hours.

It was a publicity stunt for the Gilmore Oil Co. The idea is one that can be used in other communities and is good for considerable public interests.

\* \* \*

**BIGGEST ENTRY** ever competing in the Women's Western Junior championship was that of the current year's event which ran at the Park Ridge CC (Chicago district) July 9-12. Shirley Ann Johnson of Sunset Ridge CC won the imposing trophy presented for the Junior title by L. B. Iccly, president of Wilson-Western.

The Johnson kid began golf under the tutelage of Al Bluhm who has several girl stars to his credit. To show you what this sort of development does for a pro, Bluhm who now is instructing at a driving range, gets enough income from women's lessons to make his income for the year very satisfactory. This bears out what we have been hammering—that some of these kid stars performing in a way to reflect their instruction are the most profitable advertising any pro can get these days.

Forty-six nice little girls whacked it out for this title.

\* \* \*

**JIM WILSON**, president of the Illinois PGA, on whose course the event was played, made this statement at the conclusion of the championship:

"The Junior championship will open the eyes of any professional and I say to the fellows in the Chicago district, don't miss it next year and boost its entry and gallery attendance.

"The way those little girls hit the ball is the greatest demonstration of the value of pro instruction that it is possible to present. Every one of them is a youngster

who has taken lessons and listened and practiced. They not only play far better than the average adult player but they get more fun out of the game.

"This is one of the greatest championships of the year for the professionals, if the boys will just realize it. Those able and enthusiastic women of the Women's Western Golf association have just put a million dollars in the hands of the pros, if the fellows will appreciate it and show interest in collecting."

\* \* \*

**DON GARDNER**, pro at Flossmoor, whose protege, a fine little lass named Livengood, lost out to the Johnson youngster, 2 and 1, in the finals, suffered more than his child wonder did when her shots broke wrong. The Livengood kid is a good trooper. All the kids took the bum breaks and defeats without crying or alibiing. They will get over that—too bad. Eddie Williams', pro at River Forest, had his daughter in the championship. She played well, but was nosed out.

\* \* \*

**THESE YOUNGSTERS** played surprisingly good golf. I've never seen such a convincing illustration of how much good it does to take golf lessons as those kids put on. For thrills, some fine golf, and unique interest, the Junior tournament was one of the greatest GOLFDOM's guy has covered.

I urge the fellows not to miss this event next year. It will send them away talking to themselves and more delighted with their work than anything else they can imagine.

Incidentally Jim Wilson said that in more than 25 years of association with golf tournaments, he'd never seen a better run tournament than the Women's Western Junior.

\* \* \*

**OLD ELMER BIGGS**, our rural correspondent from the Peoria (Ill.) CC, sends in a story from the Prairie Farmer on weather conditions. Farmer Biggs has 100 acres of nice golf course dependent on the weather and a barn full of clubs and balls he wants to plant in the happy hands of the members, so he is interested greatly in the weather.

This yarn starts out: "As usual, we're having unusual weather," and tells why you can't count on the weather. It tells why some popular weather proverbs have a sound basis. Among the weather proverbs the yarn mentions as being founded on science are:

"All signs fail in dry weather."

"In wet weather it can rain without half trying."

"Rainbow at night, sailor's delight; rainbow in the morning, sailors take warning."

"When the ditch and pond offend the nose; then look for rain and stormy blows."

"When a slack rope tightens, expect rain."

"When you hear a train whistle loud, look for rain."

\* \* \*

**MORE THAN** three times as many member and guest golfers have played Olympia Fields (Chicago district) this year than played at that club during the corresponding period of 1933.

Beverage net profit for June at Olympia Fields was in excess of \$3,000.

A press release of club news also mentions that Olympia Fields' membership prices have ranged from \$10 in 1915 when the club was started to \$1,210 in April, 1928. Present membership price is \$150.

\* \* \*

**HERE IS SOMETHING** that will interest managers, pros and greenkeepers—especially managers because they know how tough the employment situation has been in the hotel field:

A press bulletin of the Cornell university Department of Hotel Administration, dated July 16, reported: "One hundred per cent employment among all graduates was achieved by Cornell's hotel course last week when the last unattached graduate reported he had made a connection."

Write your own ticket of comment on the well-worn line, "Knowledge is power."

\* \* \*

**THE ITALIAN AMERICAN** Golf Association of Ohio ran its first invitation pro-amateur tournament at Manakiki the middle of July with 43 teams competing. Harry Rees, pro at Dover Bay and his amateur, George Enos, Jr., won first place in the \$300 tourney. The dough was split 80 per cent in cash for the pros and 20 per cent in trophies for the amateurs.

Next year the Association hopes to have \$1,000 as the prize money for its affair,

according to A. S. Trivison, secretary of the organization and the guiding spirit of the tournament. Carmen Bill is president of the Italian-American golfing group.

\* \* \*

**PROBABLY** after the orgy of gate-crashing at Merion during the National Open, the USGA and clubs holding tournaments will ask for a code having as its main provision the payment of a gallery fee.

It is estimated that about 1,500 admissions were unpaid. Of this number more than 500 were passes issued to PGA members and around 300 to the press. The PGA members with paid-up 1934 cards who got around for the last day found the supply of PGA oakleys exhausted by the early-comers who had used 1933 cards. This probably will result in a new ruling for future USGA tournaments limiting complimentary admissions to holders of current year paid-up PGA cards.

We'd say about 200 of the press tickets were for working press, with the other 100 riding wild.

The complimentary admission problem is one that possibly won't be solved as long as humans are human. If the association or club handling the tournament is tough on the deadheads then the officials are labeled as the vilest of mercenary rascals and if they are liberal they are suckers.

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**THE MANAGER** of a prominent mid-western country club resigned his job a few weeks ago. Yes, the guy resigned.

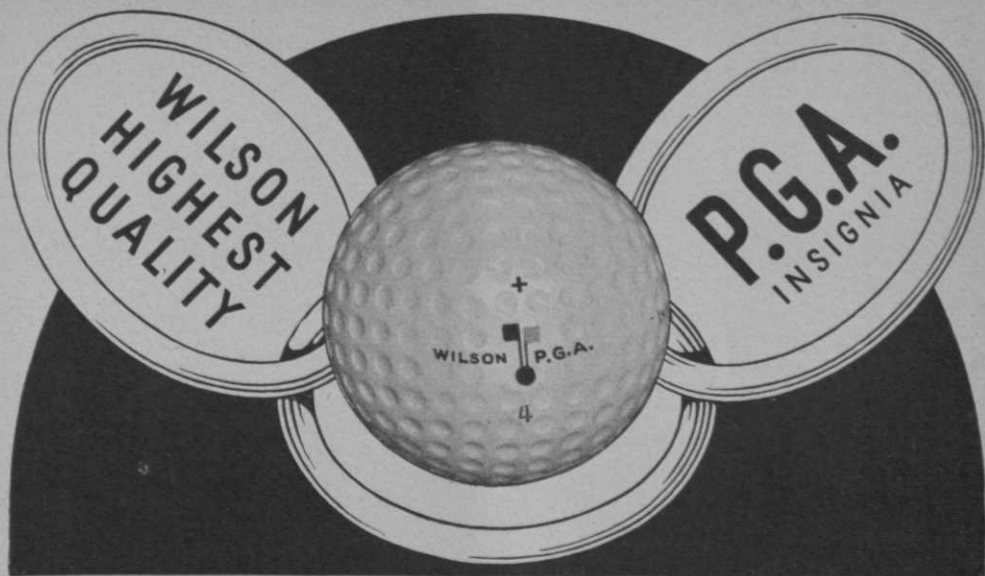
Why did he throw over a good job in mid-season?

Well, here's his story, which is not the first of its kind on record:

"When I went in there the club had a colored head-waiter who had been there 10 years. He thought he was Mr. Club. I couldn't get him to seat members. He would point out their tables and let them seat themselves.

"What a whipping he was giving the food cost percentage! The beating he was giving it came from practice. His relatives were on the pay-roll in droves as waiters. They took time off for sickness frequently without being docked. When I came in there I started docking them when they didn't work. We suddenly had an epidemic of good health among the waiters.

"But, when I tangled with the bull waiter of the herd, trying to get him to give the club a break, some of the officials



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must have had the idea that when I was hired, I was not hired to manage the club for the members but for the waiters. It's hard enough to build up a fine reputation as a club manager, so rather than trust it to the slippery hands of a waiter, I signed off."

\* \* \*

**A**N INTERESTING detail of golf's revival is the amount of business done by the first-class driving ranges that survived the depression.

Practice establishments that never were much more than pastures with the grass cut are about out of the running, but the places with good tees, distance markers, lighting, reasonably good playing equipment and instructors are doing fine business.

Practice courses have adopted a smart idea from some resort course score-cards. The distance markers are from 10 to 15 yards shy of the actual distance and the customers thrill at the yardage they get. The location of the markers also helps to make up for the lack of distance in the practice balls.

Bob Macdonald turned down three private club offers at the start of this season to lease the Riverview Park practice range close-in on the north side of Chicago. Demand for his instruction is such that he could teach 24 hours a day, seven days a week, if he so desired. This season at the Riverview place will put Bob among the big-money pros of the country if the current pace continues.

\* \* \*

**T**OM GALVIN'S completion of 20 years' service at Rhode Island CC, was the subject of quite a story in the *Providence Journal*.

It looks like the deserved publicity given Tom and John Shanahan, and last year to Charley Erickson of Minikahda, is going to bring the greenkeepers out into the sunlight and air and keep their important position in golf from being attacked by fungus growth of public indifference.

We will hand the greenkeepers an idea that will get publicity for a lot of them. The hunch is simply this: get in touch with newspaper managing editors and offer to furnish material for articles on proper upkeep of lawns. Many of the papers will be glad to have a staff man come out and write the dope after talks with the greenkeepers. Many of the readers are tremendously interested in getting lawns like putting greens so a greenkeeper who would

like to see his own club given publicity because of the practices in maintenances and their result, and get some publicity himself, can work on his hunch.

\* \* \*

**B**OB HARLOW, interviewed by Arthur Sampson of the Boston (Mass.) *Herald*, said after the Massachusetts Open, several of the Bay State players would stand a good chance of ranking among the nation's stars if they had the benefit of winter tournament circuit experience.

Among the fellows in that field picked by the PGA tournament bureau manager as potential luminaries were Roy Bronsdon, Charley McAndrew, Bob Crowley, Jack Curley and Dave Hackney.

Harlow is making a lot of the ambitious younger pros itchy to get the training that will be provided by the next winter circuit.

\* \* \*

**S**OME OF THE wise boys in pro golf already are laying plans for continuing the golf season in full swing until the weather is too cold for action. They are talking things over with heads of their men's and women's golf committees and getting schedules of events set to run late into October.

It used to be that the golf season was considered to be at end after the Labor Day tournaments had been concluded. Now the players are realizing that the autumn has the finest golfing days of the year.

This summer's heat has been so intense that many who have had no liking for the blazing sun will be really getting into the most active play of the season during the early part of the fall.

#### NEW ENGLAND PGA TO HAVE \$2,500 MEDAL TOURNEY

The New England PGA sponsors a \$2,500 medal play tournament to be run off at Metacomet GC, East Providence, R. I., Sept. 17-19. President Lewis Meyers of the New England PGA and Bob Harlow, tournament bureau manager for the national association are working out details of the 72-hole event.

It will be open to members of the PGA and to amateurs belonging to clubs affiliated with the USGA.

**R**EDTOP RAPIDLY establishes itself from seed. In view of this it is frequently utilized in mixtures to provide a quick cover and to shelter the finer and more persistent, but slower developing species of grass included in the mixture.



# AN OPEN LETTER TO THE *Professionals* OF AMERICA

● As you undoubtedly have heard, I have relinquished all claims to my amateur standing and have made a business connection with the Wilson-Western Sporting Goods Co.

Of course, the first question I am most generally asked is—WHY? I realize that there are so few women golfers who are not classified as amateurs that one who turns professional is apt to be considered an oddity.

A woman professional. Doesn't it sound strange? A thousand wonders and doubts cannot help but creep into the minds of many professionals throughout the country when they first hear of it.

Golf is greatly indebted to the men who have been raised in the professional ranks, those who have fought for its development. I know they have done a great deal for me and they have all been my most helpful friends; so much so that I want at the very outset of my new career to have a clear understanding in the mind of every professional in the country as to just what I intend to do and what my platform for activity is to be.

My entire activity as a professional will be to assist the prominent manufacturer with whom I am connected to develop a fine line of golf equipment for women. Being a woman and having played considerable golf, I feel I have some first hand information on the subject that should be of value. I shall endeavor in every feasible way, to assist in the sale of that merchandise after it is built. I hope to be of genuine assistance to all professionals in the country.

This will constitute my entire professional activities. I have no intention nor desire to take up any other of the professional functions. I have definitely decided that the function of teaching belongs to the men and I will not enter into it.

I hope you will be actively interested in the new line of Helen Hicks Form Matched Clubs and that I may be of real assistance in developing new avenues of sales for you.

Cordially,

*Helen L. Hicks*

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Hickey gets an even bigger kick out of his group golf lessons than do his pupils. Here he is working with one class of a dozen of his hopefuls.

# Hickey Enthuses Over Golf Growth at Agua Caliente

By BILL HICKEY

Pro., Agua Caliente G. C., Baja, Calif., Mexico

**DID YOU EVER** see a dream walking?

Well—I did. And right now that dream is starting to come true. It is a dream of a great community golf center down here in Tijuana, Agua Caliente to be exact, in which the entire population of Baja California, Mexico, is interested in the good old game so dear to us all.

This may seem like a pipe dream, but it is a reality to me and to those of us who are interested in seeing Mexico become a golf-loving nation. But let me start at the beginning instead of jumping right into the middle of what I have to tell you.

Several years ago Agua Caliente, realizing the importance of golf, employed William P. Bell to construct a thoroughly championship golf course in the rolling foothills five miles below the American border, in Old Mexico, twenty miles from San Diego. The ground was magnificent terrain for golf course architecture and Bell did himself proud. He built a course which is tremendously popular with the every day golfer and a course which can quickly be made a searching test of championship play. The greens are cocoos bent, the fairways are good old California

bermuda grass, the traps are large, self draining, and beautifully target the greens. The greens themselves are so constructed as to place a high premium on the perfectly placed tee shot. The long drive which is off line finds the holes closed while the well placed drive opens the greens up beautifully. It is just the kind of course to appeal to the finest play.

So much for the golf course.

The next thing Caliente wanted to do was to show the world that it had a fine golf course and so it was that the \$25,000 Open Tournament was evolved. You will recall that Gene Sarazen traveled across the country to win the first of these great competitive events. Times made it necessary to cut the size of the purse a bit, but the fine character of the tournament has been maintained. It is a championship event in every sense of the word and this year Wiffy Cox played record breaking golf to lead the finest field ever to tee off in this tournament.

Now—the galleries that follow play in this Agua Caliente Open run from 1,500 to 5,000 persons each day. Many came from Los Angeles and many from San Diego—