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It is our belief—based on broad contacts — that there is a very definite need for a "Turf Problem" service, sponsored by an organization such as the Turf Service Bureau of the Milwaukee Sewerage Commission.

Last year this organization published two series of articles under captions "The A.B.C. of Turf Culture" and "Case Histories". The A.B.C. dealt with the fundamentals of turf management; the Case Histories illustrated their application to specific problems. These articles were com-

plied by O. J. Noer, Chief of the Turf Service Bureau. Because of their favorable reception, both series have been reprinted and bound into a compact volume for free distribution; obtainable for the asking.

As a further development of this constructive service, we invite greenkeepers and club officials to submit questions relating to their specific problems. Some of these will be answered each month in this magazine. All inquiries will be answered by mail — with unbiased recommendations by Mr. Noer — thus giving you the full benefit of his broad experience in this specialized field. The facilities of the Bureau's soil laboratory are available as needed.

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# Golfdom

The Business Journal of Golf

JANUARY, 1938

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No. 1

## OVER HERE, OVER THERE

By JOHN MONTEITH, Jr.

WHEN anyone interested in golf or golf courses returns from a visit to Great Britain he is expected to give at least a locker-room dissertation on turf on British courses as compared with American courses. To conform with this old American custom the following discussion is presented, based on a visit to Great Britain during summer 1937 in connection with the Fourth International Grassland Congress.

ANY comparison of British and American golf courses is almost certain to bring out the striking difference in cost of golf in the two countries. This contrast is particularly striking when one considers the Scottish courses. There one may belong to 6 or 8 first-class clubs at no greater cost than membership in one first-class American club. The number of playing members at many British clubs is likely to give one the impression of more crowded conditions than actually is the case, due to the low fees which serve to encourage membership in several courses.

The question of why British golf is so much less expensive than American golf leads one to consider the principal costs of course and club maintenance. In Great Britain the big majority of golf is played at golf clubs rather than at country clubs. There the golf course comes first not only in theory but in practice. Therefore the cost of golf in Great Britain is likely to be in reality the cost of golf rather than the cost of enjoying the privilege of an elaborate clubhouse. Also, British turf can be maintained at a much lower cost than is necessary to keep turf in good condition in America.

Countless arguments have developed in locker-rooms and in executive board meet-

ings over suggestions or demands of club members that efforts be made to duplicate certain British turf conditions in this country. In most of such arguments the participants know very little about grasses and less about maintenance methods. The important factor of weather, on which they have information, they invariably ignore.

Before attempting to compare turf and maintenance methods in the two countries the differences in climatic conditions and their affect on vegetation should be fully recognized. Golfers acquainted with manufacturing processes too often incline to the opinion that by using the same materials turf can be duplicated anywhere the same as identical goods may be manufactured anywhere by using the same base goods and similar production methods. Unfortunately, their arguments sound quite logical and convincing.

They overlook, however, that climatic conditions are not so all-important in manufacturing operations as in the production



Building up the bank of a trap with layers of sod is common in England, but rare in this country.

of any plant product such as turf. This little oversight has cost American golf clubs hundreds of thousands of dollars in a futile effort to duplicate certain types of turf that are found commonly in Great Britain. What is even more unfortunate is the fact that some golf club officials have as yet not learned the lessons that certain fundamental laws of Nature can not be set aside at any price.

To illustrate the importance of prevailing climatic differences as they affect plant growth in Great Britain and the United States let us take just two examples, corn and tomatoes.

When the early settlers came here they found the Indians cultivating corn, which is now raised almost anywhere from Mexico to Canada. The tomato likewise will produce good crops in all our States but in Great Britain it will grow and produce green fruit but will not ripen without greenhouse protection. Agronomists and horticulturists in Great Britain have tried without success for many generations to produce crops of these two most important plants. It is not surprising that a good many of our golfing enthusiasts ignore climatic differences and try to duplicate British turf conditions over here simply by the process of planting seed used on British courses and giving turf the same care that is used successfully in the British Isles.

#### **Weather More Even**

Weather conditions in Great Britain are nowhere near as variable as they are in the United States. Extremes of heat and cold that we have in most parts of the United States are not experienced over there. The extremes from torrential rains to prolonged droughts do not occur there.

Excessive evaporation, which is so injurious to grass, is not experienced in Great Britain to a degree comparable to that experienced in many parts of this country for long periods. Other important differences in climatic conditions might be cited.

The British Isles have long been famous for their natural covering of grass. In our country, wherever the rainfall is equal to that in Great Britain, when farmland is abandoned and allowed to turn back to Nature it soon becomes covered with a growth of brush and trees. In Great Britain on the other hand similar land would soon be covered by grasses or low-growing plants like bracken, gorse and heather. When these other plants are kept cut down grasses soon dominate in the ground cover.

#### **Little Evidence of Man's Handiwork**

We have heard much of the famous turf of Great Britain. When one looks at this turf critically and compares it with turf in this country he is likely to be reminded of comment made by a visitor after looking over and admiring the campus of one of our famous universities located in a beautiful situation but where the architectural development had certainly left much to be desired. This visitor summarized his impressions thus: "Nowhere in the country has God done so much and man so little to accomplish effective results." In critically comparing American golf course turf with British turf it is quite apparent that there God has done much, man little. This statement is not made in any way to belittle the ability or accomplishments of British greenkeepers. They have simply had Nature on their side instead of against them and their progress has no doubt been hampered by the natural public attitude that the problem of raising grass is simply that "You plant it then roll it and mow it and roll it and mow it for a hundred years and there it is."

Turf maintenance methods in the two countries are naturally somewhat modified by the differences in temperament of the club members. This difference is perhaps best illustrated by a conversation with a club secretary who kindly showed us around his interesting and well-kept course. Observing some badly scarred turf in a prominent place, we inquired as to the procedure that would be followed to repair the damage. He explained that nothing special would be done about it



Typical rough natural terrain of a British seaside course. The grasses are all native.

for under ordinary care it would soon recover and one would then not be able to recognize it had ever been injured.

We registered our astonishment and immediately began questioning to try to determine the ordinary care that would accomplish such remarkably rapid recovery. The secretary obviously had no secrets to retain and obligingly answered fully all our questions. Not satisfied that we had a reasonable explanation, we tried to figure out some more questions. Then it occurred to us that he had not defined his meaning of "soon," so we asked him how long he meant. He explained, "It will be back in good condition in, I should say, about two years."

Anyone acquainted with our American speed (which the Britishers designate by different and after all perhaps more appropriate terms) as applied by certain of our golf club officials might readily name several greenkeepers who would have lost their jobs if they had been unable to restore such turf within **two months**.

#### **No Answer to This Question**

In any discussion of turf in the two countries the question most likely to be asked is, "In which country do you find the better turf?" The answer to that question is essentially the same as to the question, "Which is the better fruit—the American pear or the oriental pear?" The Orientals relish the pear to which they are accustomed and have no use for our pear. Likewise although oriental pear trees will produce large crops of attractive looking fruit in this country there is no Amer-

ican market for this fruit since the flavor is distasteful according to our standards.

Although the British and American standards of turf represent no such wide difference as the above mentioned case of pears it nevertheless is true that golfers in the two countries have developed different demands for turf. This is perhaps particularly true in the case of putting greens. The rather universal American use of the "air route" to the pin calls for a putting green that will hold a pitched shot far better than is required or even desired for the run-up approach shot that is used much more frequently in Great Britain. The turf on the average American putting green is better for pitched shots than is British turf, and the reverse is the case for the run-up shot.

#### **Weeds Tolerated**

American golfers apparently will tolerate far fewer weeds in turf than will the British golfer. This is no doubt due to the fact that the weeds which are common in both countries for some reason in this country tend to develop into distinct mats and therefore are more objectionable here than in Great Britain. Likewise one might make several comparisons which would lead to the same conclusion that British turf is better for their conditions and American turf is better for our own conditions.

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*Dr. Monteith will continue his comparison of British and American turf in the February issue.*

# REID TO HEAD USGA

**A**RCHIBALD M. REID of St. Andrews club, Hastings-on-Hudson, N. Y., becomes president of the United States Golf association when the organization holds its annual meeting early in January. Also in the '38 USGA administration are R. Arthur Wood, re-named as vice-president; Harold Pierce, present treasurer, who will be the other vice-president; Frank Hardt, re-elected secretary, and Jess W. Sweetser, who will become treasurer. Charles W. Littlefield will become the association's counsel, Morton G. Bogue, present holder of that office, retiring.

On the executive committee for 1938 are: George W. Blossom, Jr., Onwentsia Club, Lake Forest, Ill.; Morton G. Bogue, National Golf Links of America, Southampton, N. Y.; Edward L. Cheyney, The Country Club, Cleveland, Ohio; Paul P. Farrens, Alderwood Country Club, Portland, Ore.; Perry E. Hall, Gulph Mills Golf Club, Bridgeport, Pa.; Frank M. Hardt, Merion Cricket Club, Haverford, Pa.; W. F. Nicholson, Denver Country Club, Denver, Colo.; Harold W. Pierce, The Country Club, Brookline, Mass.; Charles V. Rainwater, Atlanta Athletic Club, Atlanta, Ga.; A. M. Reid, St. Andrews Golf Club, Hastings-on-Hudson, N. Y.; Jess W. Sweetser, Siwanoy Country Club, Bronxville, N. Y.; Thomas Telfer, Claremont Country Club, Oakland, Cal.; R. Arthur Wood, Exmoor Country Club, Highland Park, Ill.

## Reid Is Son of USGA Pioneer

Golf's new head man in this country is a son of the late John Reid, who was first president of the "Apple Tree Gang" that organized the pioneer St. Andrews club. John Reid also was one of those responsible for the organization of the USGA and for several years, a USGA officer. His elder son, John Reid, Jr., served as secretary and as a vice president of the USGA.

Arch Reid was born August 13, 1885. He has qualified for match play rounds in eight National Amateur championships. He graduated from Yale in 1905 and was a member of the varsity golf team. In 1918 he married Margaret Behr, whose brother Max for many years was very active in

amateur golf play, golf journalism and architecture. A son, John, 18, is a Yale freshman. The crown princess of the Reid household is Jean Arnot, 17. Reid is a partner in the New York brokerage firm of Jacquelin & De Coppet.

Arch, when younger, was a bagpipe virtuoso and still is a talented musician, comprising with R. Arthur Wood, his teammate on the USGA, a scratch duo of locker-room vocalists.

George H. Walker, a former president of the USGA and donor of the Walker international amateur trophy, was named chairman of the 1938 USGA nominating committee, succeeding Herbert Jacques, another former association chief, who headed this year's committee.

At the annual meeting the long-considered subject of the stymie, into which the USGA has been extensively probing for some time, probably will feature the program.

**Dawson Takes Plunge**—Mr. John Wesley Dawson was teamed in holy wedlock with Miss Velma Wayne Pascoe on Saturday, the eighteenth of December, one thousand nine hundred and thirty-seven in Hollywood, California. That, very formally, is to inform youse guys that Johnny Dawson of Spaldings went and got himself married and to a very sweet young person judging from her pictures in the papers and the nice things said by the pros and their wives who know the Pascoe kid (pardon us, Mrs. John Wesley Dawson).

## CLUBS!

Send your greenkeeper to the  
Annual NAGA Convention.  
Cincinnati,  
February 15-18

# HOW I HANDLE FEE PLAYERS

By JOSEPH F. CHAMBERLIN

A COMPLETE lack of understanding of the golfers' psychology is often the cause of a great many misunderstandings between the fee course management and the golfer. You can be sure of one thing when an argument arises—the golfer has all the best of it and always the last word. That word is more often than not: "Well I'll never go back there," and "I'll tell the gang about this."

It doesn't pay to have an argument with a customer. You not only lose his business but the business of his friends, and this regardless of the quality of your club.

There are three points of contact on fee courses where misunderstandings are bound to arise at one time or another unless the viewpoint of the player is thoroughly understood. These three points are the ticket selling, the starting and the giving of rain-checks. Of course, there are plenty of other places on the course and in the clubhouse where the golfer is likely to run afoul of the "rules" but I'll say these three are about the most dangerous spots.

## Asks Adjustment After Several Months

One day in September, a player came to me with four green-fee tickets. He said to me: "We played here early this spring in a foursome. We had only played three holes when we were caught in a rain and we were so soaked we left without getting rain-checks. We haven't been playing golf this summer because of the heat and I am wondering if it is possible to get any credit on these tickets."

I did not recognize the player as one I had seen before. It had been a poor season, we needed money badly and every dollar we could pick up meant life to us. The young man seemed straightforward and rather apologetic.

I thought to myself, "He is not the type that will argue over this: I have every right to turn him down now. This is all irregular." There were any number of reasons why I should have denied the request, in fact, it was a rather nervy request, I thought.

However, I took the tickets, looked at

the date, and the starting time stamp and went to my daily report and looked at the weather record. It was true that a rain did start at about that time and ruined the day.

I went back to the player. I had noticed that he was watching me with a sort of quizzical smile on his face. I said: "Yes! there was a rain at that time. We will be glad to let you play again" and handed him four new tickets. But he stood still. He said: "You know those are \$1.50 tickets, the rate is now only 50 cents. What about that?"

Again I was taken aback, but determined to go all the way or not at all. I wrote out a credit for the difference.

"You know," I said, "tickets on golf courses are not transferable but I presume you paid for those tickets yourself. So I am giving you the refund credit for them as you wish. We want you satisfied and as long as you believe it is coming to you, you are welcome to it."

That man became one of our most enthusiastic supporters from that time on. That six dollars was the best advertisement I ever made. It seemed to give him pleasure to bring new players to the course and introduce them to me.

## Rain Checks Always Approved

A policy of approving all rain-checks whenever requested has worked for our own benefit. I have often replied to the question of rain-checks that I would give a rain-check to any player who honestly thinks he should have it. And the golfer seldom has abused that privilege in my experience.

This customer-is-always-right policy on the golf course makes the customer feel important. It gives him a sense of being "someone." Here he is the boss, and the manager and pro are at his service. He may be only a low-salaried clerk in an

office up-town, but here he becomes someone of authority. In this frame of mind he is apt to buy balls, take a caddie, step up to the bar or in other ways spend more money than otherwise.

The first tee is an important psychological point of contact with the player—a place for misunderstanding, a place to ruin the good nature of the golfers before they play a stroke, a place to start a riot that will show itself on every green and tee on the course. No wonder some courses are noted for discourteous players.

It is hard to keep your good behavior hour after hour at the first tee, answering the stock question, "When am I up?" time and time again to the same agitated player. But the good starter must keep that sweet expression of service and help. And the more nervous the player, the greater the will to serve should be practiced by the starter.

Often the method used in lining up players for the start is so obviously haphazard that in itself it is a source of dispute.

#### Fee Player's Idea of Rights

Golfers like to be led, not driven. They want to be asked, not told. They want to be invited, not ordered. The player looks to the starter for protection of his rights. He is the constitution and the court of equity all in one. In him is placed the confidence of a square deal.

Essentially the golfer has come out for a good time and relaxation. He wants to forget his worries, the strain of the office and maybe of the home. When he pays his money over the counter, one of the unlisted parts of the bargain is a right to relaxation. It is not an admission paid to a battle-field.

A starter should understand this mental attitude and avoid things that tend to irritate players, among which are: Order of starting, short answers to questions, crowding between foursomes, the teeing area crowded, caddies over-running the place, lack of interest in finding the pro, a certain caddie or any other person, loud talk near the first tee.

While visiting a course operator he told me he had a most profitable tournament that day from one of the largest banks in the city. He said: "I have had no trouble today of any kind." And it seemed to me everyone was happy.

Just then one of the players, who was pleasantly liquored and very talkative

stepped up to him and said, "We want to thank you for one of the finest days we've ever had. We're coming back. This is the first time we've been here.

"You know," he said, "we've been going over to the ——— golf course, but we're never going back. Over there they order you on the tee, they order you off the tee, they tell you you can't do this, you can't do that. They don't treat you like human beings. We like the course fine. It's a better course than yours but they treat us like we were cattle. We have had as fine a day as we could possibly have and we haven't had a single word spoken to us that hasn't been courteous. We're coming back by a unanimous vote, and are trying to organize another party next month."

#### Operator Needs Constant Alertness

To sell a golfer a ticket and make a golfer happy in buying it, to deliver 18 holes of golf without a regret on his part and send him home after six to eight hours of intimate contact with your entire staff is an art. That calls for real reading of character, under nerve-racking circumstances. That is an endurance contest and a maintenance of alertness from early morning to late at night, hour after hour, day in and day out.

Too much importance is placed upon the player taking advantage or chiseling the management. Regardless of what you say or do, there are just so many such persons. You will never change that few. They go on the theory "it costs nothing to ask." You will find them in every walk of life. They delight in breaking the rules. Forget them. Take the chip off your shoulders. Know what you want to do, how you want to run your course, and train every person on your staff to a happy courteous attitude and you will soon find your club is getting a real reputation.

N. J. Managers Form Chapter—New Jersey Chapter of the Club Managers Association of America has been formed as the outcome of informal sessions engineered by Wm. Norcross, Essex County CC manager. Officers elected for the new chapter's first year are:

Pres., Edward L. Grissner, Crestmont GC; V. P., Clinton E. Wiener, Greenbrook CC; Sec., Lester W. Boyes, Montclair AC; Directors, Wm. Norcross, Essex County CC; Louis Parlamento, Tuxedo Club; J. J. Bond, Braidburn CC.



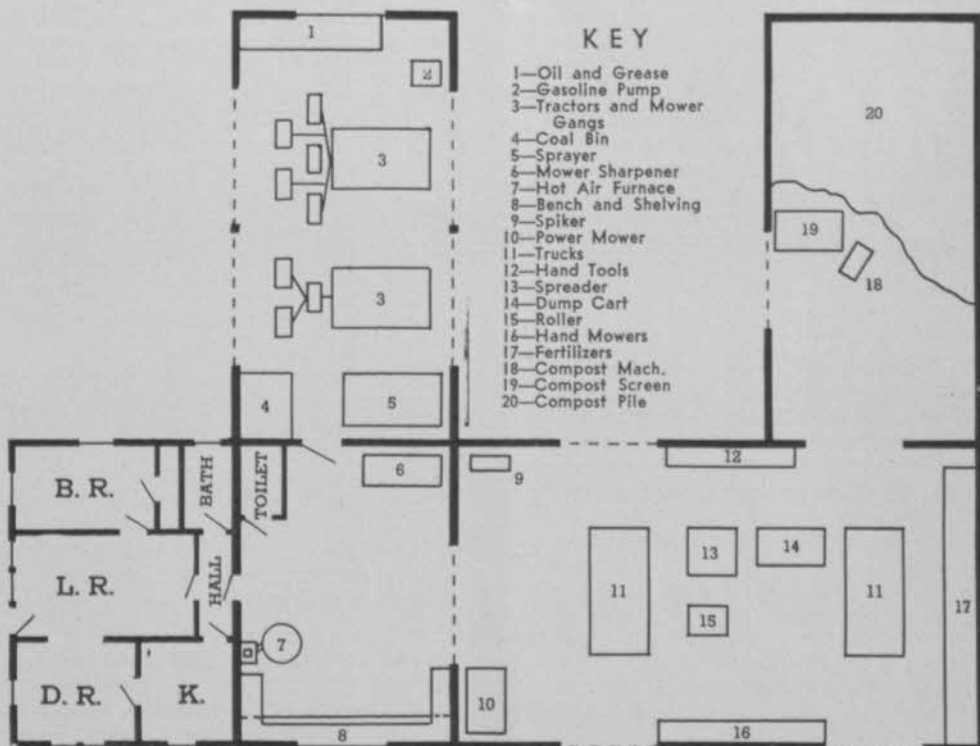
# PEORIA BARN IS TOPS FOR SERVICE

By JACK FULTON, Jr.

COMPLETED last fall and now in service at the Country Club of Peoria (Ill.) is a new equipment building which, according to pro-supt. Elmer Biggs, is any greenkeeper's "dream structure" for efficient handling and control of golf maintenance supplies and machines. The building is designed for use, as Biggs points out, there is nothing fancy about the job, but there is a place for everything and no excuse for everything not being in its place.

The building, of concrete blocks with composition shingle roof, is U-shaped and

The right arm of the U has a concrete floor, and in this room, 22' by 44', compost is mixed, screened and stored. About 75 loads of compost can be stored in this space. There are no windows in the walls, just a doorway into the adjacent storage room and a single courtyard door. The



approximately 74' deep and 76' wide, including the central courtyard. Off one arm of the U is a four-room apartment, 22' by 30', for occupancy by the grounds crew foreman. Sliding doors, the top half of which are glassed, give easy and quick entry to all sections of the building except this apartment, which is well isolated.

door is 10' wide, ample to permit dump carts to back in for direct loading.

Continuing clockwise through the building, one comes next to a large storage room 54' by 30'. Fertilizers are stored along the right wall and hand mowers against the outer wall. Two 10' doors are provided here. Locations have been set for

## STATEMENTS, PLEASE!

GOLFDOM finds annual club financial statements of inestimable value in arriving at the true picture of the golf business.

Will you, accordingly, send us a copy of your club's annual report? The figures will not be broadcast, but rather combined with similar figures from other clubs throughout the country to arrive at national conditions.

Address Golfdom, 14 E. Jackson Blvd., Chicago.

Many thanks.

the hand-tool rack, the spiker and the power greens-mower. The club's trucks, dump carts, spreader, roller and similar equipment occupy the center of the room.

The balance of this portion of the building is the machine shop, 22' by 30', enterable from the room just described through a 12' door. A work bench extends the full width of the room under a bank of three windows; over the bench, running out both side walls and extending to the ceiling are shelves. The mower sharpener is on the other side of the room; one corner is partitioned off for a toilet, with a stool, wash-basin and trough urinal. A hot air furnace assures comfortable working temperatures in the shop, regardless of how wintry the weather.

### Can Drive Straight Thru

Tractors and mower units are kept in the final wing of the structure, with two pairs of 14' doors in each wall to make straight-in parking of these bulky units possible. Oil and grease storage space are conveniently at hand with a gasoline pump at the corner of the room near the door to the courtyard; the storage tank is outside. A coal bin fills the corner of the room nearest the furnace; the club's sprayer is backed into the other corner.

Ceilings throughout the storage barn are 10' to the eaves. This is the only feature Biggs says he would change if he had the building to construct a second time. Eight-foot ceilings are ample, and this lowering of the walls would have saved considerable in the construction costs. In all other respects, Biggs boasts the building is perfectly arranged for the job it was designed to do.

Hewitt, Emerson and Gregg, of Peoria, were the architects on the job, and A. C. Folden was the contractor. Total cost was slightly under \$9,700.

## New Jersey Bidding for 1939 Greens Convention in October

**N**EW JERSEY Association of Golf Course Superintendents is conducting an energetic campaign to get the 1939 Nat'l Assn. of Greenkeepers Convention for New York. Holding of a World's Fair in New York is one of the reasons set forth in the Jerseymen's bid. They also cite figures of greenkeeper association membership and USGA club membership in territory handy to New York as bases for their solicitation of the convention.

While the friendly competition between New York and Kansas City is being conducted for the 1939 meeting and exhibition, there is a growing interest in the possibility of future annual national meetings of greenkeepers and the displays of course maintenance equipment being held in October and under arrangements that would permit outside demonstrations of equipment.

Proponents of the combination indoor meetings and outdoor demonstrations set forth the statement that October would provide a good time for men to come to the meeting with their summer season problems fresh in mind and with the shopping factor in a close tie-up with impending budget making. The October date, so its advocates claim, also would be a practical one for greenkeepers in the southern belt.

An arrangement of indoor meetings and practical outdoor demonstrations, so those in favor of the plan declare, could be made in a way that would keep greenkeepers' expenses of convention attendance low, provide exhibitors with valuable opportunities for effective demonstrations, and possibly increase the association convention income which is a vital element of convention operation.

**Dickinson Honored**—Tribute is paid to Professor Lawrence S. Dickinson of Massachusetts State College, with the announcement that this year's Index, undergraduate year book, will be dedicated to him.

Professor Dickinson, who is in the agronomy department at the state college, is widely known as an authority on maintenance and design of greens. He is the founder of the first course for greenkeepers in this country, started at the college here 11 years ago.