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# Know How to Fit Clubs Is Pro Sales Service "Must"

By J. VICTOR EAST

Golf, unlike baseball, tennis and other games where the ball struck at is in motion, is in itself such an individual game that it might seem the majority of players would require each club made to order. Such, however, is not generally the case, but, personalized selection for suiting the individual is necessary, and there will follow some of the reasons why.

Let's take the matter of club length and the fitting of same to two people with a difference of 12" in height. Say one is 5'6" and the other 6'6". Put two such people side by side and have them close their hands. It will more generally be found there is very little difference between their closed knuckles and the floor; certainly far and away less than the 12" difference in their over-all heights.

It, however, is this matter of reach or relative distance to the ground that plays an important part in fitting an individual with the length of club he or she can use to advantage; for, when the hands are brought together to the position of gripping the club, it is the distance between them, the hands, and the ball, that has to be accommodated by the club length. The comparatively slight difference of hands to ground between tall and short people accounts for the most part in the narrow spread in club lengths used by players of widely different heights.

In this matter of length-fitting of clubs the next point of influence is the club "lie" best suited to the individual, for obviously if the ball is to be played a long way from the feet the space between the hands and the ball would have to be bridged with a longer club than would be necessary if the accommodating stance be taken with the feet closer to the ball.

Since the distance of hands to ground, and the club "lie" best suited to the path of stroke, are two important essentials for fitting the customer with clubs of suitable length, then it behooves the professional or his salesman to quickly size up the build of each customer. In this regard he should be guided as to whether the individual to be fitted is built for an upright, medium or flat type of swing; as, for the upright type the length will be relatively short, and for the flat type, long, with the medium in-between length. Correspondingly, the "lies" of the clubs will be selected to suit the individual type.

Before passing on to other points of selecting or fitting clubs to the individual it might be pointed out that where the prospective customer has already played it is recommended a study be made of his or her used clubs, as much can be determined by the evidences of use. In looking over used shoes, as is commonly done, it can readily enough be determined if worn shoes are too short, too narrow, too wide, etc. for the wearer. In like manner the scratch or wear-marks on the sole of a wood club will show whether the "lie" is O.K., too upright, or too flat, as it will prove whether the player's build has been accommodating improper length instead of the reverse order, viz., the club length meeting the physique of the owner.

## Suiting the Individual

Turning now to suiting the individual with the proper **flexibility of shaft**, and also the **club weight**. This is not so complex or confusing as is commonly thought to be the case, for usually it narrows down to temperament and the physical side. If one is muscularly strong, then the shaft flexibility is best to be on the firm or stiff side, with the club weight correspondingly heavier than medium. Conversely, a lightly built person will be able to use a flexible shafted club of lighter over-all weight to advantage.

On the mental side, the professional or salesman takes his cue from the customer's manner of speech, whether rapid, moderate or deliberate, for usually the rate of talking is correlated with a person's speed of action.

A quick talker is almost bound to be a fast club swinger, and so, knowing the tempo of the stroke when striking at the ball is best to be in smooth progression, a club with a firm and not a whippy shaft will be selected. So also, for such a person, will there be a proportionate increase in the over-all weight of the club. Similar reasoning applies to each type of individual, as does the matter of age, for along with any slowing down of muscular effort lighter weight clubs with increased flexibility of shafts are unusually helpful and accordingly prescribed.

While each of the above noted items, viz., length, lie, shaft-flexibility and weight are essential in suiting the individual it should be emphasized that "lie"

is of primary importance, as from it the length and other items of suitability are determined.

As the lie of the club is important it perhaps would be wise to point out that when a club is held in the position of address to a ball by the person being suited the sole of the club should rest on the heel side of center.

The reason for having the sole resting nearer the heel is that when any golf club is put into swinging motion each club actually changes to a flatter "lie" than when in the stationary position of address to ball; therefore, never should a club be selected where the sole is resting at or forward of center when held in the position of ball address.

Many have been the studies for arriving at the range of golf clubs considered best to meet the requirements of the vast variety of people, and in the latest analysis the decisions arrived at have been made by applying the law of averages. That is why, unless a person be of unusual build, each can, from a well assorted stock and

with proper guidance, be suited or fitted with clubs to best serve his or her respective needs.

Supplying players with the proper clubs is a primary function of the pro's valuable merchandising service. Knowing golf, the player, and making more of a study of club design and construction than any other class of merchants selling golf equipment, the pro logically is qualified best to correctly fit the player.

Younger pros have asked GOLFDOM for some basic material on the club fitting responsibility, so we got Vic East, with his extensive experience as a pro and in golf club design and manufacturing, to handle the assignment.

The development of club design and making has been so rapid since World War II ended that the pro must make an intense and thorough study of this element of his business. He will find that in shaft design and construction alone the advances of the past few years have accounted for such marked improvements as to make clubs with pre-war shafts antiquities that cost strokes.

### Annual Turf Conferences

#### 1950

- Oct. 15-17—National Turf Field Days, USGA Green Section, Beltsville, Md.  
Oct. 25-27—Central Plains Turf Conference, Kansas State College, Manhattan.  
Oct. 30-31—Southeastern N. Y. Turf Short Course, White Plains, N. Y.  
Oct. 30-Nov. 3—American Society of Agronomy Annual Meetings, Cincinnati, Ohio.  
Nov. 27-29—Oklahoma Turf Conference, Oklahoma A. & M. College, Stillwater, Okla.

#### 1951

- Jan. 11, 12—Annual Conference, Mid-Atlantic Association of Greenkeepers, Lord Baltimore Hotel, Baltimore, Md.  
Jan. 22-26—20th Annual Rutgers One Week Turf Course, Rutgers Univ., New Brunswick, N. J.  
JAN. 29-FEB. 2—22nd NATIONAL TURF CONFERENCE AND SHOW, SHERMAN HOTEL, CHICAGO, ILL.  
Feb. 12-14—Texas Turf Conference, Texas Turf Association, College Station.  
Feb. 26-Mar. 1—20th Annual Turf Conference, Pennsylvania State College, State College, Pa.  
Mar. 5-8—Annual Turf Conference, Midwest Regional Turf Foundation, Purdue Univ., Lafayette, Ind.  
Mar. 6, 7—Fourth Annual Turf Conference, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.  
Mar. 7, 8—Fourth Annual Turf Conference, State College of Washington, Pullman.  
Mar. 8, 9—Annual Turf Conference (Concluding 10-Weeks Winter School), Univ. of Mass., Amherst.  
Mar. 12-14—17th Annual Turf Conference, Iowa Greenkeepers Association, Iowa State College, Ames.  
Mar. (?)—Annual Turf Conference and Short Course, Minnesota Greenkeepers Association.  
May (?)—Annual Meeting, Florida Association of Golf Course Supts., Tampa.

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*photo courtesy Rudy Mendez*

View of clubhouse at Guadalajara Country Club as seen from the 18th green. Excellent facility is under able management of Charles C. Smith and Sr. Raul Urrea who has been president since 1939 when club began ambitious program.

## Mexican Golf Club and Spirit Arouse American Admiration

When the Guadalajara CC holds its annual invitation tournament, the 12th through the 15th of October this year, the Americans who are fortunate enough to attend the event at this fine and hospitable Mexican club will return home, as other visitors have, to sing the praises of the Mexican cousins as folks who know how to put on a memorable golf party. Part of the know-how in making the golf establishment one that will rate along with excellent establishments north of the border is due to a transplanted American, Charles C. Smith, the club's general manager.

But Smith will side-step the applause and award the credit to Sr. Raul Urrea, the club president to whom the Guadalajara club owes its fine golf facilities, enthusiasm and high standing among country clubs on both sides of the border. Sr. Urrea was president in 1939 when the club began its ambitious program of golf expansion, and he's still president. He had the vision and gave generously of his time, money, energy and brains to build the vision into a reality. That uninformed idea some of us Americans have about Mexico being the land of the siesta is a million miles from the fact when we see

Urrea or other typical Mexican businessmen operate.

At the start the Guadalajara CC was a tennis club, as were other of the older country clubs in the Republic. About 40 years ago a few members had a fairway and a sand green built and from that beginning golf in Guadalajara grew. Later a 9-hole course was built near what's now the airport. Its design was very casual and its greens were sand.

Then Senor Raul started the golf development which is represented in the present plant. The club acquired 170 acres through which a river wandered and wide and deep barrancas presented possibilities of magnificent, testing hazards. John Bredemus who designed and constructed many fine courses in Texas was brought to Guadalajara to design and supervise construction of 18 for the club and he did a grand job.

The first 9 was put in play October, 1942 when the amateur invitation tournament was inaugurated. The clubhouse, an Olympic-size swimming pool and tennis courts were opened then.

By 1947 the golf activity was so great Charley Smith was brought to Mexico to build the second 9 according to the Bre-

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demus plan. The entire 18 was put into play in October, 1948.

The club has 485 members of whom 220 are active golfers. The initiation fee is 1000 pesos or approximately \$115 at present rate of exchange. The golfing members pay the equivalent of about \$7 a month. The course has been developed so the turf condition is first class. Urrea and Smith say that's due, to a great extent, to the help received from O. J. Noer who spent some time down there. Fairways, tees and greens are Bermuda, and the strain on the greens, together with the maintenance practices that have been worked out, provide some of the finest Bermuda greens you'll ever putt on, say widely travelled American amateurs.

The card reads: 3280, par 36, out, and 3285, par 36 in—6565-72.

Very interesting use has been made of the natural hazards. The 375 yd. tenth is surrounded by deep arroyos. The tenth is known as Lengua del Diablo, or Tongue of the Devil. Conversation after clumsy attempts to recover from those traps fits the title.

The club is fortunate in having an ample water supply from nearby springs. Although the property is rather well wooded considerable tree planting for landscaping and golf architectural purposes has been done in recent years. More than 10,000 trees have been planted in the past three years. The club is located in a fine suburban residential section, among the fine homes in the vicinity being that of Sr. Urrea.

Many American greenkeepers will envy the Guadalajara maintenance staff its

equipment, shop and storage building. In it the club's machinery is stored and kept in top condition. Course supplies also are stored in the building. Tom Mascaro, who was a recent American visitor to the club, reports that the course equipment and supply structure, its contents and its use in course management, will open the eyes of any Americans who believe that because Mexican course labor wages are much lower than ours, a well-run Mexican club is lowering its standards of machinery operation.

The modern clubhouse provides splendid and complete facilities and every inducement for really enjoying social life.

In addition to the golf, tennis and swimming, the club is putting in a place where horsemen can put their jumpers through their training and competitive performances. The club claims, among its members some of the world's finest horsemen. They'll put on a show for the tournament guests this year.

This year's Guadalajara invitation will have six flights for men, from the championship flights down to the 26-handicappers; and four flights for women. Visitors are asked to bring handicap cards from their Mexican or American home clubs.

As anyone who has attended the Guadalajara invitation will attest, these people can give many of our clubs lessons in how to put on delightful parties. The tournament is preceded by a dance. There is a Noche Mexicana and a Noche Tapatio, with the ladies of the club in fiesta costumes, a formal ball, and a dance and other gaiety the night the prizes are pre-



*photo courtesy Rudy Mendez*

Looking down fairway of the famous No. 5 hole of the Guadalajara course originally designed by John Bredemus. Final nine was completed according to the Bredemus plan and opened for play by manager Charles Smith in late 1948.

sented. The Guadalajara members have a great gift of easy graciousness that has made invitations to their affairs treasured by those who know how to enjoy life among genial and cultured companions.

Mexico is growing rapidly as a strong magnet for the winter golfer who wants to get golf in another land in along with his cold weather golfing sojourns in the southern part of the U.S. It's also well on its way to becoming a definite factor in the market for American golf goods



Manager Charley Smith, the man who is helping make a golf plant "South of the Border" that will rate with excellent facilities in U. S.

and in a few years probably the trade conditions will be such that orders for American goods will mean as much in the pursuit of happiness on both sides of the Rio Grande as the Mexican adaptation of the American country club idea has meant at Guadalajara.

## N. Y. Conn. Stage Field Day at Rye, N. Y.

By BILL BENGEYFIELD

At the New York-Connecticut Turf Improvement Assn.'s most successful meeting, 220 turf men spent an afternoon at the Willows CC, Rye, N. Y., viewing golf course equipment in action. Matthew Scanlen, president of the club and Louis Santucci, supt., opened the club and all of its facilities to those attending. They allowed the exhibitors to demonstrate four different aerification machines on their practice green.

The A. D. Petersen Co., demonstrated the West Point Lawn Product's "Aerifier". Austin and Barrett Co., demonstrated the Ferguson "Night Crawler". The Soilaire Industries' "Soilaire" was demonstrated by the Golf and Lawn Supply Corp. and the Toro Equipment Co. demonstrated the Thompson "Terferator". Many of the fellows have seen all these machines on exhibit in this area but have not seen all of them working side by side.

Among the other exhibitors was the John Melady Co. showing various golf accessories, ball washers, mower parts, etc. Piekarski Bros. showed their 55% organic fertilizer and the Stumpp and Walter Co. had flame guns, seeders, spike discs and other gear.

N. Y. State College of Agriculture had a large series of crabgrass control plots as set up by Gene Nutter, Research Assistant, and Bill Bengueyfield, Asst. County Agricultural Agent. Some of the new materials such as potassium cyanate, PMA in the soluble powder form, Scuti and several products some not yet on the market had been applied. The old stand-bys, Milarsenite and arsenicals in other forms were also used.

All of the arrangements, organization and planning for the day were in the capable hands of Doug Rankin and Charles Sawtelle. They did an excellent job as shown by the smoothness of the entire day.

When afternoon activities were over, 140 members and guests sat down to a



Gene Nutter of N.Y. State College of Agri. discusses turf plots at N.Y.-Conn. meeting.

fine dinner at the club. Pres. A. R. Twombly presided and introduced the notables present. Dr. J. Schread, Conn. Experimental Station, Chas. Wilson of USGA Green Section and Ralph Engle of Rutgers University were among the visiting experts. The meeting was then turned over to Warren Lafkin who introduced the main speakers, Dr. John Cornman and Gene Nutter, both of the N. Y. State College of Agriculture. Nutter has done extensive crabgrass control work for the past two years and his talk reviewed this work.

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on Page 101

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### FAIRWAY-GREEN AERIFIER

The tractor-pulled F-G model Aerifier provides rapid aerification for fairways and all large open turf areas. The single unit cultivates a path three feet wide. Three units can be coupled together for use as a gang; the gang cultivates a path nine feet wide.

The F-G Aerifier can be equipped with hydraulic lift for easy lowering and raising of the spoons. This implement is generally used with either inch or  $\frac{3}{4}$ " diameter spoons.

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The G-L model Aerifier is self-powered. It is maneuverable enough to handle on greens, or on lawn areas broken up with walks and shrubbery.  $2\frac{1}{2}$  h.p. engine provides plenty of power for use on slopes. Sturdy construction and low upkeep make the machine suitable for use by landscape gardeners. Cultivates a path 20 inches wide. May be used with  $\frac{3}{4}$ " or  $\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter spoons.



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What makes the Aerifier different from other aerating implements is the cultivating action obtained with the curved, open spoons. Full-round hollow tines simply punch out holes. The Aerifier spoons scoop out the soil, leaving loose-walled cavities. Water and plant foods can penetrate into the surrounding soil. The Aerifier hole is small at the surface, large underneath so roots can spread out. Moreover, the open spoons take out a soil core every time; they can't block up. For the best in aerifying equipment—it's the Aerifier.