

PGA, policy adopted to give sponsors more of a field for attracting week-end galleries, not favored by pros who have club jobs . . . Pros say that if Tamarisk CC at Palm Springs, Calif., and PGA could get together on Tamarisk's proposal for PGA championship in winter it would be perfect timing . . . Home club pros would have time to practice for the championship and wouldn't have to leave club jobs . . . Championship would have benefit of his title all thru busiest part of the year.

Hogan after winning at Oakmont said he doubted if he'd play in Ryder Cup matches . . . After British Open and exhibitions at Joplin, Mo., and Chicago, he's going fishing in Canada, and intends to play no more competitive or exhibition golf this year . . . He also said at Oakmont he is thru playing hilly courses . . . He's thinking about producing another instruction book.

Talk about new course being built north of Tuxedo, N. Y. . . Famous old Tuxedo course doomed by highway construction . . . Out o' Bounds CC, Mahwah, N. J. (formerly Houvenkopf) to be industrial site . . . Elmwood at East Paterson, Teterboro and Phelps Manor at Teaneck, other

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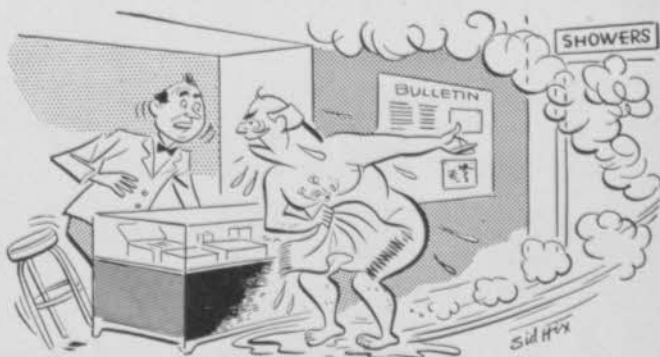
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Jersey course fatalities in recent years . . . Wayne CC, new semi-public course, opened at Preakness, N. J. . . . Mickey Traina is pro . . . Bob Grant is supt. . . . Ash Brook 18 opened by Union County (N. J.) Park Commission.

Middle Atlantic PGA members pictured with pupils in "Tips for Golfers" in Washington (D. C.) Star feature with golf editor Merrill Whittlesey interviewing the pros for instruction copy . . . Tri-County GC, Batesburg, S. C., 9-hole course opened . . . Dave Todd, Columbia (S. C.) CC pro and Mike Serino, Ft. Jackson (S. C.) pro, planned the course . . . Estimated cost \$15,000 about \$8,000 of which was in donated work.

"Ducky" Miller now pro at Camp Lejeune, N. C. . . . Construction under way on \$300,000 clubhouse for Greenville (S. C.) CC . . . Columbia CC (Washington D. C. dist.) gives sets of woods and irons to member who reduces handicap most during season.

Ocean Links, once world's finest 9-hole course, with each hole patterned after a famous one in Scotland, for sale at valuation of \$39,000 . . . Course was built in 1920 on Providence, R. I., estate of late T. Suffern Tailer, father of Tommy, prom-

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inent amateur in 1920s and early '30s . . . Course was out of play from Tailer's death until 1940 . . . Then it ran 2 years as a private club and the Army leased the 85 acres.

Huntsville (Ala.) Junior Chamber of Commerce considering building public course . . . Ernest J. Boudreau new mgr., Prairie Dunes GC, Hutchinson, Ks. . . . Pat Markovich, Richmond (Calif.) CC pro-mgr., in syndicate which has bought 1,083 acre Vesta Maxwell ranch near Napa, for \$350,000 . . . Will build course and do other development.

Kearney Mesa 200 acre tract near San Diego, Calif. bought by syndicate which plans early construction of 18-hole course . . . Arnold Toole now pro-supt.-mgr., Oxford (O.) CC . . . Rocky Ford, Colo., moves a barraeks to muny course and converts it into clubhouse . . . Thermopolis (Wyo.) CC offers its courses for instruction and play of all town's youngsters as feature of community recreation program . . . Lion's club has bought 6 sets of clubs for kids' use and golfers are contributing used equipment.

Course to be built at Gillespie Field, El Cajon, Calif. . . . Hillcrest CC, Mt.

(Continued on page 66)

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JULY • 1953

N.E. Supts. Tell Officials Labor Problems Critical

By **LAWRENCE S. DICKINSON**Executive Sec.-Treas., Mass. Section, New England Turf Assn.
Associate Prof., Agrostology, University of Massachusetts

THE 1953 annual University of Massachusetts Fine Turf Conference differed from the usual turf conference in that it was a real conference in which there were no lectures. The entire time was taken by the superintendents discussing by themselves without academic supervision or influence three important questions.

At many golf courses the basic cultural reserves have been drawn upon heavily during the past several years. Player demands, poor quality of labor, scarcity of labor and "low budgets" have been charged as being the cause. Some superintendents have lost their positions and others have been called on the carpet. Something must be done to reduce the casualties to both courses and superintendents.

This report summarizes the opinions of the conferees.

Golf course maintenance is no longer simply mowing and fertilizing the grass.

It is a profession in that it deals with the health and development of living organisms and must recognize the natural laws of plant life and the soil factors involved.

It is a business in that costs, both money and cultural, must be evaluated, labor skill and hours economically used; a product, enjoyable playing conditions sold; reserves accumulated and protected; and the "manufacturing plant," the golf course, kept in repair as in profitable business. Unfortunately in golf the

product, pleasurable golf, has no definite "take home pay" or "cash dividends" to remind the golfer of these facts.

The conference was not a gripe session, but an unselfish, serious, and detailed study of the emergency situation.

Only three subjects were discussed:
1. The Golf Course Labor Situation.
2. Present Player Demands vs. Golf Course Cultural and Maintenance Practices.
3. The Greenkeeper, the Golf Club and The Profession.

Ample time was allowed for discussion and the conferees kept very close to the subject, rarely mentioning grasses, fungicides, etc.

Discussion groups consisted of:
Superintendents of large courses.

Superintendents of small or summer courses.

Owners of golf courses.

Superintendents of Municipal Courses.

Course Labor Situation

Shortage of course labor is acute and because of its accumulated and immediate effect on maintenance alone, omitting course improvements, an emergency exists. Club officials have not realized the insidious creeping up of the fact. The shortage is felt as less actual manpower, and fewer efficient labor hours available, due to interruptions, slowdowns, and diversions that steal time from necessary maintenance.

The opinion was unanimous that the increase (30% to 40% or more) in the

number of players of both sexes, together with the wider spread of playing hours during the day necessitates an increase in work slowdown and actual stoppage.

Women now start to play at 9 a.m. or earlier and to avoid player annoyance work must cease while players pass. The policy of inviting convention groups to hold tournaments also increases play. Traffic may even as much as double the labor hours required for a routine operation.

New construction and course alterations also add to the required routine labor hours rather than reduce them. During a season many hours of productive time are lost.

The present generally recognized poor quality of labor is not confined to golf courses, but because of the type of work and the small number of workmen involved, it is by comparison much more costly than in industry.

The superintendent now has little or no chance to choose his labor, so except for the year-round man the laborer cannot be depended upon, is careless, slow and indifferent requiring "from two to as many as four men to do the work of one man before World War II."

There are plenty of very good men now working in factories who would be glad to work out-of-doors on a golf course, but cannot afford to because of the seasonal work, comparatively low wages, lack of security, and the number of week hours.

Permanent Force Advantages

Failure to offer year-round work is as much to blame for the present labor condition as the low wages.

The advantages of having a well-trained permanent working force were expressed in detail and, if explained to the club officials, should prove that the idea is sensible for good cultural conditions and as sound business.

There is much work that can be done on the golf courses and repairs made on the clubhouse in the winter to permit an earlier opening date for both at a saving of labor hours during the playing season. Demand for year-round golfing and earlier opening of closed courses costs labor hours which, unless especially supplied, are stolen from the summer maintenance budget.

For an 18-hole course a superintendent and four to six permanent men (if the clubhouse is closed in winter, three to

five) can reduce the number of summer employees and start maintenance work when advantageous without delay for spring clean-up work and timely maintenance.

An increase in wages without an equalizing increase in the budget will actually reduce the available labor hours and the possible improvement in morale will not noticeably increase efficiency. The cost to cultural conditions and in added labor hour consumption to train new men is large. Therefore, if possible, the summer or seasonal men should be assured regular winter employment elsewhere to eliminate annually training new men.

Labor unions have already become established in certain districts and are endeavoring to add a considerable number of golf course employees to their roster. The union closed-shop subject was discussed in detail and was considered as undesirable and to be avoided if possible. "Unionization of labor will hurt the smaller clubs more than the larger ones and may cause some of them to fold up."

If golf clubs can offer a reasonable increase in wages, reasonable security for full-year employment, and usual social security benefits, there would be ample labor of excellent quality available and improved skill, interest, and loyalty of the men and improved playing conditions would be assured with fewer labor hours than are now required and the unionization risk would be eliminated.



Flanagan

"The grounds committee pays me regular caddie rates to follow him around."



Albert A. Tenner photo

THE BOYS WELCOME "THE HAIG" AT SIWANoy

Left to right — Kenneth Telfer, Pres., Siwanoy CC (NY Met. dist.); Walter Hagen, Bud Geohagen, pro, Crestmont CC, West Orange, N.J.; and Tom Kerrigan, Siwanoy's pro for 30 years, at Steve Hughes Day at Siwanoy.

Hughes, former Siwanoy president, died suddenly two weeks before formal opening of the course remodeled by Robert Trent Jones. Steve was there though, in merry spirit and loving memory.

Foursomes of pro, TV, golf writer and member composition put on a hot event with the Tommy Armour, Dave Garroway, Dave Eisenberg and W. R. Cook team winning with a net bestball of 61. Craig Wood's 74 was the best gross of the day. Gene Sarazen had 76 and Johnny Farrell, 79.

Geohagen mc'd the affair with his customary high talent. Jack Redmond put on his amusing trick shot routine.

There was a gallery of more than 2,000.

Kerrigan arranged the golfing program which, with the dinner entertainment, provided one of the liveliest schedules any club could present.

The present 44-hour week should be continued as a basis for normal pay but labor problems should be handled by the superintendent and the club without union interference.

Beyond a certain point additional equipment does not save labor. It may improve playing conditions, but its incorrect use often accumulates a cultural cost that requires a major operation to correct. Quoting again, "Equipment is no better than the man who operates it" . . . "A green man will do more damage to the piece of equipment and to the golf course than a saving on his wages can pay for" . . . "Equipment may break down more than man power and when it does break down man hours are also lost."

Favorable sources for summer laborers varied from high school boys, college students (athletes in particular), older men, teachers, to bus drivers from the 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. shift for late afternoon or night watering. Young men operate machinery faster than older men, but break it oftener and are more careless because of the monotony.

Typical of group discussions: A budget

should be set at the beginning of the year and adhered to because mid-season cuts waste many hours. Long-term maintenance plans should continue even though the Greens chairmen change frequently. Good business principles should underly all transactions including one man in complete charge, winter employment arrangements, proper insurance coverage, etc.

Player Demands vs. Cultural Practices

Players are buyers of the manufactured product, pleasurable golf. Their exacting specifications must be met if possible. However they may be getting their golfing at a price far below the cost of production. No business can be successful if continually being operated at a loss.

It is the low-scoring players who set the player demands and they want "things not thought of five years ago" and "complain the most," but "There are many club members who will be satisfied with less exacting conditions."

In trying to meet these demands the standard of course maintenance has been raised, without a realization of the cost to reserve cultural conditions, economical

(Continued on page 69)



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Floor to ceiling plate glass window brings the outdoors inside to "Dode" Forrester (R) and club member sitting in Forrester's new shop at Hobbs (N. M.) CC. Picture window at right sets off bag display in another side of shop.

Architect, Glass Man, Team with Pro on Shop Miracle

By E. E. (DODE) FORRESTER
Professional, Hobbs (N. M.) Country Club

IT was a Hole-in-One job. One hole 20 ft. long and 9 ft. high was made on the west end of the south wall of my pro shop. The other, on the east end was 14 ft. long and 5 ft. high.

Those two holes in one shop were major changes in converting a little pro shop into one that our members and I can proudly compare with any other pro shop. It may not be the most elaborately fitted and swankiest, but as an attractive, bright shop laid out for the primary function of inviting customers in and providing them with pleasant facilities for buying what they need for enjoyable golf, I doubt that our shop has many superiors.

And it certainly is a convincing ex-

hibit to club officials and members and to pros that a pro shop that looked almost hopeless could be transformed into one of the most cheerful areas in the clubhouse.

It all happened when I decided to buy some light instead of lighting fixtures. My little pro shop at the Country Club in Hobbs, N. M., was so dark and uninviting that I knew I was going to have to do something about it. Hobbs people like to play golf when not drilling for oil, and I sometimes think the oil drilling business plays second fiddle when some one says "How about a round this afternoon?"

With the aid of two of my golfing members, an architect named George Graves and manager of The Hobbs Glass