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Walter Hagen



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The Haig Canister—Finished in rich diamond pattern, of simulated leather. Choice of green, tan or maroon. Lift-out interior holds four 3-ball trays of HAIG *ULTRA* golf balls. Containers have many interesting uses when emptied. Pay for balls only.

The Haig Utilicase—Finished in burgundy leathereite with padded top and simulated walnut interior. Holds two 3-ball trays of HAIG *ULTRA* golf balls. Case has many utility uses when emptied. Pay for balls only.

Personalized, FREE! Name or initials on each ball. Up to thirteen letters including spaces between names and initials. Orders must be received no later than November 20, 1953.

WALTER HAGEN, Grand Rapids 2, Michigan • Division of Wilson Sporting Goods Co.

home. The buyer may be out of the mood and out of spare money then. But time after time I know we make sales simply because the buyer wasn't reminded of his needs at his home club.

"I insist that clubs be perfectly fitted to the buyer and a lot of our club selling is done by fitting sessions on the practice tee. There are cases of men and women players who certainly need clubs a whole lot more suitable to them than the clubs they are playing, but the clubs they really need I don't happen to have in stock. I carry a big stock of good clubs, and a stock with a wide range of specifications. But it wouldn't be good business for me to tie up a tremendous investment in a club stock that would supply an exact fit for everyone who came into my shop.

"There are very few resort visitors who will wait until I can send away and get factory stock or custom-made clubs. Certainly the smart thing to do then is to tell them what I know they need and tell them that they'd better wait until they get home and have their own pros take care of them.

"That policy probably accounts for the sale of at least 30 sets of woods or irons each year by pros whose members have visited Shawnee. I think the pros appreciate that and know it's a good build-up for pro expert service. The profit in good will is more important to us than trying to hog all the cash that's loose."

The basic principle of the Shawnee shop operations is, strangely enough, not to make money, but it's one of the biggest money-making pro shops in the world, notwithstanding a heavy pay-roll and limitations of traffic on an 18-hole resort course.

Spends to Make Money

Fred Waring, who bought Shawnee from the Worthington estate and rehabilitated and modernized it, has the top level policy of finest entertainment pervading the whole establishment. The house operations managed by Dick Quillen are first class country club standard. The ground maintenance, under the supervision of the veteran John Dimmick, are expertly handled for enjoyable golf; testing but not devastating. And in the pro department the foremost thought of Waring and Obitz is to see that the customer is made to feel that everything is done to make golf great entertainment. This policy pays off in volume that has made spending of money entertaining because there's very good value and genuinely sincere competent service returned for the money.

Here the pro department spends money

wisely to make money. One of the unique stunts that the Western Seniors will talk about for a long time is supplying free buckets of balls to be hit off a practice tee into the Binniekill, where caddies retrieve the balls from the shallow stream. The balls are beat-up and the shag caddie service is the main item of expense. Thus for smart spending of little money there's a practice, entertainment, and publicity stunt that indirectly and directly contributes to pro shop business and satisfaction with the whole place.

When some addict of practice comes to Shawnee and has forgotten his own shag bag and asks Harry about renting practice balls, Obitz answers, "Why don't you use mine?" The fellow does, and when he learns there's no charge for this personal favor you know what he is going to do. He buys something in the pro shop that shows a profit far greater than the rental on shag balls.

The same canny idea is used when some likely looking prospective customer comes to Shawnee for a business meeting, gets the itch to play and asks Harry if he can rent clubs for a round or for practice. Obitz says, "I'd be glad to have you use mine." Harry has three sets of his own clubs for that purpose. Again the pay-off



FRANCIS OUIMET HONORED

Francis Ouimet, Boston, former national open and national amateur champion, receives the annual Fred Waring Sportsmanship Award made by the Old Masters award committee. Presentation was made by Francis Elliott, New York, chairman of the committee, during ceremonies at Shawnee Inn and CC, Shawnee-On-Delaware, Pa., during the eighth annual Bill Waite Memorial tournament. Ouimet is shown above on left accepting award from Elliott.



Obitz keeps displays of apparel and accessories in immaculate condition.

is that the man feels happy and built-up about using the pro's own clubs and buys something in the shop.

The shop staff is an all-star outfit that Obitz has selected and trained. The line-up is Jack Ryan, Stan Dudas, Dick Farley, Al Nelson, Ronnie Ward, Rocco Coco and Joe Quincey. All the boys have astonishing memories for names and that's an impressive and profitable asset considering the number of players who come into and out of Shawnee. The members of the pro staff have to spend time on their own games in the evening when the teaching and the shop service work is done, or in the morning before the schedule begins.

Features Own Labels

Harry insists that his staff members keep in good golfing condition as an important element of their teaching must be in understandable demonstration. "The Swing's the Thing," the fundamental of the instruction by Obitz and his staff, is a slogan that Harry has on lighters and money clips that he presents discreetly to customers.

Obitz merchandise is uniformly first

class and the surprise to many is that the prices often are lower than those for similar merchandise in highly rated retail stores. He has his own labels in shirts, sports coats, women's apparel, and ties. He sells a very large number of ties at \$3.50 and \$5. These ties are made by a woman in Massachusetts. These ties are 53 in. in length and are of materials and workmanship that correspond with \$6 and \$10 ties in well known men's wear stores.

His shoes have stamped in them: "Made expressly for Harry Obitz." He sells a great many "loafer" shoes as well as a big volume of golf shoes.

The packaging, in envelopes or boxes, is handsomely done in packages made especially for Obitz. The envelopes have the names of Harry's staff members printed on them.

The shop, of course, is immaculate and the merchandise is rearranged frequently. A women's apparel department is in one arm of the L-shaped shop. A barrel by the door leading from the shop to the first tee contains putters and specialty clubs.

(Continued on page 100)

MacGregor

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Trends in Turf Management Show Progress in 1953

By O. J. NOER

REPORTS from the several regional directors of the USGA Green Section appear elsewhere in this issue of GOLF-DOM. Each director tells about the specific problems in his area. So it is proposed to deal here with the more general aspects and advances in golf turf management during 1953.

The labor situation on golf courses has been bad since World War II. There has been a progressive deterioration each year both in the number of workmen and in their quality. The situation was never worse than in 1953. At the start of this season many clubs were lucky to have two or three workmen. In industrial areas clubs recruited part-time factory labor from second and third shifts. These men worked half a day for several days a week. A few clubs engaged city firemen on their off day. Summertime labor was obtained by employing vacationing students. They, too, lacked experience and the know-how to competently water and to do other important routine tasks.

A satisfactory job of turf maintenance with only a partial crew during the fore part of the season is practically impossible. The superintendent is equally handicapped when he has inexperienced help during the hot summer months. Early spring is a crucial time. Unless turf is put in good condition it will suffer in bad weather. During hot, wet, humid spells inexperienced workers may unwittingly lose turf which an experienced man can save. These men may be eager to please, but do not have the self-assurance of a trained, experienced worker.

Before the war the staff of most clubs included a trained mechanic. They have departed for more lucrative employment. Some clubs do not have anyone with the simplest knowledge of mechanics. One club thought they needed a factory trained service man to start a stubborn power greens mower. The only thing wrong was a shattered porcelain in the sparkplug. Had the service man from the golf supply firm made the 280-mile round trip, someone would have been unhappy about the need-

less expense. Clubs should train or employ personnel to keep the equipment in good condition.

Change Labor Policy

The time has come for the superintendent and the club officials to solve their labor problems in a different and a permanent way. The superintendent must study the course and make changes which will eliminate hand labor without affecting the strategy of the course from the standpoint of play. Every manual operation should be scrutinized and mechanized wherever possible. Club officials should insist on the employment of a nucleus crew of four men at least on a year around basis. These workers should become a part of the club and know that they have permanent employment so long as they are loyal and efficient. Their pay should compare favorably with private industry in the locality, and they should have any other advantages enjoyed by these industrial workers, such as social security, a pension plan, etc.

There is nothing more pressing than the labor problem. When it is solved there will be better turf and fewer mishaps during the bad weather. In the long run good, well-trained labor will pay for itself. It is cheaper and better to preserve existing turf rather than lose it from carelessness or an indifferent attitude, and then incur the expense of coaxing recovery or renewing the grass. Further, the way to keep members happy is to give them good greens, tees, and fairways from the start to the end of the season.

Incidentally, competent superintendents are hard to find for new openings. The situation is critical and will get worse unless golf clubs are prepared to pay adequate salaries and make provision for retirement pay after say, 25 to 30 years of faithful service. That kind of thing seems to be the trend of the times.

Bent Grasses Do Well

The improved creeping bent grasses for greens have fared well, and even the old-timers such as Washington have behaved

well when given the right kind of care. A competent superintendent sometimes makes an inferior grass look better than it should, and likewise a poor man may have trouble with the best strain. Old Orchard and Toronto are holding their place, and have their staunch champions. The mixture of Arlington (C-1) and Congressional (C-19) seems to be gaining in favor, as well as the three-way combina-



Injury on edge of green from abrupt turning of mower.

tion of these two grasses with Collins (C-27). Those who have had most experience with these two combinations like to use a little more Arlington in the original planting mixture. They suggest an extra bushel of it per 1000 sq. ft. of area. Unless stolons are well mixed at planting time separation of the strains may occur, because it has happened. Some think Arlington has no equal for pocketed greens in ravines where air drainage is bad. Cohansey (C-7) is finding favor in Oklahoma and other parts of the South where bent is being used on greens.

Polycross looks like the best seeded bent grass. Seedlings of it have been promising almost everywhere. Even though seed has been high priced, it would be cheaper to seed with Polycross than to plant stolons because coverage is obtained quickly with a seeding rate of one lb. per 1000 sq. ft. In most comparisons, coverage was obtained much quicker with Polycross than with Seaside or any other bent. The parent strains from which Polycross is derived were selections made by Professor H. B. Musser. Up to now Polycross looks like an achievement for which Musser may well be proud. Unfortunately, no seed was pro-

duced this year, but limited production in 1954 is expected. Some who have nurseries of Polycross have let the grass grow and plan to use the resulting stolons this fall to produce more turf.

Trend to Velvet in New Eng.

In New England and nearby New York some clubs are switching to Velvet bent for greens. The Kernwood strain is being used mostly. Elsewhere Velvet bent is not popular because of intense heat in the summer. Velvet is the finest textured of all grasses and is favored by many golfers. Its tendency to thatch with age to a point where surfaces become spongy and footprint badly, and the fact that it fails to recover after abuse in hot weather are the two drawbacks to its use from a maintenance point of view. Iron chlorosis is another problem when the turf becomes old, but can be controlled and prevented by the regular use of a little iron sulphate.

Velvet bent requires a very different cultural treatment than creeping bent, because of the denser and tighter character of the turf. Top-dressings must be lighter in amount and sandier in character. Too much top-dressing smothers the grass and even with the right amount it cannot be rubbed into the turf unless the mixture is quite sandy. The leaves and stems of Velvet bent do not undergo complete decay. They accumulate as a peat-like mass. There is no use making a bad situation worse by applying more organic matter in the top-dressing. The tendency has been to over-water Velvet bent turf. Its dense surface mat checks the loss of soil moisture by direct evaporation. Best results are ob-



Goose grass in apron where mower thinned grass. Pao was good in spring, then came the goose grass.

tained by less frequent but thorough watering. Except in very hot weather an interval of seven days, or more, between waterings is not uncommon. After Velvet becomes matted keeping it continuously wet tends to aggravate iron chlorosis. Those most experienced with Velvet bent seem to think it needs slightly less nitrogen than the aggressive creeping bent grasses.

South Turns to Fine Bermuda

In the South interest in the finer textured Bermuda grasses for greens is tremendous. They have been used long enough by Hall in Savannah and in South Florida to prove their worth and superiority. The



Iron chlorosis on putting green.

Gene Tift Bermuda greens at Indian Creek, Miami Shores, Plantation Club, Fort Lauderdale, Lake Worth — just to mention a few — were very much like bent greens all last winter, and were considered as such by many northerners who played them. The new Tifton 127 developed by Dr. Glenn W. Burton looks like an outstanding grass. It is a cross of African Bermuda with Tifton 57. The resulting strain has the fine-leaf characteristics of African Bermuda and the robust growth characteristics of Tifton 57. A small temporary green of this grass survived last winter at Cincinnati Country Club. It looked very good in July. Last winter was a mild one, so the coming winter may be a better test. If the grass survives, it is the intention of the club to try it on a pocketed green where bent has never been good in mid-summer.

The finer textured Bermudas which can make a turf sufficiently dense to resist invasion by coarse, common Bermuda have a big future, and will dominate on greens where the use of bent is not feasible or impossible. But they will need different handling than common Bermuda. Top-dressing rates must be lighter to avoid

smother and nitrogen feeding should be more frequent, but at lighter rates. The timing of phosphate and potash applications may affect stubbliness. Red top may prove to be a better grass for winter play than rye grass. Thinning of the turf before seeding and light seeding rates are apt to prove best.

Leaf Spot Diseases Increase

Leaf spot diseases have had more attention this year than ever before. The helminthosporium type has been known for long as a devastating enemy of common blue grass. It has been blamed for the melting out of poa annua. In the days of Virginia bent there were times when leaf spot played havoc with it. The term "melting out" is now being used by some to designate damage caused by leaf spot disease.

Leaf spot fungus spores lurk everywhere ready to attack at the slightest provocation. As a consequence, leaf spot can be the primary cause of damage. Very often grass falls prey to leaf spot after the plant is weakened by something else. Then the disease is secondary. When leaf spot is the primary cause, it is reasonable to expect control by a fungicide such as PMAS or Acti-dione. Where the disease is secondary, the logical procedure is to eliminate those things which weaken the grass. Then leaf



Excellent grass on this apron is the result of enough width for wide turn of mower.

spot may automatically disappear, or respond to fungicide treatment.

In 1953, and in 1952 as well, there was no curvularia type of leaf spot on the Velvet bent plots at Rhode Island where Dr. DeFrance was using PMAS regularly for crabgrass control. It was present on the check plots, and was seen elsewhere in New England. In these cases curvularia was controlled by fungicide because it was

(Continued on page 102)

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Short Golf Course, Inexpensive Community Recreation

By GEOFFREY S. CORNISH

SHORT golf courses are becoming important recreational facilities in many communities, under private ownership, in limited park areas and at summer resort hotels. Fortunately only a small acreage is required for this form of golf and almost every community in the United States and Canada has not one but several desirable locations.

When one watches play on a short course he cannot help but note the fascination the game holds for both experienced players and beginners, old and young alike. Columnist Bill Moiles of the Worcester Massachusetts Telegram reports a typical reaction. Having played Little St. Andrews, a floodlit approach course on the Boston Worcester Turnpike, with Mrs. Moiles he writes:

"This thing was a revelation to us. Time was and a dim and distant time it now seems when we were fanatically devoted to miniature golf. This place on the Turnpike isn't quite miniature yet it isn't quite full size. It's in between. We felt the old madness.

There was part of a moon shining down and we found the whole operation sort of stimulating. May be the means of getting us out in the night air more than we have since we moved into the city. We may even get a plaid hat and who can tell what we might do to par."

Two weeks later he again wrote:

"Slowly, gradually, at times almost imperceptibly we are edging into golf with all its subtle joys and frustrations. It is much too early to tell whether this will be a good thing or bad thing.

... we have come along so well with our pitching and putting at Little St. Andrews out on the Boston Turnpike that we actually had a hole-in-one on the 12th there last Friday night.

We are thinking of adopting Gene Sarazen's style. We already have his hair-line, so that's sort of a beginning right there."

Mr. Moiles' experience expressed in his whimsical remarks is typical of thousands who are finding a new pleasure through short golf.

Having talked with many of the patrons at several recently installed short courses in New England, I have been impressed by the fact that a remarkably large number of people never before had the opportunity of playing golf. Often this is due to lack of facilities, but even when facilities do exist introduction to the game is not always easy. Playing on a full length course without previous instruction particularly when it is crowded is embarrassing for many people, and some who have tried it with little or no knowledge of the game and no one to help them have given up in despair and lost interest.

The atmosphere of a short course on the other hand is entirely different. The shorter distances give the beginner confidence and he does not feel that he is holding up experienced players unduly. Also an instructor can quickly range the entire area giving helpful hints to all in difficulty. Under these circumstances beginners take quickly to the game and often graduate with confidence to longer courses. Since most short courses provide necessary clubs and balls the newcomer has the opportunity of learning something about the game before he invests in his own clubs — a contributing factor in the popularity of short golf.

Young couples are barred from many forms of recreation by the universal baby sitter problem. Mrs. Lawrence S. Dickinson, wife of Professor Dickinson, well known turf expert at the University of Mass., suggested the happy idea of providing supervised children's play areas in conjunction with short courses. When ground is available adjacent to the clubhouse, these areas and the necessary supervision can be easily provided at little additional cost. This opens up the game to an age group particularly interested in outdoor recreation.

There are several types and lengths of course that can be built on limited acreage to appeal to practically all age groups and to all degrees of golfers. Two such courses built in 1952 represent different styles and serve different purposes.