

More Exciting than the Oil Boom

Smart Promotions Make Golf Big Business in Small New Mexico Town

By ART GATTS

THE busiest nine-hole private golf club in the country calls for superlative efficiency and savvy in the pro department to keep operations merry and serene.

And the Hobbs (N.M.) CC has got that competent and calm management under pro Dode Forrester. There's no doubt about that. There's not reason either for doubting the Hobbs club's distinction as the liveliest of all nine-hole private clubs. It's got the largest tournament in the southwest as an annual fixture, several other big annual events, a steady program of golf members' competition and social activity and, in general, reflects the vigorous spirit of an oil-rich town of 28,000 where golf is played the year around.

The Hobbs CC is the scene of the Petroleum Institute's annual blind bogey scholarship trophy, an event that has a field of more than 600.

Last year 625 players entered the tournament and by the time they had fired their nine holes of golf, the HCC greens looked like they had been bombarded. But they all played, and winners — everyone wins something — collected \$5,000 in merchandise prizes. This year 804 golfers shared an even larger list of prizes.

Dode starts teeing off the foursomes at 5:14 a. m. on Friday and Saturday. Sometimes the last group needs a flashlight to line-up the final putt but everyone has a big time doing it.

Southeastern New Mexico's API chapter sponsors the tourney and the profits are used to provide four college scholarships to students majoring in an oil-industry course.

Every sixth player wins a major prize (golf bag, dozen balls, golf shoes, etc.) This year 68 dozen golf balls were donated by the Milwhite Mud Co. of Hobbs. Everyone teeing off got one Titleist ball. Not bad for the pro shop.

A month before the tourney starts, prizes start coming in. Pledged early for this year's tournament were 25 pairs of golf shoes, 17 golf bags, 20 dozen golf balls, four sets of irons, six sets of woods, five putters, golf cart seats, a dozen steaks (to be flown from Fort Worth), a cart and bag, two carts, two dozen sports shirts and golf slacks, gift certificates for \$25 and \$15 and \$80 worth of luggage.

Club 20 Years Old

Hobbs Country Club was organized in 1936 and grass greens were installed in 1938. Dode has been pro at Hobbs since



A few of the more than 800 golfers who took part in the American Petroleum Institute's 1956 blind bogey tournament at Hobbs CC get ready to scramble for a warehouse full of prizes. Everyone entering the tournament came away with some item from the \$5,000 plus collection of merchandise. Play started at 5 a.m. on Friday and continued through nightfall of the following day.

1948. His brother, Al, is professional of the new Hobbs Municipal course, finished last summer and already bustling with activity.

And to keep it in the family, the Forresters have another brother, Doyle, who is Dode's assistant!

The country club is planning to build another nine holes because the present nine — evenly divided among par 5, par 4 and par 3 holes — is a bit crowded most of the time. The club has a closed membership now — 325 persons — and future applications for memberships go on the waiting list.

(Editor's Note: Hobbs CC officials just recently announced that Warren Cantrell, Lubbock, Tex., golf architect, has been hired to design an additional nine holes.)

Besides the API, the club sponsors an Invitation in June, ladies and men's club championships, a junior invitation, a spring men's tournament and hosts a West Texas-New Mexico sectional pro-am.

The Invitation is something else Hobbs is proud of. It annually attracts almost 200 entries — another rush on a nine-hole course — from some three states. The hospitality is famous. Such players as Billy Maxwell, Joe Conrad, Don Cherry and Rex Baxter Jr. have played in the tournaments.

In 1953, a \$3,500 Hobbs Open was won by Dutch Harrison, who set the present course record of 61 in the first round. Fred Hawkins, Dick Metz, Tommy Bolt, Jackson Bradley, Chuck Klein and Ray Gafford were among those entered. Conrad was low amateur.

The national junior sectional qualifying has also been held there the past few years. Junior golf is a big item in Forrester

and club plans. Hobbs has sent players to the national junior and national Jaycee tournaments the last two years and the Hobbs High golf team uses the club as its home base.

Honesty Has Its Reward

Trophies are given for the low individual score and to the most honest golfers — last year's winner scored 73 strokes. One man won a set of irons last year and said: "What am I going to do with them? This is the only time I ever play golf." Remarks such as this are heard all around.

There are 10 separate blind bogie prizes — closest to the pin on a certain hole, closest to a flag in a fairway of another, long drive, putting, players coming the greatest distance, player guessing the number of balls going into the lake on one hole (124 last year).

In eight years, only one hole-in-one has been made in the API tourney, but one day two holes-in-one were made on the same hole within 20 minutes of each other at Hobbs CC.

Dode provides a temporary practice putting green during the tournament — 600 golfers would ruin the permanent, regular green. It was left open once and had to be closed for three months to allow recovery.

Yep, Hobbs is a growing, bustling town and golf grows with it. The census in 1930 for instance was 598, in 1940 it was 10,619. That had jumped to 13,875 in 1950 and Chamber of Commerce officials estimate 28,000 now.

The first oil well in the Hobbs pool

(Continued on page 69)

"Putting is a pleasure

... all summer long!"

THAT'S WHAT SUPERINTENDENTS from coast-to-coast are telling us. Why are things going so well for these Superintendents? Because they are using the West Point Verti-Cut to create tight, upright growth on grain-free greens. They are maintaining true putting surfaces that have had excess growth removed through light, frequent Verti-cutting.

IF SPIKING IS REQUIRED during the summer months before thorough aeration in the fall, Superintendents know there's no need to buy other equipment when they have the Verti-cut. It adjusts quickly and easily from a Verti-cut to a Verti-spike position so that the self-sharpening blades can slit the turf.

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Fig. 1. — Bermuda grass area (left of pencil) was treated with Maleic Hydrazide before overseeding with rye while section on right was left untreated. Notice the difference in texture.

Chemical Inhibits Bermuda Growth In Fall Changeover of Greens

Tells Use of Maleic Hydrazide in Summer-Winter Turf Transition

By JOSEPH S. FOLKNER*

ANUAL rye is most often used to overseed permanent Bermuda turf to produce green color during the winter in southern states. Seaside bent in combination, or seaside bent alone are occasionally used.

The fall transition period—warm season to cool season grass—is often complicated by warm temperatures which keep the Bermuda grass growing vigorously at the time when overseeding with a cool season grass should be performed.

Several years of exploratory work with Maleic Hydrazide in Arizona have indicated that Bermuda grass growth can be inhibited for periods up to six weeks without injury or discoloration of the turf. Maleic Hydra-

zide, in addition to inhibiting growth, also inhibits seedstalk and pollen production.

Results obtained with Bermuda grass, however, are contrary to those reported by workers testing Maleic Hydrazide on cool season turfgrasses.

Large Scale Trial

Based on this work, Gene Reid, Supt. of Parks, Tucson, in cooperation with the Horticulture Dept. of the University of Arizona, agreed to a large scale trial involving Maleic Hydrazide as an aid in the fall changeover of greens at Randolph Municipal GC.

On Sept. 10, 1954, 18 temporary putting greens were sprayed with .18 per cent MH-30 per gal. of water applied at the rate of 4-gals. per 1,000 sq. ft. The maximum temperature was 99 on that date. Test plots lo-

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cated on fairways were sprayed with concentrations of .09, .18, .27, and .45 per cent per gal. of MH-30.

The .18 per cent solution applied Sept. 10, inhibited the Bermuda grass where applied properly. Uneven coverage and an irrigation too soon after applying reduced the overall effectiveness of this treatment.

In fairway test plots, no discoloration of turf occurred; yet growth was inhibited and seed stalks reduced or eliminated.

Complete Growth Stoppage

On the basis of preliminary observations, the 18 permanent greens were sprayed with a .45 per cent concentration on Oct. 21, 1954. Immediately prior to treatment, greens were mowed at a one-half in. height of cut. Following treatment, all cultural practices — including watering and mowing — were omitted for one week. At the end of the week the greens were cut again at one-half in. No clippings resulted. This lack of clippings indicated complete cessation of growth.

To prepare greens for overseeding, mowers were set at 3/16 in. and the turf cover removed. Clippings resulting from this mowing were a green chaff rather than clippings as such. This close mowing or scalping removed all of the green Bermuda leaves and left only brown stems.

Annual rye and Seaside bent were seeded and mulched with finely ground sewage sludge on Oct. 29 and 30. At the end of one week the Bermuda stems had greened up and the areas were showing seedlings of rye one-half in. tall.

The competition factor was eliminated by Maleic Hydrazide at a time when temperatures were conducive to the growth of both warm and cool season grasses, thus allowing much earlier establishment of a satisfactory winter turf. The new seedlings were apparently unaffected by the chemical, indicating no residual toxicity.

The winter-summer transition was satisfactory with the rye and bent going out and gradually being replaced by Bermuda. The greens were never out of play during this period.

The same treatment of the greens was employed during the 1955-56 season with equally satisfactory results.

Rapid Transition

El Rio CC in Tucson for the past several years has been overseeded with Seaside bent. The transition period generally has been slow and late due to high temperatures favoring the growth of Bermuda grass. This created considerable competi-

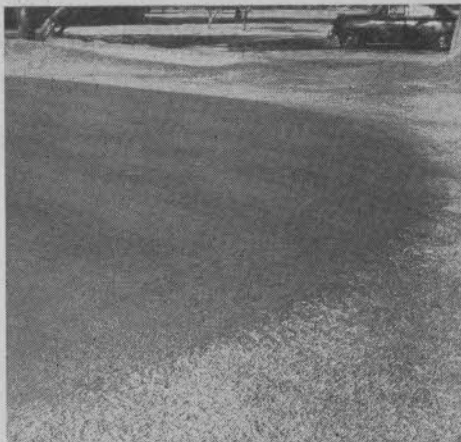


Fig. 2 — Contrast in texture between treated area and untreated portion of 17th green (foreground) is well emphasized in this photo at Randolph MGC.

tion for the bent grass seedlings.

In the fall of 1955, Ellis J. AuBuchon, chmn. of the green committee, and Otto Grieshaber, supt., requested assistance in preparing the course for the Arizona Women's Open early in December. Maleic Hydrazide was suggested as a possibility for a more rapid transition. On Sept. 21, temporary greens were sprayed with 120 cu. cm. of an aqueous solution of MH-30 in 5-gals. of water per 1,000 sq. ft. One oz. of Velsicol was added to the solution as a spreader. The temperature on that date was 97. Irrigation was withheld one week allowing time for the compound to be absorbed and translocated. The greens were verticut, fertilized with 10-lbs. 16-20-0 per 1,000 sq. ft. and seeded to rye on Sept. 29 and 30. Play was transferred to these greens Oct. 11.

The regular greens were sprayed Oct. 11, and with one exception, treated in the same manner as the temporaries. Seaside bent (instead of rye grass) was seeded at the rate of 5-lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. and then topdressed. The seedlings emerged Oct. 30. The greens were mowed for the first time Nov. 15, at 9/16 in. Succeeding mowings were progressively lower until Nov. 30, a 1/4 in. height was attained. Greens were in play the first week of December.

Approximately one-fourth of one regular green was left unsprayed to serve as a check. In this area Bermuda grass reappeared and was growing strongly prior to the emergence of the bent. Fig. 2 shows the coarse texture of the Bermuda on the untreated right-hand side of the green. Fig.

(Continued on page 69)

CHRISTMAS PROFITS

We've done it again! Once more, we've come up with what we sincerely believe is the handsomest, most appealing, most saleable holiday gift package you've ever seen. Here's the deal.

One dozen* Titleists (100's, Regulars or Reds) in a deluxe package that anyone will be glad to keep on the living-room table long after these famous balls have been used. AND NO EXTRA CHARGE FOR THAT.

Each ball personalized with name of the lucky recipient. AND NO EXTRA CHARGE FOR THAT, EITHER.

During October and November, these gift packages will be advertised to the consumer in national magazines, and on the sales made by us from this advertising, THE WHOLE PROFIT GOES TO YOU.

Each year more and more of you Pros take advantage of this Acushnet idea to make sales during the slow winter season.

Each year more and more Titleists are sold for Christmas gifts. This year, with the popularity of Titleist at an *all-time high*, the opportunity for increased sales is greater than ever.

Samples are on their way to you now, or will be shortly. Get your orders in quickly, either direct to us or through the Acushnet salesman who calls on you — *and don't under-order*. You'll need a lot. Acushnet Process Sales Co., New Bedford, Massachusetts.

**Also in half-dozens as shown (sorry, no personalizing on half-dozens) at no extra charge.*

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Club Fitting Calls for Study of Golfer's Physical Equipment

By JOE E. DOAN

A PRO has got to know how to fit clubs correctly before he is qualified to hold a first class club job.

But to learn how to fit clubs is a problem that bothers many professionals. Nothing in the way of formal education in this subject has been provided since bench club making became practically extinct. When a fellow worked at making hickory-shafted clubs he learned how to fit each club to its user. Now, to learn this art and science, the younger professional or assistant has to get what he can from the experience of the older pros, from studious observation of players on the course and on lesson tees, from manufacturers' salesmen, from visits to the factories of companies making clubs and from trial and error.

GOLFDOM receives many letters from ambitious young assistants and pros asking how they can learn club fitting. There isn't any short, correct answer that can be given. The PGA is considering having instruction in club fitting as one of the subjects in the winter school sessions for pros and assistants that it conducts at the PGA National club at Dunedin, Fla. Nothing definite has been decided on that program at this time.

So the young man in professional golf now has the important job of educating himself in club fitting. If he doesn't do this he doesn't know how to order stock that

will fit the requirements of most of his customers and, even though he does know about material, workmanship and design that determine club value, he doesn't know what clubs will be right for each buyer.

The importance of expertly fitted clubs is made plain by a line that Tommy Armour has in his best-selling golf book. It should be prominently displayed in every well-qualified golf professional's shop: "Properly fitted clubs are the only part of improved golf that anyone can buy."

Armour has them coming from Britain and the Continent and all over the United States to take lessons from him and says that too many of these golfers could play better golf if they stayed home and used lighter clubs. Hogan also figures prominently in setting the trend toward lighter clubs by saying that he prefers to use a club that he can control instead of a club that controls him.

Works on the Circuit

Although some of the newer professionals and many thousands of the ordinary golfers don't realize it, there are at least five younger stars on the tournament circuit who began to get rather consistently in the money only after they got clubs that really fitted them. This fitting was the result of studious attention by factory men of the companies with which the young playing pros were connected.

Expert club fitting service is worth money to the club buyer and means a lot financially to pro shop sales inasmuch as it is a service that stores can't supply.

Experiences of some older pros that help younger men have been related to GOLFDOM. We'll be printing these helpful comments from time to time and will start with the remarks of Wally Mund, for years pro at Midland Hills CC, St. Paul.

Mund says: "About seven of ten players you can fit accurately by watching their swings and studying their physiques. The other three may call for a little experimentation. Usually a pro has enough of a variety of old or new clubs around to use

Pro Comment on Fitting

Armour: Many persons would play better golf if they used lighter clubs.

Hogan: Teach them to control and not be controlled by the club.

Mund: Is the shaft too stiff? Is the head too heavy?

Novak: Middle age means a fellow can't do it alone. He needs help from his clubs.

Ciuci: The average golfer should be fitted with clubs that can be controlled with a finger grip.

REPORT ON HOW KROMAD* STANDS TODAY

No. 5 in a series of reports on KROMAD—the new broad-spectrum fungicide formulation developed by Mallinckrodt.

The four preceding reports have explained that KROMAD is an advanced fungicide which offers several advantages not found in *any other fungicide available today*.

During this season we have watched KROMAD closely, and its performance has surpassed our original hopes. Moreover, the original team that developed KROMAD is still working with golf course superintendents and plant pathologists toward developing *even better* broad-spectrum fungicide formulations.

After several months of disease weather and widespread use of KROMAD on the nation's golf courses, we feel it is time for an appraisal of KROMAD.

Information gathered from golf course superintendents and plant pathologists who have had contact with KROMAD this season confirms its effectiveness against brown patch. *The evidence is conclusive.* Golf course superintendents who are using KROMAD on a preventive schedule are having little trouble with brown patch.

How is KROMAD performing as a control for dollar spot? Experience shows that KROMAD's ability to prevent and control this widespread disease is impressive. As we showed in the last report, the reduction in the number of dollar spot lesions after treatment of diseased plots is ample evidence of KROMAD's worth as a curative as well as preventive fungicide.

Of all the complimentary things we hear about KROMAD, one of the most frequently mentioned is that it does an all-around job of controlling most major turf diseases. That, of course, is exactly what

we intended. Our aim was to greatly simplify the planning and execution of a disease-control program and eliminate the need for buying, stocking and applying several fungicides.

There is one KROMAD advantage which is particularly appealing to golf course superintendents. Almost without exception, reports show that KROMAD-treated greens show better color and improved appearance. This is in part due to the non-fungicidal agents in KROMAD: urea and iron. Both these ingredients are valuable aids in turf culture.

KROMAD shows up well on another score, too. A large number of reports have come from golf course superintendents to confirm KROMAD's value in controlling Helminthosporium (melting out). Data shows that the disease is usually checked with one application.

Similar encouraging results have been observed in the control of other leaf spot diseases such as Curvularia (fading out).

All available information points up one all-important fact: Properly applied, KROMAD is a true broad-spectrum fungicide in every sense of the meaning. The results of our field tests have been confirmed by hundreds of golf course superintendents who have used KROMAD for turf disease control.

Try KROMAD soon. Your Mallinckrodt distributor is thoroughly familiar with KROMAD and would like the opportunity to give you the full story.

Mallinckrodt Chemical Works, St. Louis, New York.

*Trademark

Old Habit: Metropolitan PGA Pros Re-Elect Inglis



Metropolitan Section PGA members are shown at a recent meeting at the Hotel Park Sheraton in New York where among other things they re-elected John R. Inglis, Fairview CC, Elmsford (4th from left, bottom row), pres. for the 28th time. Other officers and directors are: Fred Moore, Angelo Mainero, Pete Cassella, R. C. MacDonald, Joe Phillips, Elmer Voight, Al Renzetti, Joe Mazziotti, Fred Grieves, LeRoy Jones, Fred Annon, Herman Barron, Jack Sabol, Ralph Leaf, Al Ciuci, Toney Tiso, Alex Ednie and Harry Monteideo.

for demonstration in these puzzling cases.

"Fairly often a pro will find that some trouble that stays with a pupil is caused by the clubs rather than by the swing. One of my pupils, a very good player, suddenly developed a spell of wildness. I tried almost every possible way to get him shooting consistently straight. After several other experienced professionals and I had failed to solve the fellow's problem I got him to practice and play with stiffer shafted clubs. That did the business. He was a strong young man.

"Frequently when a player is in his early 50s and develops trouble it's because the shaft is too stiff; maybe because the head's too heavy."

Joe Novak, Bel Air CC (LA dist.) pro and former PGA pres., some time ago said that if and when pros were able to get club fitting strongly emphasized as a pro service the pros would be doing a great thing especially for members who are around 50 years old.

"The golfer who is a little past middle age and who has been a strong and active man at golf and other sports when he was younger eventually comes to the day when he needs more help from his clubs," said Novak. "Actually the pro to be of greatest usefulness to his members should insist on most of his players changing to better fitting clubs when the players' muscular fitness changes."

Al Ciuci, pro at Fresh Meadow CC (NY Met dist.), says: "The professional must give attention to teaching his assistants how to fit clubs by pointing out details in the

physical equipment of the player and his type of swing that calls for certain specifications in a club.

"Then, when the player decides to get a new set of clubs the assistants and pro will know exactly what the player needs and whether it is in stock or will have to be ordered.

"The fast swinger almost always needs a club with a light head and a stiff shaft. The older fellow who doesn't have a full swing needs some weight in the head and plenty of feel in the shaft to get distance and snap into his shots.

"The average golfer is a pounder instead of a swinger or hitter. He needs weight in the club to get results but he shouldn't have the club so heavy he can't keep it under close control with a finger grip.

"The grip sometimes may need a bit of alteration if the player holds the club with an interlocking grip. Then the club's grip possibly should be built up a little so it's thicker at the top.

"The majority of golfers have arms about the same length as you'll find when you measure how far the tips of their fingers are from the floor. But when you've got a short-armed player you should give him a club with a longer shaft so he will get a good-sized arc in his swing.

"Every order a professional places for clubs should be with the specific needs of his players clearly in mind. The manufacturers have in stock top grade clubs that will exactly take care of probably 95 per cent of all golfers."