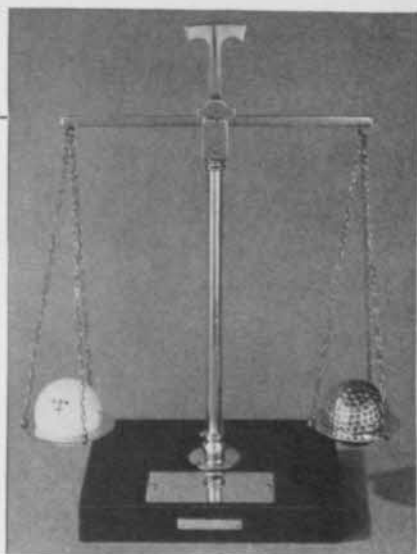


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OAKWOODS



5 Years Later

Are you planning to build a course in the \$100,000 class? If so, reading this may enable you to copy many things they did at a North Carolina club — and avoid a couple mistakes they made

OAKWOODS CC, North Wilkesboro, N. C., now in its fifth year of operation, is an excellent case history in the organization, financing and construction of a golf club. For groups that can see their way to invest about \$100,000 in a course, a study of how Oakwoods came into existence may offer a convenient solution to the detailed and often complicated matter of getting an undertaking such as this off the ground. Or, at least, it should do away with false starts.

The Oakwoods story starts in 1952 when a group of golfers, weary of travelling nearly 50 miles to get in a round, got together and decided that all this travel-time was not only taking the sharp edge off their games but their enthusiasm. Among the group were two or three bankers who devised a couple obvious but easily overlooked schemes for raising money to get the club started.

First of all, the bankers suggested that persons who wanted to join the club could borrow the initiation fee and dues and pay them back just as any other personal loan. Secondly, these men had enough influence with their colleagues to persuade them that their bank could donate a rather large sum to the Oakwoods project and charge

it off as advertising expense. Later, it was agreed, that fees and dues did not have to be collected in their entirety at the time a person joined the club, but could be paid off under a kind of subscription arrangement. A call for these funds went out only when construction costs caught up with what was left in the treasury. In the estimation of one North Wilkesboro citizen who had belonged to other clubs in his day, the Oakwoods' system of extracting fees and dues was the most painless one he had ever run into.

Oakwoods' investment in 148 acres of rolling land cost \$11,000. Pat Williams, Sr., who sold the property to the golf group, later gave the club 27 additional acres so there would be plenty of space in which to get in 18 regulation holes when Oakwoods is ready to build its second 9. Pat's recompense for this generous gesture came within two years. His son, Pat, Jr., scored two aces at Oakwoods, one in 1953 and the other in 1954.

Hamm Designed Course

Arthur Hamm, one of those venerable Scot architects, designed the Oakwoods course. There was some opposition at first to Hamm's rather individualistic methods of stripping in traps and contouring greens,



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Oakwoods' well stocked pro shop, located in clubhouse wing, is 30 ft. wide, 14 ft. deep. In photo is Newell Baker, pro-supt., who has been with the club since it was organized.

but today Oakwoods members are thankful that Art's opinions on design prevailed. There is no lack of beauty in the North Wilkesboro course because what nature hadn't provided, the architect supplied.

According to Pro-Supt. Newell E. Baker, Jr., who came on the Oakwoods scene during the organization stage, one rather costly mistake was made in constructing the course. Every fairway, with the exception of two, had to be cleared of trees. Local contractors would have handled this without charge in exchange for the lumber, but the course construction contractor under-

took the job himself. It cost Oakwoods about \$4,000 or \$5,000 to learn the startling facts of tree removal. Oakwoods officials also are not completely satisfied with their watering system. It is a low pressure type that caused the original growth of grass on some fairways to be retarded and hasn't proved to be completely adequate during prolonged dry spells. An additional initial investment of \$1,500 in a more efficient system would have been a wiser, and in the long run, a less expensive choice.

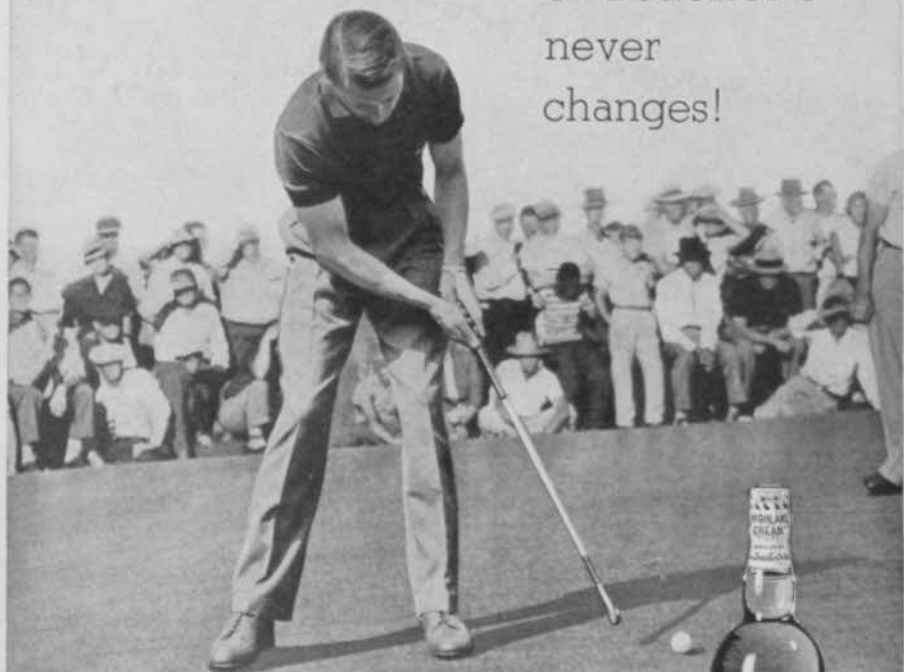
(Continued on page 108)

Oakwoods is a succession of interesting holes. Ninth green is at left; first tee is on edge of hill in center of picture; No. 4 hole is in valley, has pine tree background. It's 520 yards long.





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Construction students are checked out on the transit. Bill Mitchell is at right.

Mitchell's School of Construction

*A New Hampshire Architect
Instructs His Employees in
the Art of Course Building*

By IRWIN N. ROSEE

GOLF, like most all other industries, has been hampered in recent years by a shortage of men who are qualified to handle various technical jobs connected with the game. Probably highest on the list of technicians most desperately needed are construction supts. There simply aren't nearly enough experts of this kind to go around.

Bill Mitchell, a course architect who has headquarters in North Sutton, N.H., did something last winter, though, about remedying this situation by setting up a school to teach men how to translate blueprints into golf courses. He took 18 of his more experienced employees, fellows who had been trained to some extent in different golf construction and maintenance projects, and taught them everything he and his brother, Sam, know about building courses.

The academic sessions were held in the local public high school while the practical aspects of construction were taught at the Mitchell Brothers' farm where, it is claimed, the world's largest stretch of green turf is located. The North Sutton curriculum was made up of these subjects:

- The Game of Golf
- Plans and Their Interpretations
- Fundamentals of Surveying
- Heavy Equipment Usage
- Watering Systems — Installation and Use
- Drainage Theories and Installations
- Use of Wheeled Tractor for Finishing Work
- Grass and Seed Identification
- Fertilizer Mixtures and Effects
- Sod and Turf Development
- New Course Maintenance
- Cost Record Keeping
- Principles of Architecture



Seed identification proves to be a fascinating subject for this advanced class.



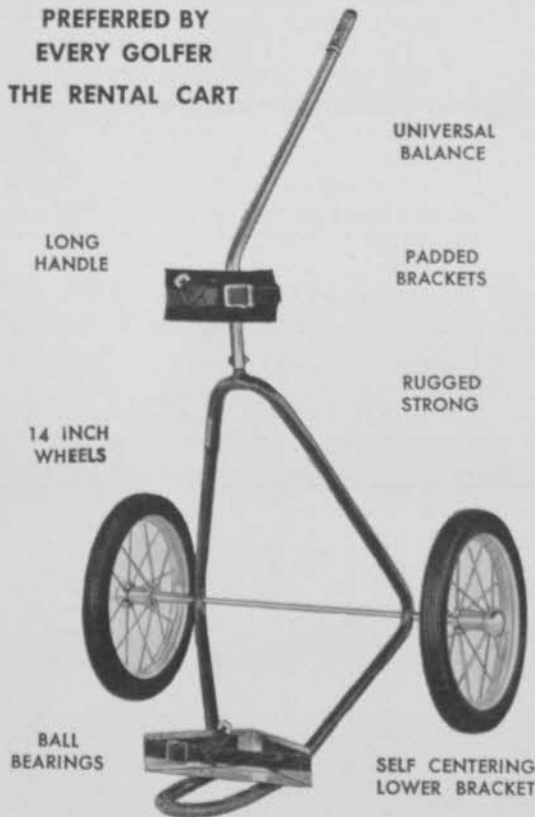
Theory of grasses is subject taught by Sam Mitchell.

Kaddie Kart

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The wise club or pro that installs Kaddie Karts 100% has a ready public waiting to use this Kart. Wherever he goes, the golfer finds Kaddie Karts a mark of distinction at the best courses. That is why often when Kaddie Karts are substituted for other carts a jump of 50%, 75% or 100% in income has been recorded in a single week.

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The Long Purse

By LEO FESER

'Twas back in the days before the car.
On this occasion we traveled far
By train. And passing by a field of
green

We saw those folks. I'd never seen
Full grown men with pants like mine.
(Boys then wore knickers at age of nine.)
They carried with them bags of sticks;
They struck at a ball with mighty licks.
Wondering what they were trying to
play,

I asked my father. He turned to say:
"They call it golf. Yes, that's the name.
For people of wealth. A Rich Man's
Game."

Much grass has been grown and cut
away

Since that very eventful day.
A life of slices, shanks and hooks,

Being owner, pro, supt. and just about everything else at the Orono GC in Wayzata, Minn., Leo Feser doesn't get much time to devote to writing poetry. But after catching the tempo of Leo's masterful work, you'll probably agree that what was golf's gain was literature's loss.

Games with masters, men and crooks;
Millions have shouted the cry of "Fore!"
These were followed by millions more —
Lawyers, bakers, bankers, clerks,
Preachers, teachers, wise men, jerks,
Stenos, spinsters, scholars, maids —
All joined the golfing cavalcades.
Seeking fun or seeking fame,
Playing at the Rich Man's Game.

Play deigned for men of wealth
Played by those in search of health
Made rich in life by courting par.
The little sphere goes sailing far
Toward verdant green. The putter
flicks —

Elation! In the cup it clicks!
Value that will outweigh gold
Gained by chipping firm and bold.
Wealth of Croesus? Golfing score
Less than that one made before.
Truly, it remains the same —
Golf is still a Rich Man's Game!

Bill Mitchell is not hoarding the men he has trained. Some of them are available to serve as construction supervisors or consultants regardless of where a course may be abuilding. Before last year, the North Sutton architect trained only one or two men at time. At various times, these expert course builders were dispatched to locations far removed from New Hampshire to either supervise jobs or serve as troubleshooters. Mitchell recalls with a great deal of pride how one of his supervisors once saved a country club several thousand dollars by questioning an architect's blueprints. It turned out that the plans had been drawn to two scales, a fact that was brought out after the first green had been constructed. A quick conference with the architect uncovered the error; the plans were redrawn and from that point everything proceeded without a hitch.

This is not an isolated case, either. On several occasions superintendents trained at the North Sutton school have recommended changes in grass and fertilizer specifications that have resulted in great-

ly improved turf, or made suggestions as to drainage and contouring that have saved hundreds and perhaps thousands of dollars.

Present plans call for the Mitchell brothers to continue with their winter construction school and perhaps enlarge it if conditions warrant. Like many architects, they feel that course building will never reach its true potential until enough men are trained to grasp and apply the things the architect is trying to put into a course.

Back to Palm Beach

The 1958 national Mixed Foursome Two-Ball amateur championship will return to its traditional Palm Beach locale where it will be played at the Tequesta CC, Jupiter, Feb. 11-15, according to John E. McAuliffe, tournament chmn. For years, previous to 1957, the event was played at the Everglades Club in Palm Beach. Golfers from U. S., Mexico, Canada and Cuba will be shooting for the title won in 1957 by Jack Penrose, Miami Beach, and Ann Richardson, Columbus, O.