

MACGREGOR '58

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Distinctively styled and tailored, this "Sweep Flare" model is breaking all-time sales records . . . with a 40% increase over last year's comparable model!

Display this golf bag (9600 series) . . . and watch it lead the way to greater pro shop profits.



Strictly PROfessional

Open Set Sales Plan

A decision that tests a pro's business judgment is that of deciding to what extent lower-priced clubs should be displayed.

Pro quality lines have enabled the pro to command the market for the better and higher-priced golf clubs and balls but with the vast expansion of the golf field there are many thousands who can't, or won't, pay for first class merchandise.

A great deal of this lower-priced business from newer golfers is coming to pros through their sales of clubs on which trade-in allowances have been made. But the trade-ins aren't the pro's answer to the problem of increasing club sales to women.

Stores are beginning to make strong plays for women's club business and the woman buyer isn't as embarrassed about buying clubs elsewhere than at the pro shop, as men members often are.

Without trading down women's club quality standards pros are selling to women by featuring sets of a couple of woods and five or six irons of first class open sets. The women are well sold on the idea that they can fill in the sets later.

Now when women's golf play is increasing so much faster than women's club sales at pro shops, the open set sales plan calls for study and testing by more pros. It gives the woman golfer the deal she wants in getting finest grade clubs without spending any more money than she would for a lower standard of design and construction.

What Do You Know—And Do About Club Fitting?

An exceptionally successful pro businessman says:

"Club fitting is really the basis of the pro's selling operations, yet very few assistants know what weights, lies and shafts

really fit the customer. If the pro department isn't fully competent to do a perfect job in this respect it lays itself open to vigorous store competition. I'm astonished that the pros don't make more of their expert qualifications in fitting clubs, especially since about 30-40 per cent of all clubs in use by average players are not properly suited to their physiques and swings. One of the most costly oversights in pro merchandising has been in failing to emphasize this point. Hence, old fellows who have plenty of money and should have clubs fitting their years, are playing with the same clubs they had 10-15 years ago."

Self-Selection Signs

Golfers who stand around waiting for you to serve them become disgruntled in a hurry if service is poor. Signs encouraging self selection should be located around your shop, especially where those items that can be handled on a self-service basis are displayed. They are a big help on busy days, or during busy periods of the day, and enable you and your assistants to handle many more customers than if you try to give each and every one personal attention.

Advertise the New Line

Whenever you add a new line to your pro shop merchandise, it is an occasion for doing some advertising, according to Walter Biber of Kalamazoo (Mich.) CC.

If you only put the information on a postcard and send it to your members, says Walt, you are calling the attention of golfers to your shop as well as the new merchandise. Here is a sample of how Biber words his messages:

• I'm happy to announce that I have added the sports shirt to my line. Many of the best men's stores in the country carry this item which has a fine reputation for style and quality. •

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The 1958 edition — the finest by far yet published — will be ready for delivery September 2nd. Watch your mail for complete details.

It brings you *extra customers, extra business, extra profits* . . . from golfers whose Christmas gift spending far exceeds any other spending season. We suggest you take prompt action to assure full delivery of your copies. Each year, although we increase the supply by thousands, we must disappoint Professionals who order too late.

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If you've got a question you want Dr. Fred V. Grau to answer, please address it to Grau Q&A, Golfdom, 407 S. Dearborn, Chicago 5, Ill.

Keeping Out of the Way

GOLF courses are built to accommodate golfers. Golfers expect to enjoy pleasurable uninterrupted play unmarred by scattered hoses, whirling sprinklers, pebbly topdressing, chugging tractors and chirring mowers. Golfers might be convinced that they must accept maintenance operations charitably as a necessary evil, but most of them would be happier if they never saw the maintenance crew.

Herein lies a real problem. Greens, tees and fairways must be fertilized, watered and mowed or there would be no golf. When play starts at sunup and continues until dark, when is the supt. expected to do the necessary maintenance work? Maybe he should start training a night crew to work after dark. But, maybe there is another way to do it.

Play usually starts on the first hole of each nine. This gives the supt. a bit of grace since not all holes are occupied simultaneously at the beginning of play. Necessary watering, poling, and mowing quite naturally are started on the beginning holes before the first golfer appears. In order to keep out of the way, the supt. must have enough men and equipment to stay ahead of the play. It is as simple as that. If the play ever gets out ahead, he is licked for the day.

Maintenance can stay out of the way of

golfers. Watering can be done while the golfer is eating breakfast (that is the best time anyway). With enough men and machines, the green mowing crew needs only about a 15-minute head start on the players. Fertilizing needs to be done only two or three times a year and that can be done early in the morning ahead of play. Aerating and topdressing can be scheduled for slack periods and in late afternoon when play has passed. Again, enough men and machines can make this a very short procedure. Spraying also can be accomplished without disturbing play.

We know that at many clubs there will be cries of indignation that there is not enough money in the budget to provide the men and machines to stay out of the way of play. If this is true, and, if the golfers demand freedom from interference with play, they should be told the truth and be given the chance to make the necessary corrections. But — on whatever basis the budget is established, it is the supt's job to give the members maximum value for each dollar provided. Many clubs must function with courses operated at "utility" levels.

Can Be Improved

But most courses could be improved at no additional cost. I saw this recently on a course where the greens are starved for nitrogen. The club could afford only a certain amount of fertilizer, which was less than half of what was needed. It seemed to be striving for something it couldn't afford. Yet the supt. and his men were performing extra operations to correct conditions which had developed as a result of starvation. There was not time to determine what these extra operations were costing on an annual or 5-year basis — but I am sure it was more than the cost of the needed fertilizer. The reader's memory can supply many examples of "costly economies."

It would seem that each club needs to explore thoroughly the possibilities of minimum interference with play and maximum efficiency in maintenance operations. A balance can be struck. In many cases it will cost more money to please the golfers. In many cases it will not cost more money to please the golfers. Efficient practices frequently provide a better course (more smoothly managed for the golfer's convenience) for less money than the price of inefficient, short sighted management.

Recently we talked with Supt. James Thomas about the problem as it exists at Army Navy CC at Arlington, Va. Jim

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spoke on the subject at the GCSA Conference and Show in Washington. He and Admiral Phillips worked out the program together before the Admiral retired. Jim has enough men and machines to get the work done before play gets under way for the day. Rarely do the golfers see the crew. The secrets are a budget that will provide the physical needs and good management that gets the work done on schedule. Costly? Sure it is! Good equipment and well-trained men cost real money but, if the golfer wants freedom from irritation and is willing to pay the cost, he is entitled to it. If the club can't afford what the golfer wants, it must raise the fees or reduce their wants.

Stay with Successful Bent

Q. Is it advisable to go to a new, more modern strain of bent for my new second 9, or should I plant the same strain of bent that I have in the first? If a new bent is more desirable, which strain would you recommend? The bent in the first 9 is Washington. It is slow in starting in the spring, but holds up well in the season and later into the fall. I do get quite a lot of brownpatch and dollarspot with Washington, but it responds well to treatment with fungicides. Washington also stands up well to the heavy traffic, about 25,000 9-hole rounds per season. I am considering a choice of several bent strains, but would like your advice on this before ordering. (Wis.)

A. You have just told me that Washington bent is quite satisfactory for your conditions, that it stands up well under heavy traffic and the diseases are easy to control. This is not taking a backward step away from the newer, improved bent grasses, but I am going to advise you to stay with the grass that has proven successful in your case. One of the reasons is that your crew has learned to work with the grass that you now have. Since it is satisfactory, why change? Perhaps by an improvement in your fertilization program and in general management, the Washington might be even more satisfactory than it has been.

If, in the meantime, you make a decision that you would like to go to another bent, these would be my choices in order. I would choose first Pennecross bent seed. The reason for this is that it will produce a turf more nearly like the Washington than any other. Being composed of different types of grasses, because of its parentage, it will adapt itself to your climate, soils, management and to the use better than any stolon bent I know. My second choice would be Congressional C-19 bent, because of its earliness and lateness and its resistance to snow mold.

Incidentally, dollarspot can be controlled quite well with additional applications of nitrogen fertilizer. By controlling thatch and mat in the green, you can make your fungicides work more effectively — also your nitrogen fertilizers will be more effective.

Too Much Water

Q. I am writing in regard to a watering situation at our 9-hole golf course. The greens average 5,000 sq. ft. The green committee tells me to water every night. Under this system the greens alone consume 45,000 gal. of water each week, not counting the rain that falls. It is my idea that too much water will cut off the supply of air to the roots. I would appreciate an answer as soon as possible. (Mich.)

A. Let me hasten to assure you that you are 100 per cent correct. The type of watering that you are being asked to do certainly will flood the soil with water and completely cut off the supply of air to the roots. The roots will have to come to the surface of the ground in order to get enough air to continue growth. This creates a very serious situation. In case of a sudden hot spell you could very easily lose all your grass because there would be no roots to support growth.

No bentgrass that I know of can possibly use as much water as you are being asked to apply. It is so excessive that it is almost ridiculous.

The only sensible way to water, in my opinion, is to apply water only when it is needed. The most successful supts. water entirely by hand early in the morning to wash in the dew. They apply the water on those parts of the greens that need water the most. This is determined by the use of a soil probe to find out where the soil is becoming dry. If there is a rain, no watering is needed for a while. Watering according to the needs of the grass is the only sensible way in which to water. To water every day, regardless of rainfall or other considerations, is something that I cannot comprehend. I have seen more serious difficulties arise from too much water than from too little.

I shall be very much interested to hear from you again in regard to the kind of grass that you have, the kind of soil you have in your greens, whether or not drainage has been provided and also your fertilizing program. With the excessive watering, undoubtedly you must be leaching out a great deal of your fertilizer.

Algae in Watering System

Q. Our club has a small pond for the watering system. The pond is filled with algae. Copper sulfate has been suggested to me to kill the algae. I wonder if the copper will affect the greens. I have experimented and am almost sure that it would, but I would like professional advice on the matter. (Iowa)

A. I shudder when I think of pulling water out of a pond filled with algae. Probably there is enough algae spores in the greens now to provide all the algae you will ever want to fight for a long time to come. There is little sense in pouring more on to the greens when it could be avoided. Yes, copper sulfate will kill the algae but its continued use in the water that is being used for irrigating the greens will eventually begin to affect the grass on the greens. This was recognized years ago when Bordeaux mixture was being used for disease control. Copper poisoning was the result. How long that would take depends on a number of factors, but there's no need to court trouble.

Swinging Around Golf

(Continued from page 24)

park that will include golf facilities . . . Erie County CC, Elma, N. Y. (15 miles southeast of Buffalo) to be ready in early summer of '59.

Started building 18-hole Lakeview course in North East, Pa., in mid-May . . . Penfield, N. Y. citizens planning 18-hole private course . . . Hope to start building next summer . . . Southern Hills, Henrietta, N. Y., also in planning phase . . . Open 9 of 18 at Towne Isle CC, Syracuse in June . . . Happy Acres G & CC, near Rochester, N. Y., also opened in June . . . Willowbrook CC, 9-hole semi private, near Lockport, N. Y. to be opened around middle of July.

At Garden City GC 60th birthday dinner the club's green chmn., Neal Fulkerson in reporting the completion of the new \$75,000 course watering system paid tribute to Supt. Lonnie Shaw and Shaw's achievement in producing wonderful greens . . . Andy Bertoni, supt., of Meadowbrook CC (Detroit dist.) made an ace on his club's 165 yd. 13th while playing with his sons Jimmy and Johnny . . . Andy is head of GCSA publicity committee . . . He knows that an ace is pretty sure to get mention . . . Asst. pro, Nick Bersan, was Bertoni's press agent in this case . . . Orville Chapin, pro at Ft. Wayne (Ind.) CC, also publicizes a pal's ace . . . The ace was made by Carl Suedhoff, formerly sec.-mgr. of the club, on the 188 yd. 8th . . . After the round the Suedhoffs left for an European trip.

Felix George, pro-mgr., Hancock Park GC, Austin, Tex., has been very successful in increasing women's and juniors' play at his course . . . Felix had 98 women in his spring classes . . . Big field in 10th annual Hancock Park championship . . . Won by 16-year-old Randy Petri . . . George's former asst., Carl Gustafson, jr., now is pro at Cuero, Tex., 9-hole club and doing well at a fine small town spot . . . George now has Winfred Crumley as his shop asst. and Joe Balander as teaching asst.

Fellow named Ernest Lane has a cute idea for a flagpole . . . It has an offset bracket for the flag that can be turned away from the side of the hole from which the putt will enter and allows more room for the ball . . . He's got design protection, he says . . . Idea is up to the USGA for ruling on its legality . . . There is some talk that the rule allowing

the flagpole to be left in the hole while putting may be thrown out . . . Consensus now is that the game calls for putting into the cup rather than at the flagpole.

New England GCSA members sod 1600 sq. ft. putting green at Vets hospital, Jamaica Plain (Boston.) . . . Supts. built the green several years ago . . . It got such heavy play grass was worn off . . . Committee responsible for the rebuilding included Manuel Francis of Vesper, Mike O'Grady of New Bedford, N. J. Sperandio of Concord . . . Albert Allen of Kernwood and Arthur Anderson of Brae Burn . . . Half doz. other supts. and members of their staffs also volunteered to work on the job . . . Dr. J. A. DeFrance, Rhode Island's fine turf expert, has been working on the dishpan plot lately . . . Mrs. De France broke a leg . . . She's coming along fine now.

Wm. J. McBride has retired after 36 years as supt., Nashua (N. H.) CC . . . Bill broke into course maintenance work under the late John Shanahan at Brae Burn in suburban Boston, then was in the Philadelphia district for 12 years . . . Orville Clapper says Bill has the best home lawn of any supt. . . . Seldom a supt. can get any time for his own grass.

Income from National Golf Day which may hit \$100,000 for the first time since the PGA alone sponsored the event shows result of well-organized planning and promotion by Pres. Harold Sargent, Exec. Sec. Tom Crane, Public Relations Director Bob Russell and National Golf Fund pres., Fred Riggan . . . Riggan's letter suggesting that clubs bill their members \$1 each for National Golf Day entry money did big business . . . Western Golf Assn. Evans caddie scholars and alumni worked to boost Golf Day revenue . . . Caddie scholarship funds get biggest draw from the fund . . . USGA boosted it too . . . George S. and Alice May personally duplicated the Tam o' Shanter members' Golf Day contribution.

Harry Pressler, one of the great golf teachers, was at the Open . . . Harry has retired from active pro service (for a while, anyway) to go around the tournament circuit watching the fellows play . . . He recently resigned as pro at Ojai Valley CC . . . He retains his residence at 52 Crestview Drive, Ojai, Calif. . . . Bud Elmer, supt., Indian Hill CC, Kansas City, Mo., and Chet Mendenhall, supt., Mission Hills CC, Kansas City, Mo.,

(Continued on page 68)

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Feast or Famine in West

(Continued from page 48)

a cost of \$21,000) a distance of 180 miles to plant on Four Hills."

The irony of Las Vegas is that while its thirty acres soak up so much water there is so little of it. The plush desert spa's annual rainfall is only 4.35 inches. Baldock built an 18-hole Par 3 course for the Hacienda Motel. There were water rights available for only nine holes. The other nine holes must remain unirrigated.

Lucky In Water Supply

Sometimes, Nevada water is not so hard to come by. Winnemucca's 9-hole city owned course gets water for the pumping, thanks to a reservoir built some years ago by the Southern Pacific Railroad. It was intended to quench the thirst of the road's steam engines. The switch to Diesels made the pond a liability.

In Carson City, Nev., the last state capital in the union to get a golf course, a nearby rancher had a deep well and a water surplus.

Fallon (Nev.) Soparovan ("meeting place of the tribes") course has a steady supply, pumped out of the Carson River.

Perhaps the extreme in lack of and surplus of water are to be found in Turlock, Calif., and Flagstaff, Ariz.

"In Turlock," says Baldock, "we had to put in a pump to lower the water table; otherwise it was too muddy underfoot.

"For Flagstaff's Coconino CC (at 7,500 feet the highest 18 hole course in the country), two lines were needed, one for drinking water, the other for irrigation. In such short supply, it was a case of using processed sewerage water, distributed from a reservoir built on the first 9 — or no golf course."

Limit on Trade-Ins

(Continued from page 42)

pression that he is buying inferior goods which sometimes is the result if you put the sale to him on "take it or leave it" basis. Every club we re-sell is, of course, cleaned and completely reconditioned.

I feel that every pro should try to set a limit on the amount of time trade-in clubs are kept on hand. In my case, I try to keep it to two weeks or less. But even though I have my profits from the sale of a new set of clubs tied up in the return set, and although I may theoretically be paying interest on money I have

not yet realized, I still try to refrain from selling the used clubs at a figure lower than the one I allowed for them. In fact, I expect to realize a profit on the trade-in clubs to cover my expenses in handling and re-conditioning them.

I think this latter point is important. Too many pros, according to what I have seen and heard, regard trade-ins as something to get rid of as quickly as possible, and in doing so, sell them at ridiculously low prices. It should always be kept in mind that a loss on used clubs reduces the gross profit on the new clubs that were sold when trade-ins were taken in.

Book Review

Better Golf Through Better Practice. Jules Platte and Herb Graffis, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 70 5th ave., New York 11.

This book is the outgrowth of a bull session involving a group of pros. It was agreed that even though golf instruction has evolved into something of a science, nobody has been able to go beyond the teaching of the mechanics of the swing to transmit the true feel to the student golfer. The feel, it was decided, can only be acquired through practice. This led to the statement, "Rare is the golfer who knows anything at all about how to practice," and from it, the book which Jules Platte has written in conjunction with Herb Graffis, editor of *GOLFDOM* and *GOLFING*.

The Platte-Graffis opus is the first ever written on the subject of practice.

Platte, summertime pro at Knollwood in Lake Forest, Ill., and wintertime master at Sundown in Scottsdale, Ariz., apparently is convinced the golfer will never get a grip on his game until he learns to grip the club. He thinks a faulty grip causes more than 50 per cent of those errant shots and a considerable chapter is devoted to getting it straightened out.

A history of practice is woven through the volume. Practically every chapter offers practice checkpoints that are emphasized by being set in bold face. Platte points out, by the way, that you don't necessarily have to go to a course to practice, but can do it at home.

There are a number of sage pieces of advice sprinkled through the book. One is to concentrate on only one thing (not club) at a time; another is to practice only when you're alert and have definite objectives in mind.