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1959: That Trying Year

*The Turf Blight That Came With
Last Year's Horrible Weather
Has Greenmaster Wondering How
A Recurrence Can Be Avoided*

*So they chop and change,
And each fresh move is only a fresh
mistake.*

The above quote from Robert Service via the pen of Al Schardt, the competent greenmaster of Wanakah CC in Hamburg, N.Y., may have compounded the ills that beset supts. from coast to coast in what will be remembered as the "trying and horrible year of 1959." But those who resorted to desperate measures are quick to point out that Service apparently didn't have a country club membership to contend with when he was inspired to write that couplet.

Al Bertucci, supt. of Old Elm Club, Ft. Sheridan, Ill., for one, would have maintained that Service's observation was "words, empty words," particularly where excessive rainfall in the midst of the extreme hot, humid weather of August was involved. And a few hundred others in the fraternity who saw the poa annua go out when it was wanted most, the greens wilt and several species of disease sweep in, would have backed him up.

Took Double Punch

A review of 1959 is well summed up in what Paul E. Weiss, the veteran greenmaster at Lehigh (Pa.) CC, has to say: "A fall meeting of supts. in our area," Paul notes, "brought forth tales of woe from everyone who attended. The previous winter had been bad enough, but we finally corrected the trouble it had brought. Just

when we thought we could sit back and recuperate we were hit by two of the worst summer weeks we ever had to endure. It was enough to make strong men weep," Weiss continues, "and I saw quite a few on the verge of tears."

The Lehigh supt. goes on to say that from late August on there was a great deal of renovation carried on for the second time during the year in order to bring courses back to something like normal. "But what worries practically all of us," he adds, "is that while we may know most of the remedies, we don't know how to prevent the many troubles that hit us in 1959. As one not too cheerful supt. said, 'What if we're in a cycle of tough weather. What if we have to go through this again next year and the year after?'"

Advice From Noer

Perhaps O. J. Noer, in two articles that appeared in GOLFDOM in 1959, has some of the answers. In May (p. 29), writing of winterkill, Noer said: "When moisture and temperatures become favorable for growth, recovery should occur. There is no reason to become excited. Patience is the better approach. Recovery of established grass is apt to be as quick and more satisfactory than renovation and re-seeding. But a way must be found to impress these things on club members."

In October (p. 51), writing of summertime turf loss, Noer said: "The natural reaction in a year like this is to condemn the grass and turn to something else. This may be best for some but not necessarily for everybody. As assessment of performance and scrutiny of management practices is justified. In those places where turf survived in good shape, we may find the answers. Management in these locations may be a helpful guide to others."

This may seem to put Noer in a league with Service and Al Schardt. Only the trouble is that members don't understand or don't want to recognize that what Nature destroys in a hurry it is very slow to heal.

Work With Nature

Schardt, in fact, hints that Nature probably resists the supt's impulse to speed its healing process. "The trouble with many of us," says Al, "is that when things start to go wrong we panic. The first thing we think about is saturating the turf with fertilizer or chemicals to snap it back. I've seen more turf ruined in my 45 years through over-control than through lack of attention.

"I'm willing to work with Nature," Schardt continues. "I advocate moderate

Club Sales Up 4.4 Per Cent

Golf club sales for the fiscal year ended Oct. 31, 1959, totalled 4,412,920 units, an increase of 4.4 per cent over the comparable 1958 period. Making up the total were 3,071,349 Iron clubs and 1,341,571 Wood clubs.

In releasing the report, Carl J. Benkert, pres. of the National Assn. of Golf Club Manufacturers, said: "It has been gratifying to all manufacturers of golf equipment to note a constant increase in sales each year over a number of years. The present outlook is that increases in the sale of equipment will continue and the percentage of yearly increases will perhaps become even greater because of increased interest by the public in the game. Then, too, there are new facilities for golf being constantly added in all sections of the country."

and frequent treatments rather than heavy dosages. Fertilizers and chemicals should be used as boosters and not in the hope that they are overnight cure-alls."

More important than growth stimulators or controls, Al Bertucci opines, are the few key men a supt. has who are willing to work overtime during critical periods and are just as concerned with saving the turf as he is. "If you have fellows who will stay on in the evenings when temperatures are more favorable for mowing, fungicide spraying and watering," Bertucci notes, "your chances of at least minimizing damage are fair. Without this kind of help you are going to lose your turf in a hurry."

It Was a Nightmare

So far as 1959 is concerned, Frank P. Dunlop of Baltimore CC remembers it as a nightmare. Turf was weak after the winter's desiccation and when spring turned out to be hot and dry, recovery was further retarded. By mid-July his course was starting to come around but 23 days of hot, humid and wet weather in the last days of July and in early August completely upset the recovery schedule. Poor drainage took its toll. Dunlop had taken some steps to forestall catastrophe by installing tile drainage under greens, but this is a long range program and enough hadn't been done to avoid trouble on the large scale. Baltimore CC greens are now being overseeded with Pennecross and fairways are being converted to U-3 Bermuda because it is felt that these two grasses will

(Continued on page 69)

Golf Cars to Replace Caddies at May's Tam O' Shanter Club

GEORGE S. MAY, owner of Tam O'Shanter CC, Niles, Ill., announced in January that caddies will not be available at his club to carry players' bags in 1960. Until this year it always had been necessary for a member to have a caddie when playing the course. Now it will be mandatory for the member to use a golf car when playing at Tam.

Tam O'Shanter becomes the first club in the country to make such a revolutionary change. It is prompted by the fact that, in 1959, two and one-half as many members used cars as in 1958. Tam officials feel that it is only a matter of time before golf cars will replace caddies at all large clubs in the U. S. Two prominent clubs on Chicago's North Side are said to be considering replacing caddies with cars and two California clubs are expected to make a decision to do so in the near future.

In changing from caddies to cars, May mentioned that he was taking a lead from the bowling industry which has almost completely replaced pin boys with automatic setting devices.

Last year, Tam had about 65 cars. The number is expected to be increased to at least 100 this year. Garaging facilities at the club will be more than doubled this spring. Employees will be on duty day and night servicing golf cars. On Ladies' Day, women members will be permitted to use cars at a reduced fee.

Tam officials expect that use of cars by all players will speed up play.

Make Big Caddie Education Contribution

May is a director of Western Golf Assn., whose first interest is caddies. Tam O'Shanter members and May and his wife have contributed \$130,000 to the WGA's Evans Scholarship Fund in the last 11 years — more than any other club in the U. S. or Canada. A total of 52 young men has received educations through Tam's contributions. The club has had a reputation for providing excellent facilities for its bag toters. Just a few years ago it spent \$25,000 to make its caddie quarters the best in the Chicago dist.

When the PGA was informed of May's decision to dispense with caddies, it did not look favorably upon the change. The pro association feels that action such as this and the general trend to cars, shuts off an extremely important source of future golf teachers and tournament players. If the caddie eventually disappears, the PGA apparently has doubts that the amateur field will be able to fully supply the needs of the profession in years to come.

Commenting on Tam O'Shanter's action, James M. Royer, pres. of Western Golf, said that altho May is a member of the association's board of directors, his views on the caddie-golf car situation don't reflect the thinking of the board as a whole. "That is not to say that we condemn May for the action he has taken," Royer said. "The Tam O'Shanter owner always has been an independent thinker and if he feels that 100 per cent use of cars at his club will improve operations there, then he should make the change."

Royer added that a recent poll of WGA's 396 clubs showed that their caddie programs in most cases are on an upswing.

California, Utah Lag In Providing Golf Courses

To keep pace with the population growth in the next 10 years it is estimated that the seven Western states will have to have at least 210 more courses. Even if that many are built this area won't be overwhelmed with golf sites. Nevada and Idaho now have one course for every 19,-

000 persons; Arizona, Washington and Oregon have one course for about 25,000 but Utah and California have only one layout per 42,000 persons. Nevada and Idaho rank 11th and 12th statewide but Utah and California are near the bottom of the list.

The No. 1 state from a golf standpoint is Vermont with one course for every 9,750 inhabitants.

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and you have . . .*



Cary Middlecoff (l) studies a shot by Paul Harney in this year's Crosby Pro-Am.

Nothing Like the Clambake

By Bill Sherman

PROFESSIONAL golf's winter tour is almost three weeks old by the time it works its way to the Monterey Peninsula for the Bing Crosby Clambake.

This year's event marked the 19th renewal of the Crosby and was the unquestioned highlight of the winter and West Coast golfing tour. It may be the best, most complete tournament yet conceived.

Why so? It has all the standard features of any good tournament: an imposing purse of \$50,000.00; a topnotch field of professionals; strong local support and smart supervision.

The Crosby is played over three courses, all of which are housed in a 15,000 acre tract of land appropriately called Del Monte Forest. The Forest is administered by Del Monte Properties, a company that has sold over \$12 million in residential real estate and which owns the fabled Pebble Beach GC, believed by many to be the most difficult links in the U.S.

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Press facilities at the Crosby rank with the best. Seven volunteers help the newsmen. Jim Gaquin, PGA publicity man is at left in top photo.

The blend of homesites, golf courses, woods and surf-smashing shoreline creates a backdrop impossible to conjure, yet alone match.

Add such other peculiar Crosby facets as a field of well-known amateurs comprised of politicians, movie stars, sports personalities, military brass and business tycoons who play an interwoven best ball two-man pro-amateur handicaps competition simultaneously with a 72 hole medal professional scramble; and consider a built-in social soiree that features cocktail parties, cook-outs, whoops and hollers of all descriptions and a picture emerges of a cross between a George S. May extravaganza and a Hollywood premiere.

It lures a gallery of 75,000 spectators whose heritage runs from bluebloods to ballboys. Also on hand is a battery of newspaper magazine and TV reporters and feature writers to track down any of the 5,000 possible stories.

Too Many Stories

Jack Stevenson, Western AP Sports editor, comments: "The hardest thing to do at the Crosby is follow up the best story. There's too many newsy people with too much to cover in too short a time."

While the theme of the Crosby is relaxation, one serious characteristic prevails. This is the purpose of the tournament — of turning over all proceeds to charity. Local charities are the beneficiaries; their sharing in these monies makes the entire local area a benefactor by providing many humanitarian services.



While the Crosby maintains a rather frivolous, 'Y'all come and kick off your shoes' air, the uninitiated shouldn't presume that this attitude begets neglect. It is in order to emphasize that the Crosby is exceptionally well-administered. Its monies go to charity but are collected by businessmen.

The actual operating agency of the tournament is the Bing Crosby National Pro-Amateur Championship Fund whose pres. is Monterey's mayor, Dan H. Searle.

This non-profit corp. is governed by a rotating board of directors and trustees. It was conceived to relieve the Crosby family of the many supervisory and administrative tasks associated with a successful tournament. When the Fund took over from the Crosbys, more than \$350,000 had already been contributed to various pro-

(Continued on page 68)

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Part of the large group of assistant pros who attended the PGA School is shown at the annual banquet.

PGA's Fourth Business School Attended by Record 239

By HERB GRAFFIS

A record number of 239 persons attended the PGA's Fourth Annual Business School for Assistants held at Ft. Harrison Hotel, Clearwater, Fla., Jan. 10-15. Of these, 229 were present at all class sessions and were awarded diplomas at the banquet at which William Junker of Fawick Flexi-Grip Co. was host as he had been for the three previous classes.

The students went to class at 8:15 a.m. and were in session indoors until after 4 p.m. Two afternoon sessions on instruction and practice technique were held outside.

There were 267 who applied for admission to the school. Some, due to geographical considerations, were advised to attend the PGA West Coast school which is to be held at Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, in February.

Successful veteran professionals visiting

Clearwater were stronger than ever in their conviction that the Business School is the PGA's most valuable function. They admit they weren't very enthusiastic about the school idea at first, but after the brains and energy of Emil Beck got it organized and operating it became one of the answers to the master pros' serious problems.

Little Time For Training

The master pro doesn't have much time to devote to the training of assistants although this expense is the heaviest item in his cost of doing business.

Selection of assistants is another serious problem. Numerous applicants for the assistant jobs are more interested in playing golf than working at it. The PGA school attracts the most desirable assistant material.

The young men who attend are excellent exhibits of tasteful sports grooming at the class sessions and of business wear at the annual banquet.

No wonder that a total of 12 of them