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40 YEARS AGO

## Three courses at a time

*More than 40 years' experience has taught Maddox Construction Company the secret of simultaneous golf course construction.*

By JOE DOAN

*These aren't a bunch of roustabouts in an oil field, but Maddox Construction men getting ready to drill for water at Des Moines G&CC, which they are now building.*

The dramatic post-war expansion of golf course construction is reflected in the activities of Maddox Construction Company, St. Charles, Ill. During the 20 years since World War II the company has built some 40 courses east of the Rockies from the Canadian border to the Gulf of Mexico.

The recent three-day Independence Day weekend was a welcome one for the owners of Maddox Construction Company. For several scorching weeks preceding it, the Maddoxes—Charles, Sr., Charles, Jr. and Bill—were scattered between Des Moines, Ia. and Warren, Ohio, building golf courses. They agreed that it may be the hottest three weeks they ever endured, but Charles, Sr. remarked: "We say that about this time every year."

Although they own the company, the Maddoxes don't retire to an air-conditioned shed and direct construction activity from there. Each describes himself as "a working foreman," who toils in the sun with his men. That goes for Charles, Sr., who has been in the course-building business exclusively for 28 of the last 43 years, and before that was a golf course sub-contractor.

If you were to look up a Maddox at one of their construction sites, you would have to walk or ride across two or three fairways of turned-up loam to find him driving a big earth hauler, jockeying a tractor or threading a ditching machine along an avenue of stakes. Each owner is checked out on every piece of equipment used in course construction work.

At the moment, Charles, Sr. is building

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*The three Maddoxes are shown in booth at recent GCSAA annual convention in Kansas City. From left: Chuck, Jr., Charles, Sr. and Bill. Each is in charge of his own building team.*

a course in Frankfort, Ind.; Chuck is working on Avalon Lake CC for the Warren Chamber of Commerce, and Bill is supervising operations on an 18-hole layout for the Des Moines G & CC. Each has a crew of about 15 men and about \$350,000 in construction equipment at his disposal. All are racing to beat a mid-September seeding deadline. For the last eight or 10 years, the Maddox firm has had three jobs going simultaneously, but seldom do the three men collaborate on the same project.

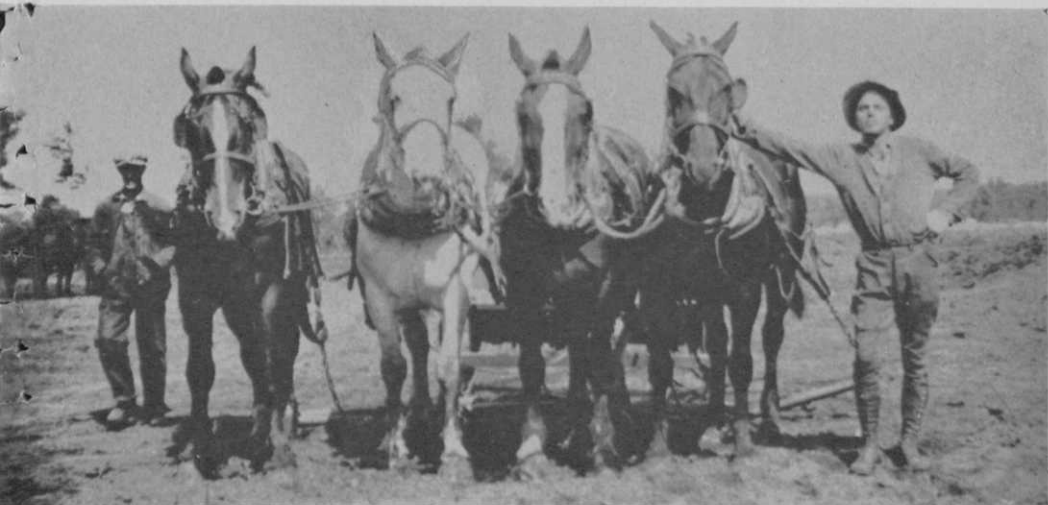
The project the Maddoxes remember most vividly, if not fondly, is the Lake-

wood CC course north of New Orleans (GOLFDOM, June 1966, p. 40). All of them had a hand in building it, because it was a job that ate into 22 months of working time. Something like 90" of rain in one year, and a site that is below sea level conspired to keep equipment mired during the early part of the construction period. However, in the second year, the weather behaved admirably and the Maddox firm was able to push through and complete what is now regarded as one of the South's finest courses.

Generally, the Maddoxes like to think that running time in building any 18-hole

*Continued on page 46*

*Rugged muleskinners of the '20s direct horse team in scraping operation.*



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## THREE COURSES

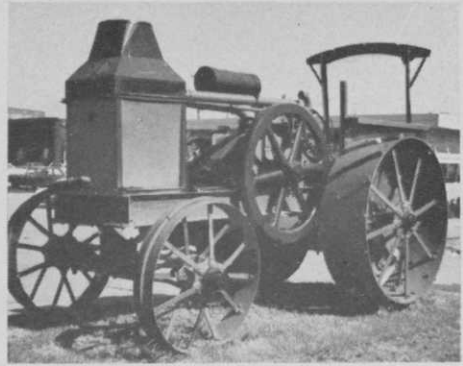
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course is a little less than a year. This takes in anticipated weather setbacks and all the other factors that may arise to upset the timetable. There are plenty of the latter, because a course builder just doesn't turn those huge earth haulers with their 20-cubic-yard capacities, and those big cats loose to ram a job through. Many times it is necessary to keep crews on a six-day week to stay on schedule.

With a year to complete a course it seems that a builder never should be pushed against a deadline, but right now work is a little feverish, because all three courses have to be seeded before late September so that greens can be stolonized by mid-October. These months, of course, are the Northern deadlines. In the South, it is April 1.

The three-day July 4th respite was like two weeks in Bermuda for the Maddoxes. It was good for Charlie Maddox and his sons to get away from the steady drone of tractors and bulldozers and breathing pulverized loam, even if they were to spend one of their free afternoons talking about golf construction.

The Maddox Construction Company is nearly 100 years old. It was founded in 1870 by the elder Maddox's grandfather, Asa, as a road-building company. In 1899, Asa got into golf construction when he contracted to grade fairways for a club in Cincinnati. His son, Eugene, was in charge of this job, and for the next 20 years or so, Eugene divided his time between road building and sub-contracting golf course projects. Eugene's son, Charlie, now the senior member of the



*This Athey tractor, used by Maddox, was on of the first in golf course construction.*

Maddox Company, started working for his father at the end of World War I.

In 1923, the firm divorced itself from road building and became exclusively a golf course construction company. It was to remain that for eight years. Then, when the Depression racked the economy and course building came to a halt, the Maddox outfit was forced to scramble for any kind of contracting work it could get. Luckily, Illinois and Texas enjoyed oil booms in the 30's and the Maddox firm got enough work in the oil fields to remain solvent. During World War II, the company specialized in government building contracts.

Charlie Maddox went back into golf construction in 1946, taking his two sons with him. So, the company has known two eras, separated by 15 years, in which it has built golf layouts. During the Depression, Maddox, Sr. actually never left the golf business. From 1925 until 1931 he was part owner and helped operate

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*Equipment looked like this 40 years ago. Cat 30 is at left, Fresno scraper at right, Fordson is in background.*



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# When is an illegal putter legal?



*A blade in front of a hammer design  
made Vic De Carlo's putter conform to the rules.*

By DESMOND TOLHURST

What do you do if you can't find a putter you like? Buy another. That's the answer for most golfers. But what if the one you want isn't available? Make it. That was the extreme course Vic De Carlo took. Little did he know then what a tough road he had chosen.

Vic, a manufacturer's rep who plays his golf at Northwood GC, Rockleigh, N. J., became dissatisfied with the putters available to him late in 1961. "The weight in a conventional putter is distributed in a line away from the golfer from heel to toe, and not along the direction of the stroke, that is, from the face to the back of the club," Vic says.

This means that the golfer has had to steer his putter, De Carlo claims, otherwise the weight of the head may well twist the clubface either way during the putting stroke.

"The first design, which I carved out of wood, copied the general design of a hammer," says Vic. "However, I seemed to remember that this was banned by USGA rules." It was: Rule 2 states the length of a clubhead (from heel to toe) must be greater than the breadth (from clubface to back of the club).

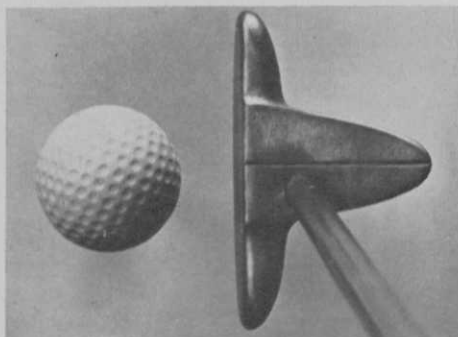
What Vic did to solve the problem was simple—he carved a blade and glued

it to the front of the hammer, the result was Putter No. 1 shown above. He then made it up in aluminum weighted with lead (No. 2), and his problems began.

De Carlo patented this design and spent the next four years perfecting his original concept.

The putter swung and felt fine, but on sloping greens the long "tail" would stub the ground on the backswing. One time De Carlo tried it for a shot from a low-lipped trap and touched the sand on the way back. "That loss-of-hole penalty did it," Vic says. "The tail had to be shortened and had to curve up from the face

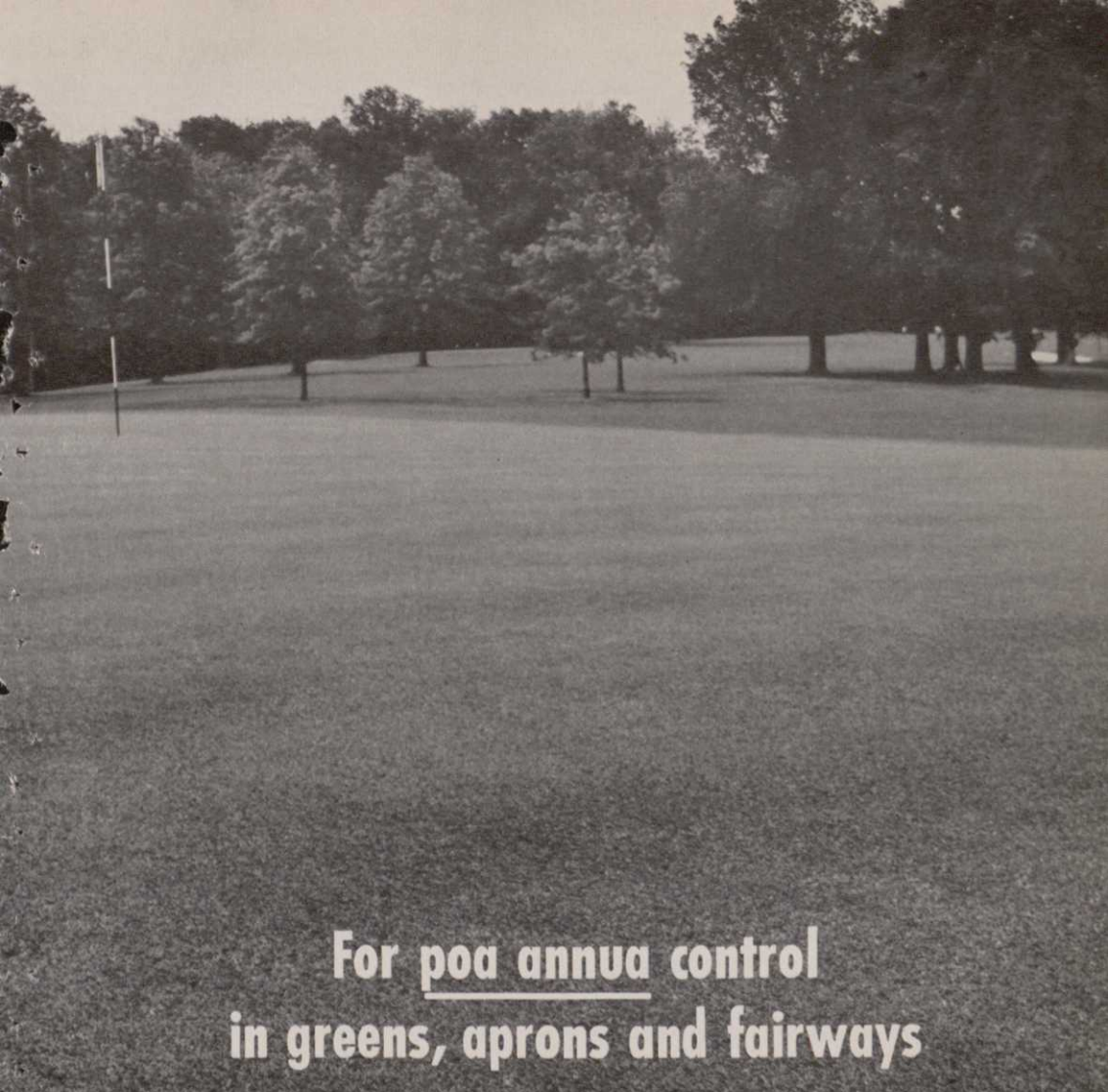
Continued on page 85



*Salient feature of new putter is that over 2/3 of the weight is centered behind ball.*

Photos by Ron Scallera





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