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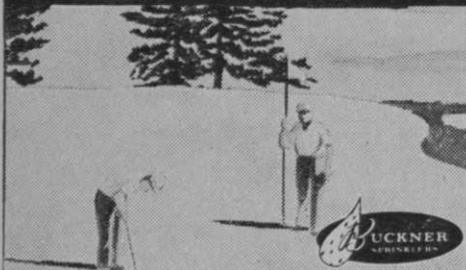
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CUSTOM CLUBS

continued from page 56

was designed to provide. In fact, a greater radius to the face bulge would be required to offset this tampering.

This does not mean that feel or opinion is non-existent in selecting clubs. It is just a warning to go a bit easy with it. It may well distort the final formula. "I believe in what Lord Kelvin said," St. Clair explains. "He pointed out that unless you can measure what you are speaking of and express it in numbers, your knowledge is meager and unsatisfactory. I like our customers to specify, *in numbers*, what they want. Then we can be sure to satisfy them."

Here is John's check-list of what to include when ordering custom-built clubs:

- Your customer's physical characteristics and personal requirements: Is he tall, short, heavy, thin; does he have long arms, short arms; is he young, middle-aged, or a senior?
- The type and speed of his swing: Is he a hitter who booms them a long way, or a swinger who rhythmically pops them down the middle?
- His shot-making skills or problems: Does he hook, slice, hit them high or low?
- The size of his hands, wrists, forearms and legs. Describe fully.
- Length of clubs now in use—swing-weight, grip size and preference of grip material: use as a reference the driver for all woods, the 2-iron for all irons.
- Total weight: not a factor—it is automatically arrived at.

Amplifying on some of these points, St. Clair observed: "As a guide in swing-weight selection, request the lightest swingweight your customer can possibly use without turning the blade over the ball.

"The ideal club will have the head in proper hitting position precisely at the instant the hands are in position. When the swingweight is too light, the head will

turn over the ball too early in the swing, producing a hook; when too heavy, the clubhead comes in too late and he'll either hook or slice. Selecting the lightest swingweight your customer can repeatedly use will enable him to be more accurate with less effort. He will also get the greatest clubhead speed, and therefore distance.

"I would like to see the home professionals furnish us with specifics when ordering custom-built clubs for his members. Using the technical data booklet Spalding gives to each, he should ask for grip size, shaft length, lie and loft *in numbers*." (The standard club specifications are obtainable from manufacturers.)

"Shaft deflection, the heart of the club, can be ordered by describing the member's swing. This is why we have to know whether he is a hard hitter or a swinger with a lesser clubhead speed. Also, an evaluation of his strength, size of hands, wrists, forearms and legs is important, because all have a direct bearing on the final specifications. Generally, the stiff shaft will give more control and the softer the shaft, the higher the ball will travel.

"Do not generalize on the size of the hands, and please don't send us an outline of your customer's fingers and ask us to give him the proper grip measurements. There's no way," says St. Clair, "that this method, by itself, can assure correct grip size. Some hands which might have the same over-all shape might more fleshy or leaner, and circumference of the grip will have to be changed to fit the inside diameter of the person's grasp.

"For instance, the standard men's grip at Spalding is .90" measured 2" down from the cap. This will fit a hand with a middle finger $3\frac{1}{4}$ " to $3\frac{1}{2}$ " long. At 6" down from the cap the grip measures .780". When ordering oversize or undersize grips, it's most important to send us the adjustment of the grip size from normal expressed in either fractions of an inch or decimals. A good rule for fitting the correct grip size to your custo-

continued on page 94



for a good grip — a better game



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CUSTOM CLUBS

continued from preceding page

mer is that a good left hand grip will have the second and third fingers barely touching the palm.

"Another important measurement is the lie—the angle formed by the shaft and the sole of the clubhead. The lie is correct if the sole of the club sets almost flat to the ground at address, with just a bit of daylight under the toe, say about $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ " worth. The toe should be raised this fraction to accommodate the heel-to-toe bend the shaft undergoes during the hit. If the club were to set precisely flat on the ground, the forward bend would cause the toe of the club to contact the ground first, ruining the shot.

"In arriving at the lie of our clubs," says St. Clair, "We measure the height of the hands when in the *bitting position*—when the left shoulder starts to come up and right shoulder goes down and through. When customers come to the

plant, we ask them to take at least six practice swings, stopping at the impact point, and then we determine the average from them.

"If his hands are higher or lower than our 32" measurement (from the center line of the shaft at the end cap straight down to the ground), this deviation will have to be corrected by a different shaft length. For example, for every $\frac{1}{2}$ " difference in hand height, there is corresponding one degree in angle of lie. A $32\frac{1}{2}$ " hand height measurement would call for a driver with a 56° lie, instead of the standard 55° .

"Do not give us the hand height as it is at address. On occasion this might be the same as during the hit, but it is not positive enough. Any resulting error in design can cause a person to change his natural or grooved swing, and the new clubs would be working against him."

One man who can perhaps more than any other bridge the gap between the era

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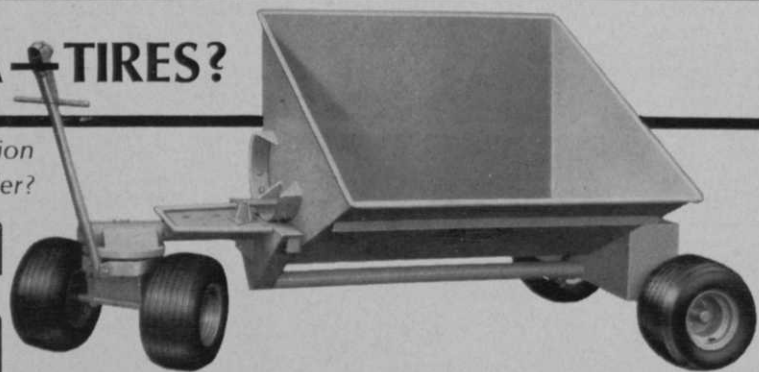
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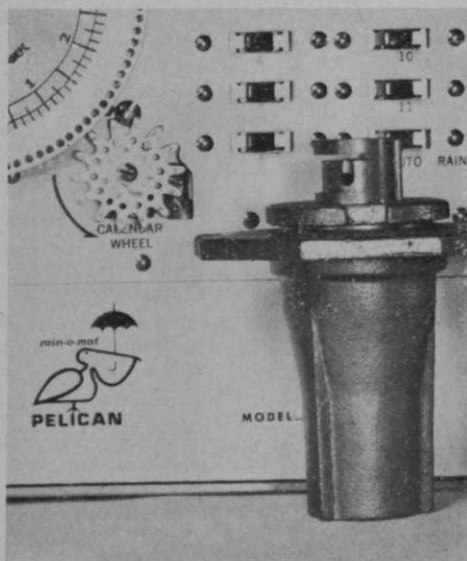
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Coming Events

Nebraska Turfgrass Conference, Nebraska Center for Continuing Education, Lincoln, Nebraska, January 11-13.

PGA National Golf Merchandise Show, Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., January 21-24.

Virginia Turfgrass Conference, Hotel John Marshall, Richmond, Virginia, January 24-25.

United States Golf Association, Green Section Conference, New York, Jan. 27.

International Turfgrass Conference & Show—GCSAA, Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D. C., February 5-10.

CMAA National Conference, Century Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles, Feb. 7-11.

Cornell Turfgrass Conference, Statler Hall, Cornell Univ., Ithaca, New York, February 20-23.

Maryland Sod Conference, Center of Adult Education, details later, March 2.

Midwest Regional Turf Conference Purdue University, Indiana, March 6-8.

Annual Michigan Turfgrass Conference, Kellogg Center, Michigan State University, March 15-16.

CUSTOM CLUBS

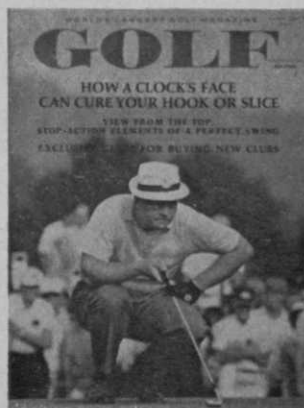
continued from page 94

of the hickory shafted custom club and today's beauties is Al Watrous, who was selected for the first Ryder Cup team in 1926 and today is head professional at Oakland Hills CC, Birmingham, Mich.

"I couldn't say enough in behalf of John St. Clair," Al says. "He checks out all my orders for repairs or custom clubs and channels them to his super staff. I agree with him about the need for personal evaluation, but I get my break by going to John in person, every year for the last twenty-five.

"To me, states Al, "if a person loves the game and gets pleasure out of playing, he becomes aware that there are some clubs especially suited to him. It then becomes a matter of reasonable research in finding them." •

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ALL SEASONS

continued from page 32

which 15 guns with hoses 75 feet long are fitted to cover the slopes. Each gun will cover up to 100 square feet, but to cover the wider intermediate slopes, two hoses are coupled together to double their effective 'reach.' However, I'd like to point out that this equipment can only be used when the temperature is below freezing." (For detailed information on snowmaking, see *GOLFDOM*, February 1965.)

"At Merrywood," says Joe, "we use Larchmont snowmaking equipment. They are the pioneers in the snowmaking business and proved most helpful to us in setting up this operation.

"One problem we had was the noise made by the diesel compressors, which are standard for snowmaking equipment, however, we licked it by enclosing them in soundproof huts.

"To pack the slopes after snowmak-

ing," says Maietta, "I use a Ski-Doo snowmobile. I also offer these vehicles for sale to our members.

"Our golf course superintendent, Bob Dunne, has no objections to our ski operation. There is so much nitrogen in the snowmaking mixture that the 18th fairway is always the first to come back each spring. The snowmaking operation on the practice tee (novice slope) greened up the bare ground so much that it encouraged him to put grass in that area far earlier than he had scheduled."

The ski season at Merrywood is from about the end of December to the middle of March. Maietta aims to build up two to three feet of snow at the start of the season to prevent bare spots appearing on the slopes during Long Island's "January thaws," when the temperature goes up to around 65°. As soon as there is a major thaw in spring, he stops skiing cold—he does not consider it worthwhile extending the club's ski season at the expense of golf.

continued on page 100



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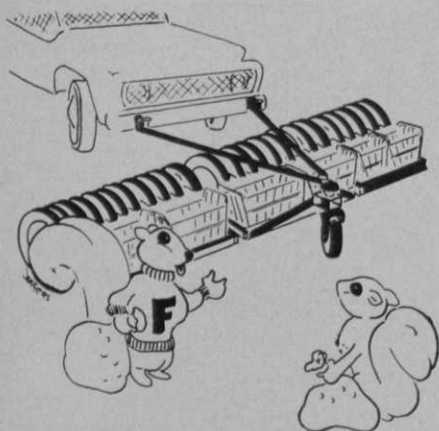
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ALL SEASONS *continued from page 98*

"One of the beauties of the operation here," says Maietta, "is that there is no waste of labor. For instance, the grounds crew during the golf season become the ski crew in the winter. We have eight men who work alternate morning and afternoon shifts when we are making snow, and when we aren't, they are available to do winter maintenance and repair the course equipment and other work under the supervision of Bob Dunne. Bob is not involved in our ski operation and schedules his vacation during the winter.

"Our clubhouse is ideally situated to take care of the needs of our skiers. It's near the base of the intermediate slope (near the 18th green in the golf season) and is one of the reasons why Mr. Poole decided to expand the original house on that site into our present clubhouse. He envisaged a ski operation at Merrywood from the start.

"In the ski season," says Joe, "we reserve what was the original house for our members' use. This gives them a lounge and a small dining room and leaves the large addition Mr. Poole built, which includes a large dining room, a big horseshoe-shaped bar overlooking the slopes, and locker room, for the use of our skiers.

"Our house staff is another example of how the ski operation here complements the golf season," Maietta points out. "Our chef and his kitchen staff, the Maitre D' and the waitresses—all stay with us during the winter months. In fact, we still have the waitresses who started with us when the club opened.

"For the ski season, we turn the pro shop into a ski shop. (Pete Mazur, our professional, takes off to play the Winter Tour.) We stock the shop with ski equipment for sale and hire—such as skies, poles, boots, waxes, tow mittens, hats, goggles, etc. However, we don't carry stretch pants, sweaters, and other apparel—I leave that to the stores.

"Even in my own position here," says

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