

INVERNESS PIONEERED USGA GREEN SECTION

by

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HAD the Open Championship not been held at the Inverness Club, Toledo, Ohio, in 1920, there might never have been a Green Section of the United States Golf Association, or at best its formation might have been long delayed.

The then chairman of the Inverness Green Committee, E. J. Marshall, and the golf course superintendent, W. J. Rockefeller, got together on the job of getting the course into first-class condition. They drew up a schedule, presented it to the Board of Governors and in due course received the necessary funds to go ahead.

But chairman Marshall and superintendent Rockefeller were startled by the lack of substantial facts as they started the job. According to their writings, only a few opinions were available and most of these related to selling some special supplies but were not necessary in helping to improve the condition of a golf course.

It was while hunting for real information about golf course soil, grasses and management in 1920, that E. J. Marshall encountered others interested in developing a central clearing house for golf course maintenance facts. His correspondence with Hugh and Alan Wilson, of Merion Cricket Club, near Philadelphia, and Dr. Walter S. Harban, of Columbia Country Club, near Washington, D.C. during that period was lengthy and heavy, the result being the formation of the Green Section of the United States Golf Association. After the organization meeting on November 30, 1920, Dr. C. V. Piper was selected Chairman, and E. J. Marshall, Vice-Chairman.

Help for Small Clubs

Mr. Marshall supplemented his letter-writing by frequent trips to Washington to aid in starting the turfgrass plots and

USGA FILM LIBRARY

The USGA Film Library has added "Play Them As They Lie" to its two previous films, "Inside Golf House" and "The Rules of Golf—Etiquette".

The latest addition, a 16 mm. color production, runs for 16½ entertaining minutes in which Johnny Farrell, the Open Champion of 1928, acts as intermediary between Wilbur Mulligan, a beginner of unimpeachable integrity, and Joshua P. Slye, a past master in the art of breaking the Rules. The film was made at the Baltusrol Golf Club, Springfield, N. J., where Farrell is professional.

"Inside Golf House" gives the viewer an opportunity to see the many interesting exhibits in "Golf House," USGA headquarters in New York, and to re-live golf triumphs of the past with many of the game's immortals. The film is a 16 mm. black and white production and runs 28 minutes.

"The Rules of Golf—Etiquette" also has proved popular. The film stresses the importance of etiquette by portrayal of various violations of the code in the course of a family four-ball match. Ben Hogan appears in several scenes, and Robert T. Jones, Jr., makes the introductory statement. A 16 mm. color production, the film has a running time of 17½ minutes.

The distribution of all three prints is handled by National Educational Films, Inc., 165 West 46th Street, New York 36, N. Y., which produced the films in cooperation with the USGA. The rental is \$15 per film, \$25 for combination of two and \$35 for all three in combination at the same time, including the cost of shipping prints to the renter.

the publication of the Bulletin of the Green Section of the United States Golf Association. He was a contributor, usually writing under the guise of "Dear Bill." He had a burning desire to aid all, and especially the nine-hole and isolated golf courses, to secure facts to enable the management to give the golfers better playing conditions. The Green Section has continued since Mr. Marshall's time to inten-

sify its efforts to serve the member clubs of the United States Golf Association.

Superintendent Rockefeller was as intensively interested in securing new information and aiding others in having better golf courses. He both traveled to and talked in other areas and designed a number of courses in Ohio, including Heather Downs, Napoleon, Lakemont, Catawba Cliffs, Defiance, and Mohawk golf clubs. He often referred to "his boys" who, after their training and work at Inverness, became superintendents of other courses—namely, Joe Mayo, Al Schardt and Charles Meyers.

The Same Spirit

The determination of Green Committee Chairman Edward J. Searles and Superintendent Wilbert Waters to have Inverness ready for the 1957 Open was just as keen as was that of Marshall and Rockefeller. The striking difference reported by Messrs. Searles and Waters is the fund of information that is available to them to aid in having the soil, grasses and general condition of the course in championship caliber.

Superintendent Waters renovated the tees in 1955, stepped up the fall fertilization program the past two years, mowed the rough at a uniform height all through 1956, and applied fertilizer wherever the turfgrasses were thin. Aeration has been the normal practice on all areas to develop deeper roots and to increase the water-holding capacity of the soil.

Slow-acting and long-lasting nitrogen is the regular diet for the upstanding grass growing on the greens. The mowing schedule calls for close cutting with both the vertical and reel-type mowers. Freedom of mat, thatch and grain is Superintendent Waters' specialty.

Wilbert Waters secured all the necessary "know how" for putting Inverness into championship form by his long experience in work at Inverness, and having been the top man at Highland Meadows for twenty years. Seven years ago he returned to Inverness to take the position as Superintendent. He is a regular attendant

DEFENDING CHAMPION



Cary Middlecoff, Open Champion of 1949 at Medinah Country Club, Medinah, Ill., and 1956 at Oak Hill Country Club, Rochester, N. Y., will be bidding for his third title at the Inverness Club this month, the third time that Inverness has entertained the Open Championship.

at the National and Mid-West Turfgrass Conferences and is a leader of his fellow superintendents in the Toledo area. With Chairman Searles and other committee members of Inverness he attended the 1956 Open at Rochester, N. Y. He listened to Superintendent Elmer Michael tell the problems which he encountered in preparing Oak Hill during an extremely wet season for the Open.

Messrs. Marshall and Rockefeller did more than have Inverness in the best possible condition for the 1920 Open Tournament; they led the way to making it easier for others to have their courses ready for their members as well as the USGA Championships.