

by a stone quarry and a fence is not required there. But additional fence will be installed for protection and privacy along the 1/3 mile alongside a public highway. Fencing of this section previously has been desirable but not necessary; now it is required for the control of admissions.

#### **Water for Lakes**

A lake on the fourth hole constitutes a beauty spot and makes this 194-yard hole challenging, since the lake extends to the edge of the green. This lake is fed by a spring and in recent summers the level has dropped occasionally because of both the drought and leaks resulting from an occasional incursion of muskrats. The job here has been to curb the animals and to plug all possible leaks while hoping that rains will be adequate.

#### **Spectator Ropes**

Roping entire fairways from tee to green was an innovation at Baltusrol for the 1954 Open Championship. This practice proved so satisfactory that the USGA purchased the rope and used the system at all subsequent Open Championships. Baltusrol will be roped again. The club has outlined procedures for driving metal stakes and for stringing about 42,000 feet of rope. Special crossing signs will be erected at designated points where the gallery is permitted to cross the fairways. All this work must be done in the last few days preceding the practice days so that the stakes will not interfere with mowing operations.

#### **Trash**

It is an old American custom to discard paper and other refuse at the immediate point

where it becomes useless. Baltusrol will try to encourage the spectators to deposit such trash in 250 containers which will be located strategically around the course. These containers will hold plastic bag liners for easy handling. However, recognizing that some people may be careless, it will be necessary to employ a clean-up squad to cover the entire course and collect the scattered refuse. The cleanup and collection from the containers must be accomplished each evening after play has ended.

Several additional activities are necessary in preparing for an event as important as the Open:

1. Arrangements must be made to supply electric power to several locations for the concessionaire, caterer and television.
2. Security forces must protect the course 24 hours a day before and during the Championship.
3. Additional lines and cables for communications and television must be placed.
4. Platforms or towers at six locations for photographers must be erected.
5. The clothing size of the workers who will be raking traps and doing other work on the course must be estimated so that they will be suitably garbed.

#### **Conclusion**

Preparing for a championship entails more than providing a good golf course. Initially, Baltusrol had about 40 months to do the job. Most of that time was used to study the needs, plan, make arrangements and schedule—and now only a short time is left in which to complete the many things that must be done. The Open is played in four days; it took more than three years to get ready.

## **Selling the Idea**

by E. L. MEISTER, JR., Green Committee Chairman, Kirtland Country Club, Willoughby, Ohio

**G**olf course changes or innovations, if they are to be digested easily and without criticism by the membership, must start many years in advance of the actual work.

First, it is important that the chairman of the green committee be someone conversant with golf and who has the confidence of the membership. If the green committee chairman has a reputation as a fine competitive golfer, changes in golf course design will be accepted more easily. Changes also must be practical and

worth doing. It is important to establish a long-range plan for the development of the course. This plan should be implemented by a golf architect, who can present his proposals and suggestions in written form. The membership will accept recommendations of this type much more easily than those coming from other members or from green chairmen.

At Kirkland Country Club it was obvious that certain changes had to be made in the golf course to bring it up-to-date. The club employed

a well-known golf architect to prepare a plan. It wasn't very difficult to sell the membership on his plan, which would require several years to complete. In the case of Kirtland, the fact that I, the green committee chairman, was a member of the Walker Cup Team helped to sell the idea to the membership. My suggestions and thoughts on the necessity for improving the golf course were readily approved and accepted. It is extremely important to have the right person as chairman of the green committee. If he does not play golf well, or is not particularly interested in golf, he won't sell a plan of modernization very effectively. Likewise, he probably won't be interested in bringing the golf course up to modern standards. Thus, the selection of a green chairman and the development of a long-range plan are extremely important.

Obviously, the membership of every club is different, and different approaches are necessary at each club. When members understand the changes and why they are being made, there is little opposition. A bit of psychology might be useful. When a member says the golf course is in great shape, reply that, yes, it is not a bit bad, but it could be a lot better. Generally the member will quickly reply, "What do you mean? This is one of the greatest courses in the country and it is in better shape than any course I have ever played." Occasionally someone will say the golf course is in fine shape, but then he'll find something to criticize. Should a member criticize some feature of the course, try agreeing with him. By agreeing with him on the basis that, yes, you are right, the greens are terrible or the fairways are frightful, you might find his reaction rather interesting. He'll probably say, "The greens aren't that bad," or, "The fairways aren't that bad. Actually, they are pretty good." After a few minutes, the complaining member could well be defending instead of criticizing.

It is good practice to write each year to the membership, explaining the changes so that they are not surprised to find the work crew building a new bunker, a lake, or a new green. In other words, it is extremely important to communicate with the membership so that they know what is happening.

Most members instinctively feel that changes will make the course harder to play and, therefore, less enjoyable for them. However, improvements often make a course easier to play and more enjoyable for the member. Some clubs suggest one basic rule: make the course hard

for the good player and relatively easy for the average or poor golfer. This at first glance may seem impossible to do, but in fact, it is not. The positioning of fairway bunkers, the positioning of green bunkers can make a course extremely difficult for the good player and not change the difficulty for the average player. Trees can be positioned for the same purpose. Thus, this objective can be realized for the benefit of all the members.

When to schedule major improvements is another important factor. Usually they are started in the fall or just after Labor Day. This allows enough time for the changes to be completed before the first snowfall. If they are clearly informed of the improvement program, members of Kirtland Country Club don't offer much opposition. Obviously, you cannot disrupt play. But if you make allowance, (for example, a temporary green) members accept this inconvenience without complaint so long as they understand the problem.

The development of flowering shrubs and trees is one phase of modernization and construction that seems to have been forgotten. Azaleas, rhododendrons, dogwoods, and other flowering trees are profusely planted on the Augusta National Golf Club's course. Kirtland follows the same plan and each year plants over 100 dogwoods, rhododendrons, flowering crabs, and other showy ornamentals. Members enjoy seeing beautiful shrubs and trees about their course, and a great many golf courses could be improved in this area.

Naturally, problems occur. It is not all easy sailing by any means, but then not everything worthwhile is easy to do, or always fun. It's impossible to emphasize too much the cooperation necessary between the green chairman and the superintendent. In this respect, Kirtland offers an incentive program to the course workers. The club allocates \$500 to the man who has the best greens during the summer and \$300 to the man with the second best. This not only includes the greens themselves, but trees and bunkers adjacent to the greens. It is amazing the interest the green crew has taken and the fun the members have had from this program. Likewise, the green crew plays the course at least once every two weeks. This has been helpful because they can find many things they would correct and many good suggestions come from them. The cooperation of all hands is essential to golf course conditioning and modernization.