



Superintendent Bernie Belknap instructing Miss Baker and Miss Kester on trimming sand bunkers.

A Female Greenkeeper

by MISS JOY BAKER, Rolling Hills Country Club, Wichita, Kansas

A female greenkeeper?

I am 18, a high school graduate, and a lady greenkeeper. I didn't know that women are rarely employed in such an occupation. I first became interested in greenkeeping through my father, who has worked for several years at the Rolling Hills Country Club. I assumed that hiring women to take care of the course was a normal procedure.

Greenkeeping is a healthful occupation. I go to work at 7 a.m. and I usually leave at 3:30 p.m. I feel physically fit, have a glorious sun-tan, and I am relatively free of employer pressure. On the other hand I don't worry about getting dirty or wet, or having calloused hands and dirty fingernails, and my hair is worn in a pony tail.

I think we have a compatible and congenial crew. Some people have asked if men resent us women working with them. Frankly, we feel that since both men and women have been successfully employed in other jobs, there is nothing unusual about this arrangement. Our group varies from a 72-year old Scotsman to several 16-year olds of both sexes. There is often more than one member of a family included in our crew. Some of the employees are students who work only in the summer.

My greatest responsibility is caring for the greens. I mow all the greens and take care of my section of five greens and 18 bunkers. I mow with a triplex putting green mower. The

tools I carry in my work are a knife, screwdriver, gopher poison, ball mark fixer, and a quick coupler.

Caring for the greens is difficult during the summer. Brown patch, dollar spot, cutworms and wilt keep us on our toes. If wilted areas are not watered they will turn into a hard and unmanageable area. You must be careful in watering because you can apply too much water and scald the greens.

We help in spraying for weeds and pulling out foreign grasses—crabgrass, bermudagrass, etc. unwanted on greens. Ball marks must be repaired, bunkers must be well-manicured and raked daily. We take pride in our areas and worry about the appearance of our section.

I doubt that many women would select greenkeeping as a life-long career, but for temporary employment it is quite satisfying. The women at Rolling Hills are employed seasonally. Depending on the weather, they are hired in early spring, and their employment is terminated in the late fall since the summer is the busiest season.

We are asked to work overtime only if we need to water the greens when the temperature soars, or if there are extra duties outside our assigned work that we must do. Therefore, the hours are good for mothers with school-age children.

I like my job, and I look on this type of work as a coming source of employment for women.