

Today we know that if intelligent methods are used an excellent stand of grass can be obtained by the use of 5 to 7 pounds of the fescues, or 3 to 5 pounds of the bents, for each 1,000 square feet. In brief, the seed bill today for a 6,000-foot green is approximately \$27 if the fescues are used, and approximately \$36 if the green is sown with the bents. Furthermore, when the seeding is accomplished, if it is done properly and at the right time of the year, the club has something to show for its money.

Economy is commendable; but it should not be practiced at the expense of the greens. Good greens are priceless. Economize by using seed intelligently. Do not waste it in reseeding old turf or sowing it at the wrong season of the year. Real economy is possible by passing up the "fool's gold" that is offered in bags, cans, bottles, and crates. Too commonly it is bought with almost unbelievable credulity. Better be thankful that genuine bent and fescue seed is available. The price may seem high and hard to accept philosophically; but everything considered, the situation now as compared with that of a few years ago is as the gnat to the camel.

What Constitutes Standard Maintenance?

E. J. MARSHALL

The green committee of the U. S. Golf Association is besieged with questions in one form or another as to what is a fair and reasonable amount of money to spend in a year on the maintenance of a golf course. At this time it is quite as impossible intelligently to answer these inquiries as it would be to say what a man should spend a year properly to support his family. So much depends on the unknown or variable factors—soil or climatic conditions to be met, the money available, the treatment required to get on a proper basis, and, lastly but most important, the tastes and desires of the players.

The players on nine-hole courses such as Hillsdale, Michigan, and Lebanon, Ohio, are pleased and satisfied, though they might prefer something better, with maintenance that costs from fifteen hundred to eighteen hundred dollars a year. On the other hand the players on some of the courses near the big cities demand a perfect course every day of the season and do not complain when the cost mounts to from twenty to twenty-five thousand dollars a year.

Obviously it will always cost more, and perhaps an unreasonable amount, to keep a course in tournament condition every day than to keep it up to a practical playable standard. The problem is to determine when a course is maintained up to a practical playable standard and what that sort of maintenance should cost.

Neither the green committee of the U. S. Golf Association nor anyone else can answer the questions as to proper cost of maintenance until by common consent of players a standard of maintenance is agreed upon as good enough for practical purposes, nor until a comparison of maintenance costs on many golf courses can be compiled.

The committee is convinced that a great deal of waste and extravagance can be eliminated when there is more information available on these points. How is this to be brought about? The obvious answer is by getting the clubs throughout the country, or those interested in sensible

economy, to adopt the same system of keeping accounts, so that costs can be fairly compared. This applies more to costs of labor than of materials, for labor is the most important item of expense; but all costs should be classified properly, and there should be a careful distribution of expenses to the various items.

When golf-course accounts can be put side by side and compared item by item exactly as railroad statements may be compared, a start will have been made towards establishing a common sense or practical standard of maintenance, and not before.

Then if one course spends so many hours of labor or dollars cutting and caring for greens, or mowing fairways or the rough, or taking care of bunkers or the like, and another course spends more or less, it will not be difficult for those who know the two courses and have observed their condition to determine with fair accuracy which was on the right basis of maintenance and which cost was too high or too low.

The uncontrollable factors, such as character of construction, soil, climate, and the like will always have to be considered in comparison of cost, but it is certain that only by this means will we ever be able to fix or agree upon a fair practical standard of maintenance or a fair average cost.

If the courses around Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Detroit, and other cities were distributing their labor and other costs on exactly the same system, economical as well as extravagant maintenance would be apparent from the figures. Those who knew the courses could then see why one was not so well kept as another and why more or less money was spent on one than on the other. The course or courses that were always in good, practical condition at reasonable expense would become what we might call standard maintenance courses.

The Story of the Portsmouth Country Club, Portsmouth, N. H.

R. D. McDONOUGH

The idea that golf is a rich man's game, and that a golf club is an expensive luxury, has been thoroughly exploded by the success of many golf clubs in cities of from 10,000 to 20,000 inhabitants. The Portsmouth Country Club, in the twenty years of its existence, has lived down the theory that a man has to have a large income to belong to a club to play the game. At this club during the first fifteen years of its existence the head of the family has paid the large sum of \$10 a year for a membership, which enabled him to play over an excellently planned and well kept nine-hole course, granted him and his family the use of the four tennis courts, allowed him (if he so desired) to have a cottage on the grounds, permitted him to shoot over the clay pigeon traps, and invited him to enjoy the social life which centers around the club.

War and the high prices of labor and materials have had their effects on this club as in all other matters of life, and reluctantly the dues were raised to \$15 and then to \$20, where they will probably remain; but this is a sum that does not wreck the accuracy of the opening paragraph. Some will say they "must have a whale of a membership"; but this is not so,