

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,

as we have never had 200 members, and these include a good many naval officers who are in a special membership class.

What has been done in this club can be duplicated in any city or town in the country, and at no greater cost, provided there are men (and it needs only a few) who have the interest of the club enough at heart to sacrifice some of their time and thought to working out the problems of the club instead of wasting a lot of money securing and following the advice of the so-called experts. Neither can the small club "ape" the schedule of the large clubs, with overpriced professionals, cafes, etc., but they can have just as good a time and develop just as good golf as the high priced clubs.

I have always maintained that any ordinary golfer, who is willing to spend a little time and study on the problems of his club, treatment of its soil, the efficiency of its labor, etc., can in a few years develop as good if not better putting greens and fairways as the so-called expert, and far more cheaply. Every golf course has its special problems, and the man on the job will soon find, if he experiments intelligently, what is best for the course. The whole matter has been greatly simplified by THE BULLETIN OF THE GREEN SECTION, with its excellent advice and friendly help from men who have given their time and thought to the building up of golf courses, for the love they have of the game alone. Construction and upkeep of golf courses have been very costly to many clubs in this country, and any member of a small club who does not take advantage of the mistakes made by others is unworthy to be called a golf fan or have a place on a green committee.

The method used in establishing our club is one that is adaptable to any small town. We started by forming within the club a land company, which took up the shares, which were set at \$10 each. These shares paid 4 per cent. Every owner of a share was a member of the club, this having been made one of the provisions. With the money thus raised we purchased a more or less abandoned farm of 165 acres, a good part of which is woodland. A nine-hole course was laid out, two tennis courts built, and a small club-house constructed, to which was added later a separate locker room for the men. The club-house is large enough to hold all of the social affairs of the club, and the upkeep is small; in fact, the success of any small club will depend on its ability to keep down the overhead. The first year a pipe line was laid to all of the greens, and this has been of small expense ever since.

After the club gets under way, a certain number of shares may be retired each year until in time the lands company goes out of existence and the property is in the name of the club. We have two men employed from April until November, and hire a horse to draw our triplex mowers for cutting the fairway. As a rule the horse is the property of one of the men employed. During certain busy parts of the season one or two additional men are taken on for a week or two, but the two men do about all of the work. Our labor bill for the past four years has averaged \$2,000 a year, including horse hire. We pay our men \$25 a week, whereas in the first years of the club \$12 a week was sufficient.

The writer, who is a charter member of the club, has in the past eight years been more or less active in the management of the club as a president and member of the green committee. We soon learned that we could

buy a similar grade of seed from our local dealers for from 22 cents to 28 cents a pound that the seed houses sold us for 50 cents and 75 cents; and when we bought redbtop we got redbtop, and this applied also to creeping bent and Rhode Island bent. In this state we have a pure seed law, and every state dealer must attach to every bushel of seed an analysis giving the name of the seed, its purity and germination. If we doubted the dealer's honesty, we sent some of the seed to the State College and soon learned the real facts. The same is true of fertilizers—we found what was needed for our light, sandy soil and stuck to that, and as a result our greens, we are told, are as good as one can find in the state, and our fairways show improvements yearly. We have had our problems and upsets; but there are no problems of any small club that a good committee of golfers can't solve if they give it the time.

An innovation tried at the Country Club which worked out well in keeping up the club interest and at the same time making the club the social center of the town, was the erection of small cottages on the grounds. A dozen or more of the members have erected small cottages on the grounds on land set aside by the club. No extra rental or fee was demanded for this, and for a long time no water rent was charged. Some of the cottages were the small portable type—plenty big enough for a small family for the week-ends or even longer; others were larger; and some were used for summer homes the entire summer. This always brought a colony to the club for the week-ends and over holidays. These families made the club their headquarters and gave the members facilities which could not have been enjoyed unless the club-house was much larger and had a greater overhead.

We have seen the club grow until now we are beginning to realize that we need eighteen holes. This winter we added a toboggan chute and winter sports to our club program, and it has been a move in the right direction.

A New Method of Making Putting Greens

HUGH I. WILSON, PHILADELPHIA

The problem of making a green in a dry country, such as New Mexico, which will putt well and hold a ball if pitched on it, is a pretty difficult problem. One great difficulty with sand greens in that section is the high winds, which, unless the greens are kept heavily oiled, will take off all the surface and make the up-keep a large item. Some experiments recently tried near Silver City, New Mexico, would seem at least partly to solve the problem. They involve the use of magnetic iron dust from a concentrator located at Hurley, New Mexico. This dust is so heavy that it does not blow and holds the ball much better than ordinary sand, when the shot is pitched. It is slower than sand; but as all the particles are practically the same size, it makes a good putting surface, if it is dragged with a piece of carpet, as is done on ordinary sand greens. The experiments are preliminary, and further information will be sought on the subject. The green committee, I am sure, would be pleased to receive any experience that anyone has had in using such material.