

# ARE YOU KIND TO YOUR COURSE?

By

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**I**t is a rare golfer who realizes how greatly he punishes the golf course as he plays. He thinks more often of how much the course punishes him.

An Arizona superintendent made the following observation recently. "If I began punching holes with a crowbar in one of the palm trees on the clubhouse lawn, my members would want to injure me. However, those members don't realize that as they walk over the grass plants each day, they break them and tear them injuring the plants much more seriously than it is possible for me to injure a palm tree with a crowbar.

Wear and tear from the play of the game is expected on a golf course. No superintendent expects to find a green without ball marks after a heavy day of play.

There are, however, "great sins of golfers" which make the superintendent and the green committee chairman unhappy, damages the course, causes extra expense and adds to the work load. Most of these "sins" are the result of thoughtlessness. Few are deliberate injuries.

Some of them and their consequences are mentioned here:

1. Soft drink bottles, glasses or paper cups are left lying about.

The least consequence of this action is that the superintendent must use costly labor to police the area. If some bottles or glasses are missed, the result is broken glass on the golf course and perhaps a damaged mowing unit.

2. Climbing out of bunkers on the high side.

This offense does not occur often because it is simply easier to walk out on the low side but there are persons who believe the axiom that "a straight line is the shortest distance . . ." and the consequence is the breaking off of the lip of a sandtrap.

3. Failure to replace divots.

In many parts of the country the replacing of divots is overrated. Replaced divots seldom grow. However the replacing of the turf which is cut away by the club prevents the drying out of the portions of the plant beneath the divot and healing is not retarded by desiccation. More important, the replaced turf keeps the next player's ball from rolling into the divot.

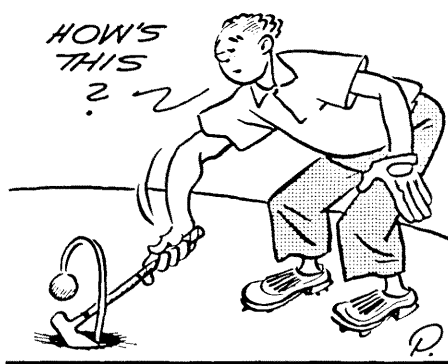
4. Failure to repair ball marks.

This sin does more damage to the following golfer than to the course. However, their repair is time consuming. It is a job that must be done before the putt-

## WISE REPAIRMAN



## CLEVER BUT COSTLY



ing green can be mowed. If not, the turf that is pushed up by the force of the ball is removed by the mower.

#### 5. Scuffing of turf by dragging feet or twisting on the greens.

To a superintendent who is proud of the appearance of his greens there is nothing more irritating than to find marks on the putting surface left by a golfer who failed to pick up his feet or who used "body English."

#### 6. Leaning on a putter.

Obviously, such a practice depresses a spot in the putting surface, and if there are enough such spots, the superintendent will soon be asked why he let the greens get in such deplorable condition.

#### 7. Using a putter to "hook" or "scoop" the ball out of the cup.

This trick saves stooping to retrieve the ball. It isn't easy to do and it takes a considerable amount of practice to become proficient at flipping the ball.

Unfortunately in the course of develop-

ing one's skill, many a lip of a hole is broken or damaged.

#### 8. Jabbing the putting surface with the flagstick or replacing it carelessly.

Usually this damage is not deliberate. It simply results from indifference on the part of the handler.

#### 9. Losing temper and cutting a divot from the putting surface with a putter.

Fortunately, this is a rare act. If there is one unforgivable sin on the golf course, this is it. Every golfer ought to be above this kind of action. Certainly he must damage himself more than the golf course when he allows himself to get so far out of hand.

#### 10. The careless use of carts.

Carts should always be kept off putting greens, out of hazards, out of wet spots, and off steep side hills. Carts are capable of damaging the golf course seriously when used improperly but they may be no more damaging than maintenance equipment if they are used with care.

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