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GOLF

VERDANT GREENE

A golfer just returned from the Pa-
cific Coast says that high handicapped
amateurs have proved an even greater
pest there in this spring's open champi-
ships than they ever did in Florida and
contiguous territory. Indeed, the nui-
sance reached such a point that at last
there is widespread demand, even among
the simon-pures for reform. For in-
stance, in the southern California fixture.
Leo Diegel, Eddie Loos and other top-
notch members of the paid brigade were
yoked with ten stroke duffers — fine
pace makers, you don't think. The only
excuse was that "The drawing by lot
gave everybody an equal chance," a
contention so manifestly untrue has not
to need analysis.

The underlying trouble was the need
of amateurs to swell the entry fees. The
same was true in a somewhat different
way, last August, in the National open
at Inverness, although there the crowd-
ing was more for a showing than re-
ceipts and fewer incongruities cropped
out in the pairings. As a matter of
fact, the California galleries were so
large as to annoy several of the ama-
teurs who found themselves in too fast
professional company which reacted on
the games of both. Diegel, who now di-
vides the public eye with Jock Hutchi-
son, rather oddly finished third in the
southern California open event and
fourth in the northern California corre-
sponding contest, being respectively five
and seven strokes above the winner.

Hutt Martin, who won the southern
title, is at Lake Placid, New York, in
the summer. Matrimony evidently
agrees with the attenuated Loos for he
ended second by two strokes in the south
and won in the north with three strokes
to spare over John Black, Californian,
who was one notch below Macdonald
Smith, equally well known along the
Atlantic slope, not to mention Pittsburg
where he spent two seasons at the Oak-
mont Club. Martin, the southern Cali-
fornia winner at Los Angeles, fell into
sixteenth place at San Francisco, barely
retaining a respectable position.

An intimate friend of Jerome Travers
told me a day or two since the latter had
scarcely swung a club all winter, despite
the open conditions because he detests
indoor practice and does not believe in
attempting to retain form during cold
weather even when play is possible.
Furthermore, Travers is not in much
better health than last season when his
lack of endurance put skids under him
in attempting to qualify for the national
amateur title. He lost, as early as the
second round in the New Jersey cham-
pionship, but did better in the Metro-
politan. At that time, John M. Ward,
former baseball star, whom he beat just
before being eliminated himself, told
me Travers played much as of old, his
lack being stamina, rather than skill.
That is exactly the contention of Wil-
liam Reekie, his club mate, now New
Jersey title holder.

Be that as it may, New Yorkers have
come to disregard Travers even as a
potential force, since a year of abstemi-
ous living has failed to place him on
his pins. Up to last fall it was thought

he had a chance to recoup his shattered
fortunes, for he had previously been
able to round into form with unusual
facility. However, the pitcher that goes
to the well too often, some day returns
in flaky finders. Travers quite unlike
other members of his family has never
been robust physically, and it was
mainly in the hope of building up his
constitution by means of exercise in the
open that his parents encouraged him
to spend so much time golfing.

Walter Fairbanks, veteran of veter-
ans, as much at home in New York and
Florida as in California, has at last
bobbed up, after being completely out
of sight since the early days of the
world war. Many have been inquiring
if he was dead. He ended first, too, in
a notable field of more than thirty at
Los Angeles. Next month it will be
eighteen years since Fairbanks ended
third amateur in the southern Califor-
nia open championship and he was griz-
zled then. Walter, accounted a Den-
verite, has been on the "turf" fully 25
years and deserves to share honors with
Mrs. Caleb Fox of Philadelphia, for
having retained form longest among
amateurs.

Douglas Grant, writing recently from
London, says: "I've tried the ribbed
irons but cannot see that they are any
better than ordinary clubs — anyway,
over here, and I don't think they will be
popular on this side. The new standard
balls do not seem to have accomplished
anything aimed at by the new rule. The
lawmakers should have standardized a
floater." Incidentally he remarks:
"There is great interest in the British
amateur, this year. The standard over
here is much higher than in 1920 and
getting better every day. As you may
know the English visitors last fall in the
United States Amateur championship,
were not the best that could be sent,
and with the exception of Tom Armour
were always erratic stroke players. If
they had managed to qualify, however,
they would have been found a hot lot."
The last named point was emphasized in
this column, two weeks following the
championship, after I had watched Tol-
ley and Weathered play in the Morris
County Club's tournament.

Jack Neville still insists, by the way,
that Grant is the greatest golfer Cali-
fornia has yet produced, although Doug-
las has played far more in Great Bri-
tain than on this side. While at Yale,
he attracted so little attention he was
absolutely unknown, when, along with
Robin Hayne of California he went to
an Atlantic City tournament, about a
decade since and won first prize, Hayne
proving runner-up. Parenthetically it
may be remarked the field on that oc-
casion was one of the poorest ever
known, down by the sea, so there was
not much glamor attached to the
achievement.

It isn't the "bald headed" row any-
more.

"Men don't have a chance to get the
front row of seats at vaudeville shows
these days," said Manager Eddie Gren-
der, Majestic Theatre.

"The women reserve 'em a week
ahead of time for every show."



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