

MY SYSTEM WITH COMPOST

George Herrington, Lindrick's popular Head Greenkeeper, gives some useful pointers on a seasonal task.

THE first and obvious thing is to decide on the composition of the compost. Soil, sand, peat, leaf-mould, sewage sludge and deep litter if made from peat, may all be used.

For soil, the top spit of your own course may be used. This should always be kept in stock whenever you have any space available as it will improve for riddling after being stacked.

Leaf mould can very often be found within ten miles of your own course. It may be possible for members to pull a few strings in order to get your own constant supply.

10/- per Ton

Peat can be bought in 1 cwt. bags but it is rather expensive. We are very fortunate in this respect as we can buy very good peat soil at 10/- per ton, plus the cost of transport.

Sewage sludge may also be bought ready for use, but we get our own from our local sewage works for 1/- per tractor load. This I like to keep for two years, keeping it well turned over. It then breaks up far better.

Deep litter can also be useful if got from someone who beds down with peat, not shavings. We bought some from a poultry farmer who had kept it in deep litter houses for three years. We gave him the price he paid for the baled peat, so we got the peat plus three years' poultry manure as well for the original price. This we stacked with alternate layers of soil and kept for one year before using.

I once tried slaughter house refuse just after the war when things were scarce. We built a wall with old turf, then got a load of refuse from the

slaughter house, put it in the centre and covered it with a layer of soil. This process was repeated using alternate layers of refuse and soil. Laying it was rich but messy.

Riddling

Once the compost is mixed, the process is completed by a shredder to break it down. It is then put through a $\frac{1}{4}$ in. riddle and finally through a $\frac{1}{8}$ in. riddle by hand. The fine dressing is then used for greens and the rest for semi-greens and tees.

One of the chief reasons why many greenkeepers do not make their own compost is lack of a suitable, warm, dry shed in which to make it during the bad weather. Clubs should provide suitable facilities for compost making as the original outlay will soon be amply repaid by the consequent saving on bought compost.

When and How to Compost

I like to spike my greens as soon as they start to grow, that is, late March or early April. The method I use is one man a green in front spiking and the rest of us following on with compost using 30 cwt. per green. We wheel this on the greens with balloon tyred barrows and spread with shovels. The compost is then brushed and drag-matted about six times. Then we rod well and iron roll. For the next few days we brush, drag and rod the greens which we think gives them their very fast pace.

Personally I cannot see the value of spiking and composting in the Autumn. I like to leave the greens as firm as possible in Winter as they are played on throughout the Winter months.