

Over-watering of Putting Greens and Its Results

By PETER LEES

THERE is no doubt that to keep pace with the times it is most essential on all golf courses nowadays to have an abundant supply of water, and this applies more directly to this country, where long spells of drought are of common occurrence. Like everything else, the use of water can easily be abused and instead of doing good, as intended, may give quite the opposite result. It is not an unusual thing to hear of putting greens which a few years ago were all that a golfer could desire, but which are now very poor indeed. Money may have been lavished on them in the way of both artificial and natural manuring, but notwithstanding all the care bestowed upon them they have greatly deteriorated. Greenkeepers and Green Committees have sought diligently for the reasons for this state of affairs but quite possibly they have never thought that their system of watering the greens during the summer might be the root of the whole evil. I have never yet seen good healthy grass go bad if properly treated, but I have many times seen a fine carpet of perfect turf, quite free from weeds, utterly ruined by improper treatment, and one of the causes was the unnatural use of water. Greenkeepers should make it a point to get as near nature as possible, but never try to get beyond it, because if they try they will surely fail sooner or later. Just because an abundant supply of water has been provided it does not hold good that it can be used indiscriminately at any time or anyhow. In the course of my career I have seen this many times with disastrous results. Is it natural, let me ask, to have the

sprinklers going at mid-day under the boiling hot sun? Can this be good for the grass? I say "no" and think that the sooner this practice is given up the better. Use water at night, in the early morning or in the late afternoon after the sun has lost its power.

It seems to be the idea that in very dry weather the putting greens should be sprinkled every day so as to keep the grass alive and at the same time make the putting green good. Sprinkling in this way is wrong. If continued, the roots of the grass will keep near the surface to get the moisture and will not grow down deep and as a result the grass will grow weaker and weaker and all sorts of weeds will take its place. What I suggest, and I have learned from a wide experience, is not to water any oftener than twice a week, but thoroughly soak the surface so that the moisture will get down deep. The roots will follow it down and a much stronger turf and one far better able to withstand the dry conditions will be the result. There is no doubt in my own mind that the continual application of water is a sure means of cultivating weeds, and one weed especially, which is spreading to an alarming extent on nearly all courses. A few years back it was practically unknown, but I am positive if care is not exercised in regard to the application of water it will get the master hand on many fine putting greens before very long. The weed I refer to is Pearlwort (*Sagina procumbens*). If this weed once gets in a green, in a short time it will master the grass and kill it out entirely, and the lavish application of water will most assuredly be a help to this end. Chickweed is another weed that is creeping in and is cultivated in the same way.

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And gave every thought to what he taught;

His book cost a dollar-ten.

From McFoozle's style we tried Letrip's
Till our strokes were naught but
cramp;

But in weal and woe to stick to Joe—

And then came another champ.

His name—Walter Wallop—he wrote
a book

That proved that the others were
punk,

So we poor dubs bought Wallop's clubs,
And our old ones we sold for junk.

Our drives soon got to a mashie's length,

And we sliced, we topped, we swore,

Then there came the book by Sandy
Hook,

And another by Jimmie Gore.

And that seems a million years ago,

If we count the time by strokes;

Yet here to-day—in the same old way

We play like a couple of jokes.

We've played our shots in a million
ways,

But we never play two the same.

We tried all the grips, the swings, the
flips,

Of the best men playing the game.

We know their books from McFoozle's,
up

To the last one by Aleck Brice.

Like two damned fools, we've followed
their rules,

But we've still got the same old slice.

We still play round in a hundred and
ten—

That is, if we're going strong,

Still it's not too late—be patient and
wait—

But how long, old Pal, how long?

A. W. T.

The Relation of Golf to Real Estate

SOMETIMES the Real Estate man secures property outside the town and then sits down and waits for the town to come to him. Maybe it doesn't come.

But a very sure way of directing the trend of residential development is to use a modern golf course as the magnet.

Investigation will prove that never has there been built a golf course but has property in the immediate vicinity materially increased in value, and which is more, been in great demand.

A search of the records also will prove that a golf course never has been abandoned except to secure a more desirable site or because leased property has had to be given over to building operations. This fact provides a strong argument for club ownership of golf courses.

But as a business proposition, an enterprising dealer in real estate has only to consult records of marvelously increased valuations of property nearby golf courses to appreciate the fact that the subject is worthy of further investigation.

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Another thing which helps to kill the grass when excessively watered, is the use of too heavy a roller when the surface is wet. The roller packs the soil very hard and closes the air spaces, and as a result no air can get through to the roots and the grass dies.

When applying sand, or stimulants of any kind, manures, etc., a very good plan is to put them on when the surface is dry and then water well. By this method quicker and more beneficial results will be obtained.

In conclusion I would point out that the foregoing are my own personal observations, carefully studied, and I hope they may help, in some small measure, Greenkeepers and Green Committees who may be in difficulties in regard to this question.