

RHODES SCALE CONTROL

By J. L. JENNINGS

Rhodes grass scale has been the cause of great concern in the Gulf Coast area for several years. Turf damage can be as small as an area from 4 to 6 inches, to the infestation of an entire green, if efforts are not made immediately to control it. This insect seems to like a dry condition, and first appears in the summer on the high part of a green which tends to dry out, and ceases to be a problem in the late fall, with the coming of cool weather. Turf loses color and then dies if growth is not forced with the application of fertilizer to offset the feeding of the scale insect.

Chlordane will control the insect in the crawling stage, but has no effect on the mature scale, which looks like a small whitish ball, sometimes as large as the head of a match.

When evidence of damage first appears, we put into action the following control:

Aerify, lightly topdress, fertilize and water the infested area. Then spray all greens with chlordane at the rate of from 4 to 5 lbs. of actual chlordane per acre, at 10-day intervals.

ADJUST TO WEATHER

By O. J. NOER

Some people decry any attempt to blame weather for damage or loss of grass, and cite the isolated instance of little or no trouble on one course to prove that serious damage on nearby courses is man-made and never God-given. In some cases this contention is the right one, but not always. Failure to modify a routine practice because of the unusual may happen. For example, a superintendent on a course in south Georgia once remarked that too much peat had been used in reconstructing one green. The soil in all the others was very sandy. He seemed puzzled when asked if this green was watered as often and if it received the same amount of water as the others. Peat has a very high, and sand a very low, water-holding capacity. His trouble vanished when the new green was watered less frequently and given more water each time. The change made sense. Because of the lower waterholding capacity of the sand it was necessary to use less water each time and water more frequently. This is but one example of many, yet the modified watering procedure would fail in a period of extremely heavy rainfall.

In each climatic zone the tricks of customary weather are known and expected.

They are handled effectively and with dispatch. But troubles multiply when there is an abrupt change to a different kind of weather. Then God-given troubles may be man made also because damage might have been averted with a little extra know-how. In the Midwest dry hot weather is taken in stride, but this occurs less often in regions where normal summers are moist and cool. Wilting and localized dry spots are not recognized in time to avert damage.

Whenever snow comes before the ground freezes snow mold is always worse than otherwise. Injury can be lessened by avoiding the use of Seaside and other susceptible strains of grass. The presence of too much organic matter at or near the soil surface keeps the soil wet and makes disease worse. The organic matter may be from the excessive use of peat, or may be due to the presence of matted grass. The amount of organic matter in the soil should not exceed 15 to 20 per cent by volume, and the development of a thatched turf should not be tolerated. Then fungicides will give satisfactory protection.

BUDGET AND FERTILIZING

By NELSON MONICAL

A superintendent's knowledge and wishes are sometimes far apart from the club budget. I have known members to compare the turf on courses located in the same locality and wondered why there was such a marked contrast. The big difference was that one had spent 3 to 4 times as much on his fertilizing program.

For those who are going in for the cold and warm weather grass combinations, it would be well to study their requirements. Most of your fertilizer should be used during the summer months. Possibly more nitrogen could be used than you normally would.

The mowing practices have been stepped up to six days a week on greens, and three to four days a week on tees and fairways. Fertilizing programs will have to be increased also. More fertilizer and less water is the trend taking place now. A well fertilized fairway, where the turf is dense and firm, plays much better than a lush, over-watered one.

Clover in a great number of fairways increased possibly because of installing a water system, and its operation did not allow enough expenditure for fertilizers. High nitrogen feeding, where clover is a problem, is almost a necessity along with your other controls.