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USGA GREEN

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“Beware the guesswork that will produce grass that will behave for 3, 4 or 5 years but then disappears, along with the builder’s guarantee. The one-third formula, (soil, sod and peat moss) is not always certain. And, above all, be careful of drainage. Watch the tile that is packed with soil that holds water, preventing the water from ever reaching the tile.”

USGA Green Section Award

Following the luncheon award, the United States Golf Association Green Section Award, presented for distinguished service to golf through work with turfgrass, was awarded to Elmer J. Michael, of Pittsford, N. Y. Mr. Michael served as Golf Course Superintendent at the Oak Hill Country Club, Rochester, N. Y., from 1929 until his retirement in 1965. The award was presented by William Ward Foshay, of New York, USGA President, and Henry H. Russell, of Miami, Chairman of the Green Section Committee.

Mr. Michael was among the earliest superintendents to recognize the value of creeping bentgrass for putting greens. He planted the East Course at Oak Hill to a strain of bentgrass that he discovered on grass plots that were abandoned after the Pan-American Exposition, which had become the site of the Park Club of Buffalo, N. Y. At that time, 1918, he was an assistant to his father at the Park Club.

He also designed and installed an irrigation system for both the East and West courses at Oak Hill. Mr. Michael served as Mayor of Pittsford from 1956 to 1960 with no interruption to his duties at Oak Hill. He is a past President of the Pittsford Rotary Club and an Elder in the Pittsford Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Michael is the seventh recipient of the Green Section Award. Previous winners were Dr. John Monteith, Jr., of Colorado Springs, Colo.; Professor Lawrence S. Dickinson, of Amherst, Mass.; O. J. Noer, Milwaukee, Wis.; Joseph Valentine, Ardmore, Pa.; Dr. Glenn W.

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USGA GREEN  continued from page 104

tores and it will disappear and crabgrass moves in. Also, the golfers want to start to play earlier and continue longer. The superintendent has trouble keeping the course in condition. Because Poa annua colors early and looks good, he might be inclined to go with it and risk the months of intense heat. For this reason Poa annua is a powder keg.

“We have now become a nation of Poa Pamperers. But Poa can’t be considered a sound grass because of its reaction to heat. We must develop a strain that is always like Poa annua is for ten months of the year.”

Other fairway renovation ideas were presented by a panel consisting of Richard Silvar, Superintendent, Knickerbocker Country Club, Tenafly, N. J.; Sherwood Moore, Superintendent, Winged Foot Country Club, Mamaroneck, N. Y., and Albert Neuberger, Agronomist, USGA Green Section.

Silvar described his scorching and re-planting eleven fairways at Knickerbocker, successfully, despite a ban imposed on the use of water before the program was completed. His plan was one recommended by the USGA, using sodium arsenite, 5 gallons per acre initially, then 3 gallons per acre in the second application a week later, with water applied every second day to germinate any seed in the soil. The second application of sodium arsenite would kill any new growth. Then he followed this preparation with a complete job of thatching and finally he fertilized and seeded.

When the water ban was imposed, he solved the problem by using heavy poly-urethane sheets to cover the tees. The 28 x 100 sheets retained the moisture and the results were excellent.

Albert Neuberger discussed the subject of seeding and the mixture ratios when using Bluegrass, Bent or Rye. He emphasized the importance of working the soil to increase the percentage of survival and to be thorough when thatch-
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March/1967
ing. "It looks horrible but it will pay off."

Neuberger also related the tendency toward earlier planting, such as Bent in mid-August, Bluegrass by mid-September, so that Poa won't have a chance to flourish. And he cautioned to use quality seed. "This is not the area to try to save money. Buy certified seed from reputable dealers, even if you have to use it judiciously. There's no substitute for top seed."

Sherwood Moore posed the question, "What happens afterward?" and suggested that attention be directed toward how the fairways and greens are mowed, does the worker follow the same path every time, thus creating a problem? Over fertilization can be harmful. Too much nitrogen on established turf would be an abuse, as would too much lime when followed by a hot spell. Drainage can lead to problems and the superintendent must keep on the look out for any tell tale signs. At Winged Foot the maximum size drain pipes are now 21" in diameter. Insect control and the selection of correct sprays have to be considered, and Moore had this sensible suggestion: If the spray you use burns the fairway, chances are that the grass will come back. If so, just disappear for a day or two until the color returns!

Miss Carol McCue, Executive Secretary, Chicago District Golf Association, opened the talks on the renovation of tees, bunkers and paths and struck a blow for the women. "I don't like to call 'forward tees' ladies' tees, because many a man would prefer to hit from a spot closer to the green. I think they should be designated by color, with each of them rated for both the men and the women. That way either can play from any of the tees and be able to submit the scores for handicap purposes."

In selecting the site for ladies' tees, Miss McCue said that it should not be so located as to change the character of

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**USGA GREEN**  
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the hole, or the course, or to make it less interesting to play. "If it changes the strategy of play or if hazards suddenly come into play, or if the golfer’s safety is endangered, the ladies tee is misplaced."

Lee Record, Agronomist, USGA Green Section, talked of sand versus grass for bunkers. "By its color contrast, sand gives the golfer a visual aid to his target, whereas grass is not as attractive to look at. Sand is costlier to maintain but grass is tougher to play out of." One midwestern course, Record stated, spends $5,000 annually to maintain its 80-odd sand traps.

Naturally, angular sand is preferred to rounded sand. "A ball will lose itself in rounded sand," he said. "The depth of the sand near the green should be 4 to 6 inches. Good sand will bury a ball about one-half its depth or less. The sand should contribute to a golfer's skill and pleasure, not minimize it. But in many cases, sand traps are being replaced by grass bunkers."

A second member of the Baltursol team, to address the large group, Edward Casey, superintendent, spoke of the extensive bunker renovations taking place at the 1967 U.S. Open site. Of the 125 traps on the Lower Course, 105 have been renovated in 13 months. Another problem was installing irrigation lines that would cover the re-sodded area without reaching the sand. The trap on the 17th hole, "a brute", was redesigned. It was graded, limed, fertilized, sodded and worked. The new sod held the water in place and water seeped down to dry soil without running off as it did before. Pop-up sprinkler heads in a specially designed double line, each independent of the other, wets down the area with no danger of watering the sand.

Now the big question: How to finance the renovation job. For this one, the USGA Green Section brought in Harry C. Eckhoff, Executive Director of the National Golf Foundation, and here are some of the sources of money.

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