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TURF NEWS LETTER

(Official Organ of Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents
Prepared in Cooperation with the USGA Green Section)

THE FIVE FARMS COUNTRY CLUB MEETING

June 2, 1953

The June meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents was held at the Five Farms Country Club, Baltimore, Maryland. The 55 members and guests present were greeted by our host superintendent for the day, Bob Scott, Sr. Guests introduced were Mr. Milton Davis, Chairman for Bonnie View Country Club; Mr. Reed, of Baltimore Sod Nursery; Mr. C. E. Lintz, Bethlehem Steel Corporation; Mr. Jim Roach, Sunnyborook Golf Club, Mr. John Darrah and Mr. Leo Cleary, of The W. A. Cleary Corporation; Mr. Dick Kelly and Mr. Dofflemyer, Hagerstown Press; Mr. Bill Frank, Hagerstown; and Mr. Tom Paciocco, Quantico, Virginia.

EDUCATIONAL FEATURE

Dr. O. J. Noer, turf's troubleshooter, presented a very interesting kodalike talk on the many problems he encountered while visiting superintendents throughout the country. He stated that the variations from the normal are what baffle us and give unexpected trouble. It is best for us to be realistic in our approach, and realize the possible effects of these variations. Dr. Noer proceeded by showing slides illustrating some of the main causes for turf losses. The excessive wet weather this spring has percolated the nutrients through the soil lessening the benefits to turf and has forced the roots to the surface for oxygen. In many cases the excessive water has caused the turf to rot, and if there is a drought such as the one experienced in '52, the failure to recognize the symptoms of wilt will be the cause of more turf damage. Superintendents confronted with these conditions (as we have been in this area) who have maintained a good aeration, raking, and fertilizing program, will have the least trouble, if any. Another point brought out by O. J. was the loss of turf caused by improper and untimely mowing. The superintendent should try to avoid mowing when the ground is too wet as this practice aggravates compaction; he should not mow when the grass is in the wilting stage. When mowing the greens, injury on the collars can be minimized by changing the direction of cut, making wider turns, using light equipment, and varying the height of cut. When turf is injured on the collars oftentimes goosegrass or other weeds take over. When this happens solid stands of goosegrass or silver crabgrass might well be completely destroyed by heavy rates of PMA formulations mixed with 2,4-D or heavy rates of sodium arsenite with 2,4-D before reseeding with improved strains of grasses. These chemicals must be used with care, and at the proper time for best results.

Losses due to overwatering, ponded water in saucer greens, and flash showers, proved again that surface and sub-surface drainage is essential for

good putting green turf. Built-in headaches with regard to drainage often cause the loss of putting turf. The use of the rototiller in attempting to mix soil conditioners into the soil, or in attempting to mix the various soil ingredients in green construction is a very bad practice, Dr. Noer stated. The rototiller floats the fine silty material to the surface, which eventually forms an impermeable layer, thus preventing proper drainage or root development. A heavy thatch results quickly which holds too much moisture and provides a perfect medium for diseases. Aeration and heavy periodic raking will help to eliminate thatch.

O. J. then showed some interesting slides on the early attempts at aeration. One superintendent took his old putting green mower, removed the bed knife and welded 2-inch knife spikes to the reel. This proved to be effective in helping to remove the thatch and helped expedite aeration into the turf management picture. Continued topdressing on a heavily thatched turf will further aggravate the thatched condition.

Several other facts Dr. Noer pointed out in his talk are as follows: Sometimes Pythium may be controlled by a light dusting of hydrated lime. Bentgrass losses in fairways may be due to the use of 2,4-D in the fall. The improved grasses - Merion bluegrass, the new zoysias, and bermudas, and the improved bents such as the polycross C-1 and C-19, have proved themselves many times over.

Certainly no talk by O. J. (or as Fred Grau once referred to him as "Iron Chlorosis" Noer) would be complete without reference to iron chlorosis injury to turf. O. J. showed some excellent slides of iron chlorosis and suggested ferrous sulphate as a remedy at the rate of 1/2 pound to 1-pound in 20 to 25 gallons of water to 5,000 (more or less) square feet of putting green turf. A minimum of water should be used as the iron must be absorbed through the leaf in order to be effective. Do not water this treatment in. Dr. Noer stated that many superintendents apply small amounts of ferrous sulphate (1/4-pound to about 5,000 square feet) with their fungicide sprays occasionally.

In closing he stated that our maintenance and management practices should be flexible enough so we can cope with the unusual situation when it presents itself. We all know Mother Nature plays tricks, but by using the improved grasses and maintenance practices we can keep ahead of her and maintain a first-class playing turf.

This Association wishes to express its appreciation to Dr. O. J. Noer for presenting his excellent educational talk. We hope we may have the pleasure of having him with us again.

BUSINESS MEETING

President Jim Thomas called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Bill Glover, pinch hitting for Charlie Schalestock, read the minutes of the last meeting and gave the treasurer's report. Both were approved as read.

A letter was received from the Norbeck Country Club asking this Association's assistance in locating a superintendent for their new course. Anyone interested or having suggestions should contact Jim Thomas.

A letter from the National Association was received requesting our nominee for the 1954 National Board of Directors. This Association went on record as being unanimously behind the candidacy of Mr. Willis Glover as an officer of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. The President was directed to so inform the Chairman of the Nominating Committee of the National.

Bob Shields reported that the Education and Policy Committee had discussed several proposed activities requiring their attention. One is to have a social function which would include our wives, and the other is to plan an exhibit for the next National Capital Garden Show in February.

Carl Senseman of the Golf Committee reported that 42 members and guests had entered in the golf tournament. Net scores are as follows: Jack Harper 71; John Connolly 71; Bill Glover 71; Ernie Stanley 72; and George Cornell 72.

CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTION REPORT

Acting as moderator, Al Radko of the USGA Green Section, expressed the opinion of the Association by saying that the Five Farms Course, as always, was in excellent condition, and as there were no constructive suggestions advanced, Al asked Bob to tell us how he does it.

To begin, Bob gave a short history of the course which he had to close during the war for three years. During this time all the greens were destroyed by insects, and the rest of the course grew up, due to shortage of help. To start over again, the greens were all seeded to Astoria bent and the fairways were maintained to favor the bents. Bob next developed a large sod nursery (about 2 acres) of all the improved strains of grasses. These included the improved bents - C-1, C-19, and C-27, which he has been incorporating into his greens by plugging, sprigging, and stolonizing. On the sunny tees the improved strains of zoysia and U-3 bermudagrass were plugged and sodded. These particular grasses, Zoysia, U-3, and C-115 bent, have stood up well in some of Five Farms most troublesome areas. Bob cited the approach on No. 15 as an outstanding example. Several years ago no turf could be satisfactorily established on this area. At that time U-3 bermuda was plugged in and now has expanded to form the dense, well-turfed area which now exists. Bob emphasized the value and economy in the establishment of a good turf nursery. There is no better insurance in an emergency, and the nursery should be used as the superintendent's proving ground to become acquainted with, and test the performance of the new strains of grasses.

COMING EVENTS

- July 7 Fountainhead Country Club, Hagerstown, Maryland
Host Superintendent, C. W. Lindsay
- August 3 Woodmont Country Club, Rockville, Maryland
Host Superintendent, Bob Shields

NOW IS THE TIME TO:

1. Stay ahead of diseases by preventative spray on putting greens.

2. Use PMA formulations for the control of crabgrass in putting greens.
3. Apply light treatment of hydrated lime (about 2 pounds per 1,000 square feet) to prevent alga formation from all this wet weather. Do not water the hydrated lime in.
4. Aerate where and when possible - to promote deeper root systems - root systems this year are shallow.
5. Watch the nitrogen levels in putting greens - the heavy rains have leached the nitrogen through the soils faster than normal.

GOOD READING

"Care of Damaged Shade Trees," Farms Bulletin No. 1896, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

"The Golf Course Reporter," May 1953.
Box 106
St. Charles, Illinois

"Golfdom"
407 South Dearborn St.
Chicago 5, Illinois.

"USGA Journal"
United States Golf Association
40 East 38th Street
New York 16, N. Y.

NEXT MEETING

Place: Fountainhead Country Club, Hagerstown, Maryland

Date: July 7, 1953

Speaker: Tom Mascaro of West Point Products Corporation will show movies of the new Nerti-cut in action. This machine was designed to combat thatch in putting green areas.

ATTENTION!

The September and November dates are still unfilled. If you want this Association to meet at your club on either of these two dates, get in touch with Jim Thomas.