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# MID-ATLANTIC News Letter



Published by

Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents to aid in the Advancement of the Golf Course Superintendent through Education and Merit.

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SEPTEMBER 1958

On Tuesday, August 8, 1958 the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents met at the Pinecrest Golf Club for their monthly golf outing and meeting. Pinecrest is owned by Mr. Charles Lynch who was on hand to greet us and we found him to be a most entertaining host. We were glad to see that Mr. Lynch had recovered from his recent illness and was able to be up and about again.

Dick Stedman, pro-superintendent for Pinecrest was our co-host for the day. We also found Dick eager to entertain us and see to our wants. He is the club's Major Domo and deserves much credit for the popularity and patronage this all par three golf course enjoys. The rounds of golf played over this one-shot course equals the play of a regulation length golf layout.

The members of the Mid-Atlantic wish to thank both Mr. Lynch and Dick Stedman for their gracious hospitality and for affording us a location for one of our regular meetings. We feel that Pinecrest will continue to enjoy success and prosperity. It is hoped that they will add the additional nine holes contemplated. There is need for more golf facilities in their immediate area.

The Association was sorry to hear of the illness of Frank Dunlap and we hope that by this time he has fully recovered and can be back on the job again. Mrs. Richard Watson was badly scalded by an explosion of a hot water tank in her home. We understand her burns were not as severe as first expected. We extend to Mrs. Watson and Dick our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

## CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTION REPORT

Paul Weiss, Jr. presided over the Constructive Suggestion Report. Superintendent Stedman gave us a brief rundown on the construction of the course and his maintenance practices. As previously stated, Pinecrest is an all par three golf course. The 18 greens are planted to Uganda bermuda grass, which is one of the finer strains of bermuda. The layout was brought into existence in the summer of 1956.

We found the greens to be much too small in size to receive the traffic of heavy play and their contours so severe that they would not hold a normally played pitch shot. We would suggest that these two conditions be modified if possible at an early date. The correction would be appreciated by the players and would also simplify the problems of management greatly.

Good surface drainage is one of the prime requisites of good putting green construction. This is what all turf authorities tell us. However, they do not go to extremes to gain the desired surface runoff of water, they want the soil to absorb the greater part of the moisture that falls on it. Desired surface drainage prevents water from standing or ponding on a putting green, yet it does not mean that the runoff should be so fast that rainfall cannot be absorbed

directly by the soil but is drained off immediately to other areas. Pinecrest in striving for proper surface drainage has gone to the extreme of severe over-drainage.

To obtain a satisfactory watering of these greens great skill and care is going to be required. A very fine mist slowly applied is recommended, and at a rate that provides absorption without a quick runoff. Sprinklers that throw water at a high rate of speed should be avoided. A good maxim to follow in sprinkling is - never to apply water faster than the soil will absorb the moisture.

As the greens at Pinecrest are planted to Ugandagrass and it being one of the strains of bermuda - a warm season grass that goes dormant during the winter months - the problem of a green winter covering is presented. They can be overseeded to one of the cool season grasses such as bent, red top, blue grass or annual rye.

Overseeding of dormant bermuda most always presents the problem in late spring or early summer of transition, which means greens of unsatisfactory playing qualities for awhile. We often experience this condition in our bent greens when heat causes poa annua grass to fade out too quick.

Temporary winter greens planted to cool season grasses and located on the approaches could be the solution, or, the use of one of the green dyes that have been recently developed for the winter coloring of bermuda grass could be used. However, past experience has shown that winter trampling over small areas of dormant bermuda is very injurious to the turf.

The tees at Pinecrest are on the ground level with little or no elevating having been done. They, too, are a bit on the small size. Tees could be enlarged to good advantage and planted to U3 bermuda grass, then ample fertilization would benefit them greatly. The fairways are native pasture sod. A spraying of 2-4D at recommended rates and cautions would eliminate much of the weed population. This could be followed by a fall fertilization and would result in a more dense turf next season.

Tommy Doerer, pro-superintendent at the Fredricksburg, Virginia Country Club, was present at the meeting. Tommy has had many years experience in the handling of bermuda grasses and is said to be quite an authority on the subject. Much of what has been written above on the subject of bermuda has been taken from comments or remarks made by Tommy during the discussion. We hope he will attend many of our meetings and give us the benefit of his experience.

#### CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS IN BRIEF

- Dye the greens for winter color - do not overseed.
- Pay particular attention to management of present greens and concentrate on water, fertilizer and mowing schedules.
- Cut greens at 3/8" or lower.
- Verti-cut often in several directions to keep new growth coming.
- Aerify or spike at regular intervals during summer to hold moisture on slopes.
- Consider reshaping some of the greens and build to hold moisture longer. Plant to improved bents. Establish nurseries of grasses used on tees and greens.
- Increase size of tees and plant to U-3 bermuda.
- Use 2-4D on fairway for broad leaf weeds.

OPEN LETTER TO ERNIE STANLEY

Dear Ernie,

At the last meeting you complimented me by asking how I kept my U-3 bermuda tees in the condition they were when you played Woodmont on July 8th. I don't feel that I gave you a very good answer, so will try again.

In the early spring after the heavy frosts and before growth starts, we verti-cut and mow at  $3/8$ " to remove some of the dead material left from the previous year, then fertilize with 10-6-4 at 30# per thousand plus nitrate of ammonia at 10# per thousand, then topdress lightly to help break up the dead organic matter and to level the surface. This part of the program is designed to green up the bermuda as soon as there is any warm weather.

We start mowing when there is growth enough to cut. At first it may be once every two weeks, then once a week, then twice a week until growth gets so heavy that three cuts a week are needed to control it and make it do what we want it to do.

From then on it's routine mowing three times a week at  $3/8$ " and fertilizing every two weeks with nitrate of ammonia at 1# N. per thousand.

We apply dolomite lime at 30# per thousand anytime during the summer that we can find time to do it, but we don't apply lime and fertilizer together.

The tees are watered when we think water is needed. We know from experience that they can stand plenty of dry weather, so we usually put off watering a little longer hoping for rain. Our bermuda tee water bill is practically nothing.

The markers are moved when the tees are cut on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and moved again on Sunday morning and any day when play has been heavy. This schedule works good for us but even if it isn't followed exactly the surface wear is never so bad that the bermuda does not recover quickly.

We have never used any weed control chemicals on our tees.

What would I do different if I could? I'd use a mower with a catcher and remove the clippings. Also I would assign two men to full time work on tees and require them to aerify more often for better growth and top dress more often to fill in divot holes faster.

We plant U-3 on newly prepared ground by tearing off a 4" piece of thinly-cut nursery sod. We drop it in front of us then step on as we tear off another piece of planting material. The pieces are put down on 6 or 8" centers, then top dressed and kept watered. We roll some time later when the water has made the ground a little softer and begin our mowing and fertilizing schedule when growth starts.

On established tees we make slits with a shovel or spade after a rain and insert sprigs of U-3 and press in tight. We maintain for cool season grass the rest of the season. Toward the end of July of the next year we start our bermuda mowing and fertilizing schedule and the U-3 comes through and covers before cold weather. We don't especially care for this latter method because of the shabby appearance of the surface during the transition from poa to U-3, but we have used it many times.

In the future we plan to re-sod entire tees from our three acre U-3 nursery which we planted this summer.

See you at the next meeting at John Leavell's Shenandoah Retreat. - Bob Shields

BALTIMORE CONFERENCE

The Executive Committee appointed a Program Committee consisting of Bob Shields, James Thomas, Francis Coupe and Charles Hallowell to work with Dr. George Langford of the University of Maryland and draw up an educational program for the annual conference of the Mid-Atlantic to be held in Baltimore January 8 and 9, 1959.

The Program Committee has met to consider possible subjects for discussion. Some of the suggested topics are: Golf Course Fertilization Problems and Experiences; Fairway Watering; Wetting Agents; Herbicides; New Grasses; Establishing Bermuda Grasses; Shrubbery and Flowers around the Club House; Equipment Maintenance; Public Relations; Budgets; and Care and Pruning of Trees.

The Committee feels that more and more superintendents should take part in the program in order to share their experiences with others and will call on many local golf course men to prepare papers for presentation. They ask that you give your full cooperation should you be approached as a speaker.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Mid-Atlantic will be held at Shenandoah Retreat Country Club, Berryville, Virginia on September 9th, 1958. We remember a most enjoyable day at Shenandoah just two years ago when the Association last visited the club.

John Leavell is our host, backed up by Dr. E.M. Freeman, President-Owner. Both have gone all out to prepare for us and to assure a successful day. John says bring your golf clubs and he will tell you some fish stories.

NEXT MEETING - SEPTEMBER 9, 1958  
PLACE - Shenandoah Retreat Country Club  
Berryville, Virginia.  
TIME - Golf - 12 noon  
Social Hour - 5 p.m.  
Dinner - 6:30 p.m.  
Meeting - Following dinner

DIRECTIONS

From Washington : Route 7 thru Leesburg, Va. The club is 8 miles past Purcellville, watch for sign on right.

From Baltimore: Take U.S. Route 40 to Frederick, left on Rt. 340 to Charlestown, left on state route 9 to Berryville, then left about 7 miles on Rt. 7 over the Shenandoah River bridge to club sign on left.

(Editors' Note : - Sounds like we are leading you in a big circle to the left, but we aren't . See your road map. )

THIS 'N' THAT

Jim Ried and his wife are abroad. Sailed from N.Y. recently for a trip through France, Italy, Germany, England and Jim's dear old Ireland.

Frank Murray to revise Surburban Club course in Baltimore to make room for new clubhouse.  
Charles Schalestock is no longer building supt. at Belair C.C. under construction near Bowie, Maryland