

The Care of Golf Course Equipment

Much may be said about the care of tools and machinery in its relation to good greenkeeping. The greenkeeper finds use for all ordinary carpenter's tools as well as other small equipment such as weeders, hoes, spades, rakes, hole cutters, etc.

Dull tools do poor work, and it is a poor workman who will use them. A few minutes spent each day in putting an edge on weeders, spades, hoes, hole cutters and similar equipment having a cutting edge, means time and strength saved in the work of the coming day.

The average eighteen-hole golf course uses sufficient mechanical equipment to keep a good tractor driver and mechanic busy during the playing season and until the fall overhauling of all machinery is completed.

The mowing equipment probably gets the hardest treatment of any on a golf course. This includes lawn and putting green hand mowers, often one or two one-man power cutting units for mowing the approaches, tees and lawns, and gang tractor mowers for the fairways. Sometimes the rough is cut with a side cutter bar directly attached to the tractor, and some courses use gang mowers set high and drawn behind the tractor for this purpose. Occasionally a horse drawn hay mower is seen, but very seldom is a horse now used on an eighteen-hole course. Some nine hole courses that operate on a very narrow margin still use horse drawn equipment, but these are gradually being replaced with some of the tractor outfits.

It is the concensus of opinion among manufacturers as well as greenkeepers that fairway mowing outfits receive the greatest abuse of any equipment on a golf course. This is largely due to the speed at which the tractors are run. Occasionally the greenkeeper finds it necessary to cut his course in a hurry, in preparation for some tournament event, or for some other logical reason. In ordinary daily work on the course, speed above six miles an hour in mowing fairways is not to be desired. Both tractor and cutting units will last longer at a moderate speed. Due care in making turns and in starting and stopping the tractor slowly

should be impressed upon the operator. Fairway turf can easily be seriously damaged by starting and stopping the tractor outfit suddenly, causing wheel slippage. If turns are not carefully and slowly made, the turf may be gouged so severely that the expense of re-turfing becomes necessary.

If the greenkeeper is not himself a good mechanic, one of his first duties is to secure a man of mechanical ability to put in charge of all golf course equipment. It will pay any greenkeeper in the end to secure the services of such a man, as golf course equipment represents a large expenditure of money on the part of the club, and good machinery will not remain good unless it receives good care.

Evenly cut greens, tees and fairways are demanded by all golf club members, and when the rough work due to imperfect mowing equipment shows up, members who are paying for the privilege of playing over a good course have every right to protest such a condition vigorously.

The best advice on the care of equipment which can be given the greenkeeper may be summed up in ten lines:

- (1) If you are not a good mechanic, hire one.
- (2) Keep tools and machinery under cover. Inspect frequently.
- (3) Keep sharp all edged tools.
- (4) Rub and wash top dressing into greens before mowing.
- (5) If your motors knock, find out why.
- (6) Do not allow untrained men to repair and adjust machinery.
- (7) Do not operate your fairway mowing outfit above 6 miles an hour.
- (8) Do not set your cutting reels too close to bed knives.
- (9) Lubricate with only best quality oils and greases.
- (10) Overhaul and oil all equipment in fall and store under cover.

GREENKEEPERS, ATTENTION!

A committee of six has been appointed by Mr. John Morley, President of the National Association, to answer all questions relative to golf course maintenance which are mailed to the offices of THE NATIONAL GREENKEEPER.

This service is offered the greenkeepers of the United States and Canada, through the pages of this magazine, in order that problems of general interest may be printed with their solutions for the benefit of all members of the National Association.

Send in your questions on soil, turf diseases, drainage, care of trees, care of equipment, in fact on anything pertaining to the maintenance of a golf course and surrounding grounds.

Each member of this special committee is expert in his line, and ready and willing to give you the benefit of his knowledge.

No names will be published. All questions will be answered. This is the real "get-together" page of the magazine. Send in your questions for the February issue not later than January 5. Don't be backward!