Keeping The Course Groomed

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THE gift of writing one's thoughts is given to few.
I am sorry to say I am not one of those, but I will
do my best to convey to those who read this, an idea of
my system of maintenance, I will say I have read with
interest the articles written by my fellow greenkeepers
in The National Greenkeeper, which have been fre-
quently beneficial, so I hope some may find what I have
to say of some interest to them.

Distribution of Labor

Without system very little is accomplished. It is
necessary to have a system of maintenance worked out
if one intends to have a well groomed course. During
the early season when the preliminary work is in
progress, I observe the men closely and pick out men
who I think are best suited for the different positions to
which they will later be required to give their entire at-
tention. I select nine men, and allot to each two greens,
two tees, the sand traps, bunkers, etc. around or adja-
cent to the greens (our greens average 10,000 sq. ft.)
one man for the nursery and putting green, two men
for the tractors for fairway mowing, two men to care
for the fairway bunkers and traps, one man for the Ford-
sen tractor and truck, and one man a handy mechanic.

As soon as weather permits and the necessary patch-
ing and cleaning up is done in the spring, the men are
started on their allotted greens to give them their spring
overhauling, weeding, raking, etc. At this time it is not
necessary to cut the greens every day.

System of Top Dressing and Fertilization

When the greens have been thoroughly freed from
weeds, they are given their first top-dressing, using bet-
ter than fifty per cent of sand for the first dressing. My
schedule of top-dressing is every three weeks, as I be-
lieve three weeks of cutting every day, saps the vitality
of the grass, and it is necessary to give it some nourish-
ment. The greens are brushed and cut every morning.
During the brown-patch season, I eliminate Ammonium
Sulphate, as I believe through its rapid stimulating ef-
fects, it keeps the grass in a soft and weakened condi-
tion, and is not able to withstand the ravaging effects of
brown-patch. During the brown-patch season I try to
keep my greens rather on the dry side, and during the
crab grass season I neglect everything around the greens
but cutting. The crab grass must come out before any-
thing else is done. The more crab grass you leave on
the green the more you will have the following year.
It is hard to keep out altogether, as the seeds are carried
on the shoes from the fairways.

The two men who have the fairway traps and bunk-
ers, are started as early as possible to loosen the sand
and put the traps in playing condition. One of these
men keeps the tees in condition, plugging them every
morning.

The tractor men for the fairways work with the men
on the fairway traps until the fairways are in need of
cutting or rolling, and in spare time after the fairways
are cut.

The fairways are cut three times a week until the
first of July, and again after the first of September.

Control of Dandelions With Iron Sulphate

The man on the Fordson tractor and truck keeps the
rough cut, using a sickle mower attachment on the
tractor. He also keeps the grass clippings cleaned
around the greens, fairways and bunkers, with the Ford
truck. He also sprays the dandelions, using a two
hundred gallon power sprayer, with a potato sprayer
attachment, which is attached to the rear of the sprayer.

The material used for spraying is iron sulphate (cop-
peras) and with this we have been successful in con-
trolling the dandelions on our course.

The handy mechanic keeps the machinery in condition,
also adjusts the knives of the green mowers every
second morning.

Fairway Watering System

As our fairways are watered in dry weather, it is
necessary to employ six extra men during this period,
which lasts from five weeks to two months. It is well
to commence in time. A soaking rain will carry the
fairways about ten days, and it takes us seven days to
water our fairways. That means three days after a
rain, the sprinklers must be put in operation. The greens
are watered in the morning by the men in charge of the
greens.

I find this system very practical and successful. My
efficiency expert is a pair of field glasses.