

News from The Southland

By MERLE ZWEIFEL

Texas

DICK GROUT, pro, and W. D. Overton, greenkeeper, of the Glen Garden Golf Club of Fort Worth, are making some very interesting experiments with bent grass. They believe that bent grass can be successfully adapted to the golf courses in the Lone Star state, especially if brown patch can be controlled during the summer months.

They have a small plot of bent grass at their Glen Garden club which is the only bent in the entire state of Texas at the present time. Years ago one of the larger golf clubs of Dallas made several attempts to obtain a set of bent greens but without success and it was finally discarded for the hardy Bermuda, which is now the standard putting green grass of the south.

Bent grass suffers most in this locality during the hot days of July and August when entire greens become discolored and finally are burned out completely. It is very difficult to control brown patch because of the rapid changes in temperature which causes this disease to spread swiftly over night.

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Bermuda grass, however, has its objectionable features when used as a putting turf. During the spring, Bermuda greens are as smooth and velvety as one could wish for when well cared for, but during the summer and early fall it becomes coarse and stringy and only heavy coats of soil topdressing repeated every other week will keep the grass in playing condition. And hard winters sometimes kill the grass in the northern sections of the state causing a delay in obtaining a grass putting surface for the coming season.

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P. S. Maxwell, well-known golf course architect of Texas and Oklahoma has just completed the job of building 36 grass greens at the new Walnut Hill fee course on Lemmon avenue and adjoining the aviation fields northwest of the city of Fort Worth. The first eighteen greens have been planted to Bermuda grass and will be ready for play by October 1st and the second eighteen will be open for early spring play.

This course represents an initial investment of over one quarter million dollars, the consideration for the land alone being nine hundred dollars per acre. The fairways were leveled up and planted to Bermuda grass last spring and a modern fairway irrigation system will be installed. It will be the largest commercial course in the state of Texas.

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Two hundred and fifty miles west of the city of Austin, in southwest Texas and near the Rio Pecos river, this writer found one of the most unusual golf courses in

the United States. Supported by a town of three hundred population this club has about sixty active members and a nine-hole course with grass greens that are comparable to grass green courses at some of the larger cities of the south. And believe it or not, the cost of keeping this course in good playing condition does not exceed one hundred dollars per year. That seems almost impossible but here's how it's done.

The nine-hole links zig-zag over a hill covered with thick native mesquite grass which makes a fine turf that does not burn in the summer season. The greens were selected on small knolls or mounds to give the desired built up effect and these are also heavily turfed with mesquite grass. A large herd of sheep are allowed to graze on the course thereby keeping the grass on both fairway and rough cropped close to the top of the ground and eliminating the expense of mowing.

Each Saturday morning the "Greenkeeper" drives the sheep to an adjoining pasture, mows the greens with a lawn mower and the course is ready for the week-end play. The greenkeeper is paid a small sum each week for his services and he also has the privilege of playing on the course when he so desires. The total expense of upkeep which included the purchase of a lawn mower, rental on land, greenkeeper's salary, etc., was less than ninety dollars last season.

But the most remarkable feature of this small course is the mesquite grass which is a really a more desirable putting surface than sand greens and is certainly more economical.

Although miniature golf itself has passed into history it created a great interest in golf in the smaller towns and communities throughout the entire country and such courses provide a place to play for those golfers that are not financially able to hold membership in a larger club.

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The city of Dallas is planning the construction of twenty-seven holes of grass greens and watered fairways at their Oak Grove municipal course according to reports

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received from that city recently. Work on the first eighteen will begin sometime this fall with space provided for an additional nine holes to be constructed in the future. This will give Dallas nine private courses and six "pay as you play" courses.

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Fort Stockton, in west Texas steps out with a new nine-hole links with greens of cottonseed hulls to replace the old sand greens. Because of the mercury climbing up to around 110 degrees in the summer at this town a few holes of golf on the oiled sand greens gives one's feet the boiled in oil feeling especially if the shoe soles happen to be of crepe rubber.

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Oklahoma

THE Cyrus S. Avery commercial golf course north-east of Tulsa will be the first course in Oklahoma to boast of a successful fairway irrigation system if plans of its owners are carried out. Water lines will be laid immediately and it will be completed and ready for use sometime in September. Fairways were cleared of all trees and stumps sometime ago, and were sodded to Bermuda grass which will give golfers the best fairway turf available for their shots.

This course will be up to date in every respect, large tees will be the vogue providing plenty of tee-off space for the heavy week-end play and the greens are to be of the latest design and planted to cocoos bent grass. Mr. Avery expects to have this course ready for play sometime in November. The greenkeeper for this course has not been selected.

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Greenkeepers in Oklahoma have had a siege of brown patch during the last six weeks that has apparently broken all records since the advent of bent grass and indications are that it will continue to give even the veteran greenkeepers a stiff battle until cooler weather arrives. A recent survey shows all the bent grass greens in the state affected more or less seriously with this disease, however it has been checked by the use of Nu-Green Barbak, 211 and other brown patch controls.

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Bermuda grass has embedded itself in some of the state's finest bent grass greens and has given the greenkeepers no small amount of worry especially at Oklahoma City where two greenkeepers there have announced their intention of letting the Bermuda spread where it will, forming combination greens. They ex-

plain that a large percent of the bent is killed by brown patch and they would just as soon revert to the Bermuda grass greens anyway as the bent grass is too delicate for the Oklahoma climate.

A couple of years ago when creeping bent was introduced into the State of Oklahoma the Bermuda was stripped from the greens to make way for the new grass, but a few roots were not uncovered and those roots are now causing all the trouble.

Combination greens are not as popular as some club officials might think. They usually become rough and do not give the sleek velvety appearance that bent grass alone does. It is absolutely necessary to give the Bermuda grass a heavy coat of cotton hulls or straw at the beginning of winter to keep it from freezing out. And this would lead to the temporary greens of sand which are not pleasing to those members that are accustomed to good bent greens.

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Grover Zweifel of Indian Hills, Tulsa, Oklahoma, is experimenting with a new fertilizer to take the place of the common soil topdressing. He has mixed equal parts of pulverized poultry manure and peat moss and has fertilized No. 5 green at his course with this mixture. If the desired results are obtained it will eliminate the necessity of having to topdress with dirt in the hot summer months. Bent grass is almost dormant during this period and a heavy coat of soil topdressing sometimes smothers the grass causing yellow spots.

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Missouri

IF THERE were any bets made during these days of depression (and brown patch) it would be a safe bet that W. M. Herod of the Oak Hills Country Club, at Joplin, keeps a golf course in better condition with less labor than any other club in the country at the present time. Mr. Herod has only one helper to assist him and they mow greens and tees with a hand mower, mow the roughs and fairways, water the greens at night with a hand sprayer and numerous other jobs such as topdressing greens, cleaning tee boxes, taking care of shrubbery around the club house, and doing all the mechanical work.

And he is also responsible for the water supply which requires constant attention. Right now he is having plenty of trouble with chickweed and crab grass which threatens to choke out the bent greens and he is engaged in the tedious task of weeding the greens himself.

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The Reding's Mill course at Reding's Mill park south of Joplin have been very successful in keeping their greens free of brown patch during the last few weeks and regardless of the fact that there are some ugly patches on several of the greens they are in much better condition than most of the grass greens over the country.

The apparent reason for this is that there has been very little play over the nine-hole links recently, consequently



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