

New Jersey's Turf Conference

Report of the 1933 annual renewal of this historic and valuable contribution to the intricate problems of turf culture.

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THE annual turf conference was held at the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, New Brunswick, N. J., on March 9, 1933. There was an excellent representation of approximately 150, including greenkeepers, chairmen of Green Committees, professionals, landscape architects, gardeners, seedsmen, and organizations specializing in turf supplies. In opening the program, Dr. Howard B. Sprague made the following statement:

"We are gathered today to discuss a subject touching the everyday life of practically every individual in the several communities which you represent. One needs but to recall that within the confines of New Jersey alone, there are nearly 500,000 home lawns and private estates; a very large number of parks under municipal, county or state supervision; athletic fields, school grounds, and parked areas adjacent to public buildings; and approximately 120 golf courses."

OVER FIVE MILLION DOLLARS SPENT ON TURF IN NEW JERSEY

THE total sum required to maintain the turf on these grassed areas during the past year was most certainly in excess of five million dollars, and probably approached more nearly 10 million dollars.

The relations between our population and the available recreation grounds which exist in New Jersey find their counterparts in the metropolitan areas of New York City and Philadelphia. We may well ask in these troublous times, whether there is a real need for the recreation grounds now in existence, and if means cannot be found for reducing maintenance costs without injury to the condition and use of such turfed areas as are essential."



Doctor Sprague is not only a thoroughly practical turf expert with a fund of experience behind him but he also has that rare gift of attracting men to him for guidance and instruction.

Due to an emergency, Dr. Jacob G. Lipman, Director of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, New Brunswick, N. J., was unable to be present for the opening address. The introductory message on proper use of land for recreation grounds, by Dr. Lipman, was read to the conference. Dr. Lipman pointed out the great need for such recreational areas in regions as densely populated as the metropolitan areas surrounding New York City, Philadelphia and Trenton.

R. F. Arnott, chairman of the Green committee of the Upper Montclair Country club, Upper Montclair, N. J., discussed the problems of golf course management from the Green chairman's viewpoint. It was noted that considerable reduction in budgets would be possible through the substitution of labor by machinery. However, the replacement of employees of long standing by machinery was not advised, but that a means be found of providing such individuals with adequate support in the present emergency.

The greenkeeper's position in these trying times was admirably set forth by T. H. Riggs Miller, North Jersey Country club, Paterson, N. J. The conference provided an excellent opportunity for greenkeepers to call the attention of both the golf club officials and players to the absolute necessity of maintaining the turf in a healthy condition if economy at this time is not to result in extra expense later on.

MACKIE SAYS TRIVIAL THINGS ARE IMPORTANT

JACK B. MACKIE, Inwood Country club, Far Rockaway, Long Island, brought out the interesting fact that it is the trivial things on the golf course

which are likely to disturb the players. The correction of these small matters does not necessarily involve great expense, and the average player may be kept quite content even though the budget is considerably reduced as compared with former years.

The afternoon program began promptly at 1:30 o'clock with a discussion of the new advisory service on turf culture, established by the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station for the benefit of golf courses, landscape architects, and other organizations. The advisory service is of two types. (1) Visits by a technical expert for a survey of conditions and recommendations for correcting situations likely to prove harmful to maintenance of the turf. (2) A laboratory service providing for the analysis of soils from the standpoint of proper growth of grasses, identification of diseases, plant specimens, etc., and determination of undesirable conditions displayed by such samples, by the technical staff.

Dr. Sprague emphasized the fact that this service is rendered on a cost basis, and no attempt will be made to place it on a profit basis. From all indications, this type of service which has been in existence for nearly a year, has proved most helpful to both golf clubs and commercial organizations interested in turf culture.

DR. EVAUL CITES WEAKNESSES IN TURF MAINTENANCE

"SOME common weaknesses in turf maintenance programs" was the topic discussed by Dr. E. E. Evaul, who has served in the capacity of field technician in connection with advisory service during the past year. The presence of layers of organic matter and sand in green soils was noted as one of the important causes of difficulty experienced on golf courses in the past year. The failure of greenkeepers and golf club officials to cooperate was frequently the cause of friction.

The balance of the afternoon was devoted to presentation of recent research on turf management and its practical application. The following topics were discussed by Dr. H. B. Sprague: Studies on the root development of turf grasses as affected by fertilizers, height of cut, and season; water storage by soils in relation to fertilizer treatment and acidity; substitutes for manure in soil improvement and composts; and, fertilizers for turf grasses.

Although the conference closed officially at 4:30 p. m., informal discussions were continued for a considerable period. From all indications, the conference was entirely successful.



—Photo by George H. Pound.

GROUP OF GREENKEEPERS AND OTHERS INTERESTED IN TURF CULTURE WHO ATTENDED THE FIFTH ANNUAL SHORT COURSE AT THE NEW JERSEY AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION, NEW BRUNSWICK, FEBRUARY 20-24