

General Review of the Greenkeeper's Work

As a windup to my series of articles which have appeared in the PRO, and, after a few hints as to what is perhaps necessary work at this time of year, I shall close with some remarks of a general character which may be of help to my fellow greenkeepers.

In my preceding article I dealt on the summer grass, which is now at its worst, if one can put it that way. This is one of the greenkeeper's worst enemies at this time. I have also tried to help out in regard to the best way of combating it where it makes its presence felt in great abundance. In passing, let me be permitted to say: where it appears only in single plants at wide spaces, weeding by hand will get rid of it. Hand-weeding is slow, no matter what weeds are being removed, but if carried out thoroughly it is, in my opinion, the best way of removing them.

In any case, when removing weeds of any kind, the greenkeeper should fill in the bare spots that have appeared by their removal with a dressing of seeds and topdressing. I have pointed out the absolute necessity of the greenkeeper, or those in charge, seeing that the "rough" is kept mown from time to time, not only from the point of the members losing balls, temper,

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etc., but from a more important one: the keeping of the weeds from going to seed.

This is a most important point and at this time of year should be carefully seen to. Where the rough is "clean," that is, free from weeds, I believe in letting it remain as rough as possible, but not so bad that it penalizes the player too much. A player getting into the rough should be penalized to a certain extent, as, like a bunker, he has no right to be there, and should he be unfortunate enough to get into it he should have some sort of chance of showing his skill in the way of recovery. It is not only the poor player who visits the rough from a pull or a slice, but also the crack can just as easily get there should he step from the straight and narrow path. Therefore, I say, give them both a chance of recovery. There is no room for a hay field on a golf course when the comfort of the members playing over it is taken into account. Golf should not be hard work, but a pleasure.

I have touched on the question of topdressing, which should be very closely watched at this time of year, as, if applied judiciously now, the greenkeeper will find that his turf will be far more able to withstand the hard winter weather that is coming, and also that he will have less trouble with his greens next spring. I have previously pointed out the necessity of the greenkeeper topdressing at all times when he sees the necessity. He must, however, exercise care and not to overdo it, as he may find that he has, through too

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much kindness, reduced his grasses from a hard, healthy and wear-resisting quality, to a soft, green, undesirable, sickly turf. This state of affairs can very easily be brought about at this time of the year, and more so if artificial watering has been resorted to, to any great extent.

About this time of year, or perhaps a little later, another of the greenkeeper's enemies makes his appearance, and that in a very short time should the weather break and a quantity of rain has fallen. The enemy I mean is the earth worm. Now is the time he seems to revel in his operations, and just at a time, too, when the greenkeeper is anxious to give his club of his best and have his course and putting greens in tip-top order. The members of the club may have been away on a vacation and have just returned home, and, of course, take the first opportunity to try out the links. If the worms have been at work the greenkeeper has his work cut out to have his greens made presentable at all. At this time of year we are liable to get heavy dews in the morning, and that being so the work of sweeping the putting greens, mowing or rolling them, is no easy matter. To sweep the worm casts when wet, leaves the surface a dirty muddy patch which looks bad and uninviting to the golfer. Then is the time to tackle the enemy and get rid of him. The question arises as to the best and cheapest way this work can be carried out effectively and without injury to the grass. I have tired about all the eradi-

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cators that have been placed on the market from time to time. Several were very good and some of them cannot be had any more. If, however, any club is in difficulties about eradicating the worms I am in a position to let them know of an "Eradicator" that will free the soil of the worms entirely, and at the same time act as a splendid fertilizer. It is non-poisonous, can be used with every safety, as there is not the slightest fear of injuring the grass. Anyone can use it if they follow the directions, which are very simple. This is, in my opinion, which I have arrived at from experience in using it in every possible way to find out its qualities, one of the very best ever put on the market. It is cheap, and that is another great thing in its favor, especially now in these war times. I shall be pleased to give all information to any Greens Committees or greenkeepers in regard to it if they write me to my address, which can be had from my advertisement in the PRO. After the worms have been removed, it may be found necessary to open up the surface in some way, especially if the soil is heavy and of a cloggy nature. Even if the worms have not been removed, as they certainly should be, about this time it may be found beneficial to give the greens a dressing of sharp sand. Sometimes this work is left until later, but I recommend this dressing being applied whilst there is still a good growth left, as it will then more quickly disappear and do more good. Little or no sand is required if the "Eradicator" I recommend is used, as

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this itself opens up the surface. I have already in a former article pointed out the necessity of the greenkeeper having a good compost heap on hand. It can now be used with results beneficial to the grass. By topdressing now, the grasses will have derived the full benefit of it, and also have had a chance to harden up before the cold weather sets in, so that they will be better able to withstand the new climatic conditions.

In concluding this series of articles, I have done my best to put my ideas, as I say, as plain as possible, so that they may be more readily understood. I have tried to put them as it were in a talk between one greenkeeper to another or others. If I have been the means of helping out even one of my fellow greenkeepers, who has found himself at some time in difficulties, I shall believe that I have done some little good, as I earnestly trust I have. I have tried my best to; no one can do more. As I said in the beginning, what I have written on the various subjects are my own experiments and experiences gained through practical experience, and are the ones I have found to give me the very best results, but I wish it to be distinctly understood I do not wish them to be taken as hard and fast rules to be followed to the letter. May the articles, if possible, help out, if only in some small way, the better care of the golf course and putting greens is the wish of the writer.