

PRACTICAL MAINTANCE HINTS

The problem of tree roots plugging drain tile has long been with us on the golf course. There have been instances where drain tile had had to be dug up and relaid every year or two because of tree roots getting in and completely clogging the tile. Roots of the willow, cottonwood and elm, in that order, have been found to be the worst offenders.

Several of the golf course superintendents in the Chicago area have tried something, which, if it is not the complete answer, is at least a tremendous help. Frank Dinelli, Ray Didier, Jerry Dearie and Pete Stewart all claim that it is the answer. The idea is to completely surround tile, which is exposed to roots of the trees mentioned, with about three inches of soft coal cinders. The idea is that tree roots will not penetrate the layer of cinders to find an opening in the tile to get into. Jerry Dearie had a particularly bad situation—a 12 inch tile which was necessarily laid close to a row of huge willow trees. Jerry in the past found it necessary to dig up and relay the tile every two or three years. Since trying the cinder idea he reports that three years have gone by without any trouble. The others have reported and similarly and Pete Stewart claims that it is not necessary to have cinders under the tile because, he says, the roots do not come thru the bottom joints but come in thru joints on the sides and top.

Many Superintendents have found that it is not necessary to grind the reels of their mowers with a power grinder. They have found that most fairway mower units and practically all other cutting units used on the golf course, need only a periodic lapping-in. In these days of critical shortages and also high prices,

it becomes more and more necessary that we make our machinery last as long as possible. One grinding of mower reels may take off as much steel as may be worn off in ordinary operations in one year. Sometimes, when the reel is well worn, the blade may become too thick. In this case it may be necessary to take a little steel off the back of the blade. I happen to know of one set of fairway mower reels which have been in operation for ten seasons and are still going strong, in fact, they look to be good for another four or five years. It is estimated that during this time the mowers have travelled at least 22,500 miles in the ordinary operation of fairway mowing. These mower reels have never been ground since they left the factory, just lapped-in when needed. Oil and emery are used in the lapping-in procedure in most cases. In order to get away from washing off engine oil when used, it is much easier to use dormant tree spray oil or just plain soapy water with the emery. These are both easily washed off with water and does away with the dangerous job of washing off the mower with gasoline.

Herman Woehrle says he is ready to defend his laurels as the curling champion of the Winter Sport meeting against all comers.

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