

WHAT HAPPENED TO GRASS SEED?

By this time if you have tried to purchase any grass seed you will know both Blue Grass and Red Top are sky high and very scarce. In each case the crop estimate is about 50% of normal. The demand for grass seed to finish the many building and construction projects continues unabated.

With this condition prevailing naturally prices are unreasonable. Blue Grass is currently quoted at \$1.25 per pound and fancy Red Top at \$.85 per pound. There will be little of either for the trade next spring.

Just what happened to the crops when apparently there was a favorable growing season is hard to pin down. A combination of fall drought (1952) and reduced acreage created this situation.

Other grass seeds commonly used are more plentiful. Fescues of all varieties are in good supply at normal prices. The Bent Seed crop is at least average and prices should remain about in line with the past few years. *Poa Trivialis*, which earlier looked plentiful, has now followed the lead of Kentucky Blue Grass — is scarce and high in price. Merion Blue Grass seed production has increased considerably this year and there is now considerable Merion Blue Grass seed available, but still high in price. Rye grasses have followed the trend of Red Top and are considerably higher in price than for several seasons.

In satisfying your requirements for grass seed for the next season it is absolutely necessary that everybody consider the use of substitutes for Kentucky Blue Grass seed. There just isn't enough to go around and of course this situation will not be remedied until after the next crop. Right now with dry weather prevailing throughout the Kentucky Blue Grass belt the outlook for a seed crop in 1954 is none too good.

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SPREADING IT THIN

When we were at Purdue on August 3, one of the things that most impressed us was the showing of a strain of bent which Bill Daniel calls 10(37)4. This strain of bent is a vigorous grower, very resistant to Dollar Spot and Brown Patch. Bill mentioned that it was one of the parents of Polycross bent. It is not available at this time.

Roy Robinson, formerly of Bartlett Hills Country Club is now with George Roloff at Roselle Country Club.

The other fine evening we counted over 200 robins on one short fairway all busily turning over replaced divots in search of food and drilling in the turf. There must have been thousands of them all over the course. The divots the members replace the birds lift, so what can we do about it.

A number of Superintendents have been having good results with iron sulphate to correct chlorotic conditions in their greens. Small amounts up to a pound to a green give wonderful results. It is sprayed on the grass using as little water as possible. The greens look a little black the next day, but soon clear up.

Some of the courses in the Chicago district are up against a serious water shortage. Some of them buying their water from communities have been restricted to a very small amount. Reason is that the towns have mushroomed so in the last few years that the water systems are just not adequate. Bert Rost at Park Ridge is planning to drill a well and build himself a lake as a reservoir on the course. Bert was cut off without enough water and his fairways have suffered this summer as a result.

Joe Dinelli was quite disgusted with his 86 at Medinah and says he left his clubs in the pond in front of number 18 green. Better get them, Joe, it really wasn't the fault of the clubs nor of the course and many a Superintendent has to explain this to his members every year.

Howard Baerwald, who has been the assistant to Don Strand for the past two years is now Superintendent at La Grange Country Club.

John Darrah of the Cleary Corp. was with us for a brief visit during the Medinah meeting. He has been travelling the country far and wide and it is always a pleasure to have him with us from time to time.

Paul Popp broke his leg late in August at a company picnic while fielding a fast one. Later, he broke the cast and revisited the hospital while the new one was being set. He is now working every day and recovering very well.

Al Hintz fell out of a tree at White Pines while trimming in August and broke a leg. Al claims the tree pushed him and says its really getting tough when even the trees push you around. Al is getting along in fine shape.

Joe Graffis was a distinguished visitor at our Medinah meeting. We always have the welcome mat out for the Graffis boys.

Roy Chaplin's son, Donald, is expected home from a 2½ year tour of duty in Japan and Korea.

Due to our National Turf Conference and Show being held in Miami in the early part of January, Pres. Ray Davis has decided that we hold our annual meeting and election of officers at our December meeting. The Nominating Committee consisting of Bill Stupple, Frank Dinelli, Dom Grotti and Stan Arendt has been instructed to have its slate of candidates ready for that meeting.

Charley Nash, owner of Mission Hills, contributed \$150.00 prize money for the Pro-Supt. Tournament on August 31, played at Mission Hills.

We note a great deal of publicity being given to 2, 4,5-T as a clover killer. The Superintendents of the Chicago District take credit as being pioneers in the use of the chemical. We refer you to an article in THE BULL SHEET, Vol. 4, No. 14, February 1951, on the use of the chemical.

Talking about the Seniors, we still think it is not too fantastic to be thinking about a Home For Retired Greenkeepers in Florida some day. Frank Mastroleo, Midwest Senior President, is sold on the idea and thinks the efforts the Seniors have been making to raise a few bucks may be the beginning.

We renewed acquaintance with Earl Dowell, who you will remember was located in this district for many years, at Purdue, where Earl is Supt. at LaFayette Country Club. A young tornado tore thru LaFayette the night before the Field Day and Earl was busier than a one-armed paper hanger cleaning up. His course was literally covered with tree branches. Earl is doing a great job there and reports that he and his family are in the best of health.

Zoyzia plantings are in our estimation not doing too well. The grass seems to take a long time to become established in existing turf and is very difficult to find. Where it is planted in new ground with no competition, it does fairly well. Bill Daniel showed us some plantings at the LaFayette Country Club and estimated that the area planted would be 80 per cent Zoyzia in three years time. We may be wrong, but bent on watered fairways in this district seems to be our answer right now, but Merion bluegrass cannot be counted out. The main difficulty seems to be in the scarcity of seed. Some of the men who have used it on tees swear by it as a tee turf and are planning to renovate some of their tees from time to time to Merion. There is no doubt but that it is a tough grass and does not need a great deal of care.

Ray Davis treated all his 18 fairways on the number three course for crabgrass control. While Sodium Arsenite got the greatest attention he had trial plots of kerosene and the Ester of 2-4-D, and three new oil sprays from Standard Oil Co.

He plans to rebuild 6 greens on the third course and has planted a beautiful C15 nursery. There are many other grasses in this nursery and it is worth while seeing.

Ray Gerber is beginning to listen to the call of the male pheasants now that the nights are cooler. He stands by the fence and cackles back to them answering their calls morning and evening. The one regret of the fall to Ray is that the wedding of his son Donald to attractive Lynn Hunt falls during the Saturday of the hunting season and that afternoon Ray figures he will have to put away his gun. Jo Gerber is quite pleased with her prospective daughter in law.

Herb Graffis says that there are 9,637,435,329 places on a golf course where a ball can land and if a crabby players ball happens to rest on a spot where the grass isn't, the offended golfer immediately adopts a career of making the superintendent's life miserable.

Dr. Ralph F. Voigt has been promoted to the rank of professor of pharmacognosy and pharmacology at the University of Illinois college of pharmacy, Dean Earl R. Searles has announced. He will also assume the duties of administering the Department of pharmacognosy and pharmacology. Dr. Voigt previously held the rank of associate professor. He is an honorary member of our association.

Knotweed has been designated as the greenkeeper's friend, It grows where nothing else will. However, this be as it may, many of us think it is getting a little too friendly.

From all reports, we are going to have a wonderful time in Miami in January.

Wonder what happened to the Senior's prizes at the last Tournament?

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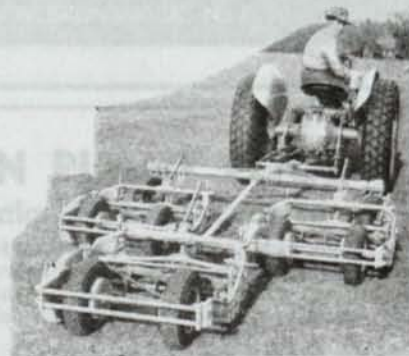
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