

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominating Committee of the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents has selected the following list of candidates all of whom have signified their willingness to run for the various offices of our Association for 1957.

PRESIDENT: Amos Lapp

1ST VICE PRESIDENT: Ed Stewart, Peter Bild.

2ND VICE PRESIDENT: William H. Stupple, Emil Cassier.

SECRETARY & TREASURER: Al Johnson, Al Rausch.

DIRECTORS: (2 to be elected) Robert Williams, Dom Grotti, Norm Kramer, Walter Fuchs, Wes Updegraff.

Respectfully submitted, Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents Nominating Committee.

Gerald Dearie, Frank Dinelli, Henry Lange, Herman Woehrle, Ray Gerber, Chairman.

THE OUTLOOK

By C. O. Borgmeier

There is no indication at the present time of a slackening of the economic pace or interest in Golf. Private Clubs are filled and have waiting lists, and municipal and fee Clubs have had a big year. Most Clubs now are ripe for improvements, sometimes running into quite large expenditures.

It is up to the Superintendent to get his two cents in for reconstruction, new barns, new or improved irrigation systems, and by all means, new and better labor saving equipment. It is hard for golf courses to compete with government and industry for labor, so the Superintendent must figure out ways and means to pay his labor higher wages, and make labor more productive. It also means efficient management of labor to get results and get the jobs done. Today, there is power equipment for nearly all operations on a golf course. Very often old or worn out equipment is inefficient and unsightly. It should be replaced. The players will think more of the Superintendent if they see good equipment on the course, and clean and orderly premises for storage, and maintenance. Too often, the Club House gets first call for additions, new furniture, redecorating, etc. Sure the members and players feel closer to the Club House environment, but, they also feel concerned with the appearance of the Course and its furnishings. Tee and greens equipment should be cleaned and replaced as soon as it looks shoddy. Machinery that looks run down and worn out should be repaired, repainted, or replaced. It does wonders for the spirit and efficiency of labor to give them efficient or new machines to work with. This is all related to and part of the general maintenance picture. In all our experience we have never seen a Superintendent criticized for maintaining his course in good condition. And that includes his equipment and working premises.

The outlook for next season is one of slightly higher prices and costs, both for material and labor. Machinery is up from 5 - 10%, Grass Seed up about 15%. Fertilizer, Chemicals, Insecticides, and Fungicides, are even with no indication at present of a change. A Budget must be flexible to provide for weather extremes, but since these usually average out during the season, the cost of labor, supplies, and equipment, govern your picture.

We do not see an economizing trend at present, as long as Club incomes are up, they will spend money. Clubs are all in competition with each other. It's up to the Superintendent to maintain a course which will please and attract the players.

For many years frequent topdressings of bent greens was considered necessary. In the past ten years topdressing has been used only when it was desired to smooth up the putting surface or change the soil structure. This change in maintenance practices has caused a new problem. An accumulation of stems and leaves, called thatch or mat, has built up on the surface of the greens interfering with the circulation of air and water. As most of the fungi damaging to fine turfgrasses attack the grass above the soil line, we have an excellent breeding place in the thatch. Overwatering, poor air circulation, high humidity and temperatures spell ruin for a heavily thatched green. Raking, brushing, aerifying and vertical cutting devices help control this thatch accumulation, but do not answer the problem completely. How does the design of our putting green mowers fit into the thatch picture?

Could design of our present putting green mowers be one of the causes of thatch? We set the cutting height with a gauge or from a level surface. We do this very carefully and then go out to mow greens. All our careful adjusting goes for naught. With the cutting mechanism mounted between the guide points, (the front roller or caster and the rear roller) we can not duplicate the conditions under which the height of cut was set. We have the front roller or caster riding on unmowed grass and the rear roller on mowed areas. Therefore a mower set to cut at $\frac{1}{4}$ inch on the bench in the shop will not cut $\frac{1}{4}$ inch above the soil on the green. The cut will be higher in proportion to the amount of growth the front roller or caster rides on and raises the front of the mower.

Suppose due to drastic methods of raking, verticutting or other means, we have a putting surface on our greens $\frac{1}{4}$ inch above the soil line on April 15th. We mow greens on April 16th and the front roller or caster is riding on one day's growth. The thickness of a blade of bentgrass is about .004 and the diameter of a stem is about .020 of an inch. Suppose that this amount of one day's growth raises the cutting edge .005 of an inch above the $\frac{1}{4}$ inch above the soil line achieved the day before. There are 168 days between April 15th and October 1st. If we gain .005 of an inch per day we will find our cutting edge 1.09 inches above the soil line on September 30th. ($168 \times .005$ plus .250.)

In past years frequent topdressing raised the soil line and counteracted a great part of the above condition as long as we were careful to avoid layers of grass and soil. Now we use other methods to combat the accumulation of leaves and stems, but from personal experience and observation, I question our success.

What are we trying to do when we mow greens? Are we trying to maintain a definite amount of grass between the soil line and the putting surface or are we trying to remove a definite amount of grass from the green? If we are trying to maintain a definite height above the soil line, perhaps we need a mower to establish that height of cut and another mower designed with the cutting unit out in front of the mower and the machine supported by the predetermined mowed surface. If we are trying to remove a definite amount of grass from the green it appears we should have a mower designed with the cutting unit in the rear set to cut the amount of grass we want to remove and the mower supported on the unmowed grass. We hope the putting green mower builders can help us control thatch and maintain better putting greens.

—The Heart of American Golf Course Supts. Assoc.