

SUMMARIZATION OF 11th ANNUAL TURF CLINIC

November 19 - 20, 1963

Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents
Olympia Fields Country Club
Olympia Fields, Illinois

By James L. Holmes, USGA Green Section

Proceedings were commenced when Mr. John Ebel, Superintendent at Biltmore Country Club and president of Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents, welcomed those attending, approximately 125 strong. After a few timely remarks, Mr. Ebel introduced Dr. Gene Nutter, Executive Secretary of the Golf Course Superintendents Association, who delivered the keynote speech. Gene's talk was entitled "Progress and Change" and was certainly a stoker speech (or one which "fires you up"). He dwelled on our advancing population and economy since World War II and the impact these are having in golf. Many new and "top" golf course superintendents are in demand and an increasing number will be needed in the future. Also, skilled golf course labor is needed and is essential to the smooth operation of a country club. He went on to say that the Chicago area is slightly above average in the growth, personal income and net and gross income of industry. The extended golf picture in the Chicago area is excellent.

Dr. Nutter presided over a panel entitled, **What I have Learned About.** Panel discussion was as follows:

1. "Aerification" — Norman W. Kramer, Golf Course Superintendent, Point O'Woods Country Club, Benton Harbor, Michigan.

Mr. Kramer presented his complete program of green and fairway aerification and why he chooses to follow such a program. He has found that machines which make vertical grooves to a depth of 1/4 to 1/2 inch into the soil are superior for aerifying and thatch removal. However, he continues to use a puncher type aerator at least once during the season. Both types of aerification, but especially the soil slitting type, prepare excellent seed beds. Norman commented that it is foolhardy to overseed unless overseeding is preceded with vigorous aerification. Winter damage has been severe at Point O'Woods during past seasons. Therefore, Mr. Kramer aerified late this fall in an effort to determine if this may reduce winterkill.

Norman commented that at the present time he has completely worn-out two drum type fairway aerifiers and is well on the way with the third. For the past two seasons he also has used the slitter or

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groover type machine on fairways and reported that he would continue to use this machine. Here again the grooving machine prepares an excellent seed bed. Highland bentgrass has been the predominant turf on his course and he wishes to incorporate Sea-side Bentgrass. To date this operation has been successful. He is grooving to a depth of 1/4 to 1/2 inch and removing mat and thatch with a commercial sweeper. Norman finished his talk by commenting that, "adequate and proper aerification which means the use of proper tools is absolutely essential in my operation."

2. "Top Dressing Application" — Tony Meyer, Golf Course Superintendent, Woodridge Country Club.

Tony gave a complete run-down on his topdressing operation which is as follows. Greens are first aerated with a plugger type machine and the plugs removed. Calcined clay is then applied at a rate of 150 pounds per 1000 square feet. This material is "drug-in". Then a topdressing mixture of 25% sand, 25% humus and 50% native soil is applied at the rate of 300 pounds per 1000 square feet. A power cart is used to drag in all topdressing materials. Mr. Meyer commented that through the use of a power cart and a power topdressing machine, labor and time were materially reduced.

Doug Jabaay, Golf Course Superintendent of Cress Creek Country Club, followed Mr. Meyer on the topdressing subject with a summarization of the various topdressing programs he had followed while developing his new course. Of special interest was the fact that stolons which were not topdressed but rather forced into existing soil with a Meeker harrow developed suitable putting surfaces as much as three months before topdressed areas developed. Doug said he planned to experiment with this concept further in order to determine if applications of topdressing actually retarded or slowed-down development of turf. Mr. Jabaay went on to explain that through the use of the power topdressing machines he had reduced labor required to topdress a 6,000 square foot green from 19 1/4 man hours by hand labor to 1 man hour. Doug commented that at no time would he apply more than 1 cubic yard of topdressing material per 1000 square feet and normally preferred to apply from 1/2 to 3/4 cubic yards per 1000 square feet.

(Continued next month)

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