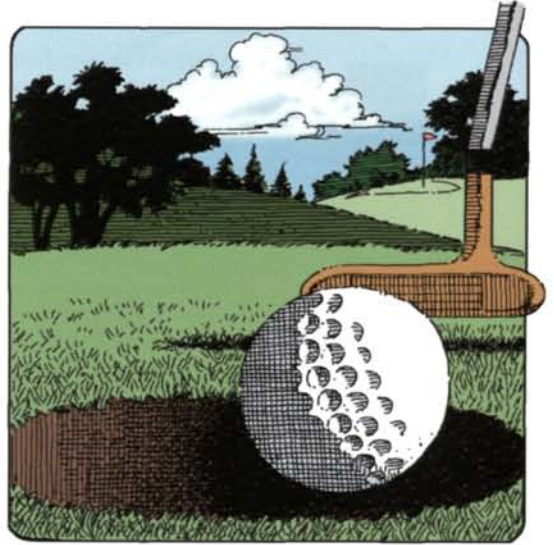


Putting Greens: Where the Way We Were and the Way We Are Converge



What are your greens worth to you? Are you aggressive enough, or are you too aggressive? Do you thoroughly think your practices through and anticipate what could go wrong?

You are being judged on the four to six acres of finely manicured turf that the player spends the least amount of time on, not the 150 to 200 other acres of the property that they spend most of their time wandering. We have taken it upon ourselves to elevate the bar for our industry; some do it to keep up with a neighboring course, some do it for personal gratification and some just do it because that is the only way they know how. In this pursuit, our profession is coming full circle to the practices that our forefathers performed in the 1920s. This article, dated May 16, 1927, comes from the USGA Green Section archives and reveals that the agronomics and the golfer's mindset have not changed much.

The Putting Green

With most golf players, the quality of the putting greens of a course determines one's estimate of its excellence. If the greens are good, the course has much merit; if they are bad or indifferent, no word of praise is forthcoming – "rotten" is usually the term employed. However we may regard the judgment of the player, the fact remains that he is never satisfied if the greens are poor, no matter how excel-

lent the rest of the course may be. From this trait of the player it follows that the first consideration of the greenkeeper must be to secure and to maintain putting greens of high quality. If with a reasonable amount of funds he can not accomplish this end he does not deserve his job. There are very few valid excuses for the turf on putting greens going bad. For the moment the only one that comes to mind is brown patch; but with due care this can be avoided, or at least its effects greatly minimized. First-class putting greens can be established and maintained in perfect condition everywhere in the United States where bentgrass succeeds. The method is easy:

- Drainage
- A few inches of good top soil
- Ammonium sulfate for fertilizer, and used freely as long as clover appears in the turf
- An occasional top-dressing of good compost, best applied monthly during the first two years

The green may be sown to South German mixed bent seed, or, better, planted with stolons. It is astonishing how quickly this method makes a green of superb quality. It is astounding how quickly the same green will deteriorate from neglect or if any other known method is used. These facts ought to be

known and appreciated by every greenkeeper. It is quite proper to judge a greenkeeper by his greens. It is a very rare case where he can prove an alibi for poor turf on his greens. In nine cases out of ten where the turf is bad he has done some foolish thing by way of experiment. The regular putting green is not the place to experiment, except perhaps a little spot on the edge of the green where possible injury to the turf will not be disastrous. Good greens do not necessarily mean expert greenkeepers, but bad greens practically always mean inefficient greenkeepers.

References

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