



The Bull Sheet

Official Bulletin

Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents



ART BENSON
Superintendent St. Charles
Country Club

APRIL MEETING

ST. CHARLES COUNTRY CLUB

TUESDAY, APRIL 4th, 1961

DINNER — 6:30 P.M.

BUSINESS MEETING FOLLOWING

Guest Speaker

Mr. Carl Mosser of Glendale Nursery

"Woody Type Plants - Their Place & Care"

THE BULL SHEET, official publication of THE
MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE
SUPERINTENDENTS.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring is just around the corner! This often used saying is very appropriate at this time both for the weather and for our Association. The weather has been very cooperative this winter for easy maintenance of our courses. The frost has left the soil several weeks ago and the warm temperatures along with some welcomed rain has started the rapid growth of grass on the tees and greens.

Spring is just around the corner! - also holds true for our Association. We are experiencing a new and healthy growth in enthusiasm and interest. We have witnessed a change of attitude which I am certain will benefit all of us. The Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents is very fortunate in having an active Educational Committee which has dedicated itself to continuing the high standards of education for which we are famous.

Last month's meeting at the Villa Moderne Motor Hotel was a good example of our interest in obtaining the latest information pertaining to one of our problems here in the Midwest. The movie and lecture was perhaps one of the finest presentations of this type ever offered to us. I am thankful to Mr. Herrbach and the American Oil Company for their fine work in producing this movie on the Control of Dutch Elm Disease. The narration and photography were outstanding.

My only hope is that the enthusiasm which is being displayed at this time will continue for the entire year.

I would like to remind all of you that our Spring Dinner Dance will be held at the Elmhurst Country Club on April 22nd. Ed Burke and his lovely wife will be our Hosts. Don Stewart, the chairman of the entertainment committee promises us that a good time will be had by all. The only thing that will make this a successful social function is the attendance and support by all of us.

Good Luck to all of you in easy maintenance this coming summer.

Your President,
Ted Woehrle

BY THE BOARD

by Paul N. Voykin

An organization that continues to exist strongly for many years consists of these main ingredients; cooperation, loyalty and spirit. A positive attitude for the cause so to speak.

I believe the Midwest Association of Golf Course

Superintendents has these outstanding qualities, therefore making it one of the largest and strongest in the country. Our members can proudly say this is the "Major League" of golf courses. Nowhere in the world are there courses as carefully maintained and meticulously manicured as here in the Chicagoland area.

This high pinnacle of success has been reached through many years of great effort by our wise senior superintendents. We can maintain the standard they have set and continue to progress only with their help and advice. Cooperation, loyalty and spirit will make this an outstanding year.

I would like to leave you with this thought from Kiplings Second Jungle Book.

"Now this is the Law of the Jungle — as old and as true as the sky. And the Wolf that shall keep it may prosper, but the Wolf that shall break it must die.

As the creeper that girdles the tree-trunk, the Law runneth forward and back —

For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack."

THE TRANSITION PERIOD

By John MacGregor
(Fairways)

The title, I believe, is appropriate to that era of the early twenties. Fairways then, to say the least, were little better than pastures. Before we get too deep into this subject, let me explain that we are speaking of Northern Golf Courses, and do not include Southern, Desert or Western Golf Courses. I believe there are others here today, besides myself, who experienced the changing picture of fairway turf.

Some golf clubs, before the twenties, had seeded the fairway areas with Fescue's others with Blue Grass. Those grasses, like Topsy, just grew! No effort was made to fertilize, in fact, fertilizer manufacturers had never been approached about producing a balanced fertilizer for golf course turf. When you come to think of it, why would anyone want to fertilize fairways when there wasn't enough equipment to mow the grass as it was?

Some clubs were graduating from the horse drawn mowers to tractor drawn. Most of the clubs at that time were using horses, one horse single unit mowers to three-gang mowers for team hitch. There were two types of gang mowers. One type was the side wheel drive and the other the roller type drive.

1920 was the year, I believe, when these units really got going in five-gang units. A tractor was also developed to pull the gangs. This tractor had large drive wheels about four feet in diameter with a bull-gear attached to the rear axles. You could hear those gears grind a couple of blocks away. The speed was not over five miles an hour, but with the new combination of tractor and five gangs the fairways could be mown in about three days.

When I say the rough on many of our present day courses is better than the fairways of the early twenties, it is true.

The remainder of this talk will be my experiences in this changing picture of growing and developing fairway turf.

I came to the Chicago Golf Club, Wheaton, Illinois in the year of 1921 to help with the re-construction of the golf course. The reconstruction was being done while keeping nine holes in play, after deciding on the line of play for the nine holes to be used during this

period. The new layout was completely different from the original. No. 1 hole to No. 9 followed the outside line of the property and No. 10 to No. 18 were inside the first 9 holes, using approximately 100 of the 200 acres. Incidentally, Chicago Golf is, as far as I know, the only course that plays from left to right. This was true of the old golf course and is true in the present layout. The reason for this unorthodox line of play was because the architect was a terrific slicer. He was Charlie McDonald and a charter member of the Club.

Re-designing of the golf course made it necessary to re-locate the fairways, so it was a matter of preparation and construction of the finest fairways in the Middle West. Carloads of stock yard manure were spread on the fairway areas, then plowed under to a depth of 10 inches, using a two bottom plow, tractor drawn. The tractor was manufactured by the Appleton Mfg. Co., Batavia, Illinois and owned by the then president of the club. After a reasonable length of time, the preparation for seeding went on until completion of seeding and leveling was done. The construction was finished by the end of 1922. I forgot to mention that while the fairways were being prepared, tiling and the installation of the first fairway watering system was being installed, using 6 inch cast-iron pipe as a loop and branching to a 4 inch cast-iron, with caulked joints. All of the ditching was done by hand, four feet deep or below frost. At that time, with the enlargement of the lake, pumps, pump house, water tank with capacity of 50,000 gals., the cost was \$60,000.

In the year 1923, problems arose. These problems were weeds, mostly Dandelions and Plantains. Because of the heavy applications of manure these weeds really were big and healthy.

I had been corresponding with Springfield about means of destroying these weeds. After debating the recommendations given, we decided to use Copperus (Iron Sulphate). Recommendations were 1-1/2 lbs. to 1 gal. of water. We bought the material and a 200 gal. power



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sprayer. We had to use a three-horse team to pull the sprayer around as there was no tractor available at that time. Of course, this was an experiment and we found that wherever the wheels of the sprayer had gone we got real kill of the foliage. Whereas, between the width of the wheels very little damage was done. We then purchased a chain drag to pull behind the sprayer. This was the answer, so continued this practice, and tried to make our treatments two weeks apart, or as soon as the weeds had attained two inches in height. This we were now able to do as the Fordson tractor was available. All of this spraying was being done in the rough. After trying the operation on the fairways, it was found that bruising of the fine grasses did considerable damage to the turf. We then decided to use oil cans, soldering a sharp spike along the spout, using gasoline in the cans, and by spiking the heart of the Dandelion or Plantain the gasoline penetrated in the wound. This was the method used on the fairways. Two men did nothing else from April 1st to Sept. 30th. They operated between lines three feet apart. Each man covered two fairways a year (on their knees)! If one or more men had an hour or more after finishing some other job, he was put on Dandelions.

Grass was growing so fast because of the manure used, we had to purchase a Parker Sweeper to remove the cut grass. As time went on, better mowing equipment and tractors were developed so fairways could be mown in two days with a five-gang.

Fairway watering was an exasperating experience. The fairways were from 150 to 160 feet wide. The water hydrants were placed in the rough near the fairway, 150 ft. apart. The only sprinklers capable of throwing enough water were mounted on a four wheeled carrier. Each sprinkler would throw 90 gals. per minute, however, our pump could deliver only 450 gals. a minute. While trying to keep grass sprinkled on 19 new greens, tree of these fairway sprinklers were all that could be used. It took nine hours to water one fairway, so we had a good water system but no practical method of distribution. As time went on, we used reducers from two to one inch and a one inch hose. Sprinklers were being made whereby one could use sixteen or more at one time, and by running 24 hours a day the fairways could be watered in four and one half days.

After four years the effects of heavy applications of stockyard manure were wearing off. It was now time to give attention to a fertilization program. The chairman of the Green Committee contacted Mr. Swift, who was a member of the Club, to find out whether or not they produced a fertilizer suitable for fairway use. As a result of this contact, two chemists from Swifts fertilizer department came out to the Club. One of them was Dr. Siems, who later talked at several of our meetings. However, after discussing the problem with them, they frankly said they did not have a formula that would be acceptable and asked me if I had a formula in mind. Not being a soil expert, but knowing the demands made on the soil in growing fairway turf, it was my opinion that because of the frequent mowings, Nitrogen would be used abundantly, Phosphates would be drawn on for root growth and so the demands of the plant would not be so great, Potash would not be used as much as the other two elements. I suggested a formula of 12-6-4 and Swifts produced this fertilizer, which proved to be an excellent mixture.

We then proceeded to use the 12-6-4 at the rate of 300 lbs. per acre twice a year. This practice was followed for years, and produced the finest fairways anyone

had ever seen. As the result of continued killing of dandelions and plantains and fertilization, we had weed free turf cut at an inch and 1/4. The turf was so dense a ball could be played with a wood club anywhere. We did it the hard way but no other method was available. I said, "weed free", but will have to take that back, I am afraid.

Our Club was awarded the Walker Cup Matches in 1928. The Tournament brings the best British amateurs and the best American amateurs together. Of course, the U. S. boys won. A week before the tournament started, which by the way was August 30th, a committee from the U.S.G.A. played the course with officials of our Club. After they played the course, I had a call from the Green Chairman, who wanted to see me. I met him in the locker room. He said, "Mac, one of the U.S.G.A. members lost his ball on the 9th fairway!" I said, "that is impossible!" Then he said, "you go out there and you will find a score card pinned in with a pencil. Please have the obstacle removed and replaced with a plug of sod." Sure enough, there was the healthiest Dandelion you ever saw, and I believe it was the only one but they had to find it! Naturally, the ball was found under the foliage.

While we are still discussing the Walker Cup Matches, I believe, we had an innovation. It may have been done before, but not to my knowledge. With the cooperation of the Worthington representative, we equipped two tractors with headlights and spotlights on the rear, showing the seven gangs of mowers for night mowing. We mowed the fairways every night during the matches. Those Englishmen thought they were "seeing things".

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While they were eating dinner, the lights would be heading straight for them, then they would disappear as the units turned around. One day this will be standard practice.

Fairway bunkers had to be mown with sickles and scythes. Mowers to accomplish this had not yet been developed, so it took about three weeks to complete the job. So — you can bet for two weeks these bunkers were real hazards.

During the thirties the picture changed rapidly. Sprinkling systems were being installed on many golf courses, better and more efficient sprinklers were being produced and more up-to-date and larger gangs of mowing units were being used. Tractors with more horsepower and better traction made it easier to maneuver and pull the seven gangs so that fairways could be mown three times a week, making conditions more favorable for the players.

Arsenicals were being used by some. In some cases, where good judgement was used, fair results were obtained. Milarsenite was produced by the Milwaukee Sewage Commission with sometimes not too satisfactory results as it was discontinued after a fair trial.

Research was going on during those years. The golf clubs are indebted to the U.S.G.A. and their Green Section for the fine work they were doing, especially with weeds, as I am sure you will be briefed by the next speaker on this subject. The U.S.G.A. has been very fortunate, since inaugurating the Green Section, in having very outstanding men on research. We can go way back to find such men as Drs. Piper, Oakley and Carrier, followed by Dr. John Montieth, whose ability as a scientist was outstanding and then Fred Grau, who worked untiringly in his efforts to make conditions for better turf.

I have no doubt there are many more important happenings which I have not covered, however, I am sure many of the practices will be interesting to our young

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DON SWENSON PASSES AWAY

We regret to report the death of Don Swenson who passed away Monday, March 20, 1961. He was formerly the Superintendent of Round Lake Golf Club and more recently the Superintendent of the new Vernon Hills Country Club where we had our November Meeting last fall.

Time brings us a change and leaves us fretting;
We weep when every comrade goes -
Perhaps too much - perhaps forgetting
That over yonder there are those
To whom he comes and whom he knows.

We wish to express our deepest sympathy to the immediate family.

men here today, who were not born at that time and many more who were attending school.

SPREADING IT THIN

Bob Williams reports that about 30 members visited his new maintenance shop before going to our last meeting at the Villa Moderne Motor Hotel. He had refreshments served before, during and after his personally guided tour. Thank You! Bob for being such a fine host.

Dick Hedburg, representative of the International Minerals and Chemicals Corporation reported that about 20 members toured their administrative center and research laboratories before attending last months meeting. Thank You! Dick, for your time and effort.

COMING EVENTS

The April Meeting will be held at the St. Charles Country Club in St. Charles, Illinois on April 4. This is a Tuesday. Dinner will be served at 6:30 P.M. immediately followed by a two part educational program.

John Ebel tells us that the guest speaker will be Mr. Carl Mosser the owner of Glendale Nursery. His subject is a very timely one - "Woody Type Plants - Their place and care." After the speaker we will have a short presentation on a controversial subject of Liquid Fertilizers vs. Dry Fertilizers. Bob Williams and Frank Dinelli will talk on Liquid fertilizers and Ed Stewart and Warren Bidwell will talk on Dry fertilizers. This should be very interesting.

The May meeting will be held at the Beverly Country Club. Plan to play golf and have a good time.

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