

Golfdom

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Fertilizer's Share of Budget Is Important

By C. A. TREGILLUS

A HEAVY doubt that weighs on many a small-club green committee, and for that matter there are committees in more affluent circumstances afflicted the same way, concerns the purchase of fertilizer and the proportion of the budget that may be applied to the supplies of such materials. The question is so hedged about by entangling difficulties of prejudice and ignorance that it is often hard to get to, in a fair and unbiased manner.

There are some that think that fertilizer is more or less of a luxury, desirable perhaps but not true economy, and are inclined to compare the putting green with the average private lawn and wonder why there is so much fuss of the former and but little over the latter. There are those who in a hazy way realize that fertilizers are worth while but are afraid to invest in them for fear of raising criticism among the rank and file of the club over doubtful expenditure; there is no argument against the visible immediate indispensable greenkeeping costs, the mowing and watering of the grass, these are obvious to one and all: but when it comes to such things as compost materials and fertilizers, the direct returns are not so patent. This fact hinders the use of fertilizers quite a bit. Then, of course, there are those that fully appreciate the use of chemical and organic manures but find it hard to get adequate support when pushing their ideas forward.

An Investment Policy

Without question, there still is a great deal of missionary work to be done concerning this aspect of course upkeep. It is

surprising the amount of bias that exists regarding the use of chemicals and their application to growing grass. And like many other things in this world it takes a great deal of faith to start a new venture: there is a natural inclination to consider money invested in manures and compost as bread cast upon the waters with no satisfactory guarantee that it will be returned within the sower's tenure of office. Where there is an annual turnover of the green committee, the office holder has only seven to nine months active service, which is too short a time in which to initiate new ideas and methods and prove them by results. We often find that small clubs and low quality greens are associated for the simple reason that the short term committeeman has not the backing or sympathy to encourage him to treat his greens in the light of a genuine investment. In consequence his policy is to skimp through the season as cheaply as possible and let his record rest on low operating costs rather than the excellence of turf provided. Those who have broken away from this position have found that in a short time, the improvement in playing conditions has more than repaid the effort and that the increase in green fees and memberships has thoroughly justified their action.

It is the first duty of the green committeeman and those sufficiently interested in their club to aspire to that office, to acquaint themselves with the broad fundamentals of grass requirements. It is an enjoyable and absorbing study and not only will it be an interesting diversion but it will make the committee a real tower

of strength behind the greenkeeper. There is a world of difference between the lawn at home, which seemingly behaves quite well under a minimum of care, and the highly cultured putting green on the golf course, a fact that seems like an exaggeration to the unthinking. However, a little thought upon the matter and contact with the work will soon reveal the artifices and manoeuvres that must be employed to hold a turf in condition under the severe grilling of tramping feet and remorseless mowing.

Study Fertilizing

Assuredly we must produce a surface that is satisfactory for play, free from blemishes or irregularities that would interfere with a dense, compact, continuous sward. To reach this end, two environmental considerations are necessary. First is a suitable root bed, a soil that will meet the plant's requirements in the way of air, moisture, drainage, or in simple words, of a satisfactory texture. This is an obvious objective and so closely allied to good playing conditions that we all have a fair idea of what is meant. The kind of a green that the golfer likes to play on, one to which balls can be pitched with confidence, that keeps firm in the rainy seasons and does not bake when it is dry has just the sort of soil that best suits the grass that grows upon it. The second we might term as "suitable fertility," a somewhat vague designation and not so easy to understand, but really the key to successful green management, and it is on this account that an appeal is made to committeemen, who would master the job they have undertaken, to delve into this subject as deeply as time and inclination will permit. It takes a great deal of study of local conditions in respect to soil texture, climate, length of season, nature of turf, losses through mowing and the removal of clippings, and many other things before proper and efficient fertilizing can be really understood.

Putting greens are subjected to long seasons of play, and to be "fit," they should be neither over nourished nor under nourished; while it may be possible to bring them up to a high pitch of perfection for a short time, it is unwise to attempt to sustain them above what might be called a healthy standard. An overly fed, stimulated green has not the resistance to disease, drought and abnormal weather changes as one that has been conservatively tended.

Cuts "Dog Day" Deficit by Quantity Buying

BY J. P. McCANN.
Cascade Hills Country Club.

WE FOUND our biggest house problem has been in keeping up the cafe attendance during August. Many of our members leave for the lakes and resorts that abound around Grand Rapids, and others give up golf for the warm weather.

This season I met the problem by first installing a cooler eight by ten, operated by an ice machine where the temperature can be regulated to suit conditions. Then, buying whole lambs, hind quarters of beef, chicken, etc. in large quantities, and naturally at a much lower price than we formerly had to pay, and working these up into various appetizing dishes and serving same on our regular dinner which I reduced to one dollar with half rate for children. Chops, steaks, chicken, and frogs are one dollar and a quarter.

The result has been an increase of fifty per cent in the number of meals over last season. I find many of our members drive in from the lakes to dine at the club.

In the grill room we have a bachelors' table where members whose families are out of town will always find a fellow member to dine with, eliminating the lonesome evening meal.

So we have cut down on the deficit the club suffered in the past seasons by a better method of buying and keeping up the volume of business when the overhead expenses continue the same.

Refinancing Puts New Club] on Its Feet

“ [T'S NEVER too late to mend,” adopted as a policy when a financial crisis confronted a young eastern club pulled the organization through in excellent shape and it now boasts of about as comfortable a position as a new club could enjoy.

The club started three years ago with ambitious plans and a big overhead, considering its field. This year the club reorganized making each member take a \$500 bond instead of the original \$100 membership certificates. With the club a going concern there was less difficulty selling the bonds than the organization experienced in selling its original memberships. Bond sale was facilitated by an easy payment plan. One of the first results witnessed with delight was the reduction of about \$7,000 in interest charges.