

GREEN SECTION IN

Arlington session reveals financial needs of section

By B. R. LEACH

AUGUST 19th witnessed the gathering of the greenkeeping clan at Washington for the annual summer meeting of the United States Golf Association Green Section. A good crowd turned out for the occasion and was blessed by that rare event in Washington—a cool August day. The morning was spent in an intensive inspection of the green section experimental turf garden at Arlington Farms, the experimental grounds maintained by the government just on the edge of the city of Washington. Dr. Monteith and his associate, Mr. Welton did the honors and to those who knew the Doc in his more bashful days it is enough to say that the old boy has become very clever in piloting the crowd.

The experimental turf gardens at Arlington are intensely interesting to any one sufficiently familiar with the problems besetting those charged with the maintenance of fine turf in this country. In fact a visit to the gardens will net you information exactly in proportion to what you know about the fundamentals of turf management. If you don't know much you won't learn much, if you know your stuff you can learn a whole heap more.

The north end of the garden is laid

out in an extensive series of plats planted to practically every species and strain of grass which will do anything at all in the Washington climate. This layout came in for a great deal of inspection and comment.

Putt Test Explodes Old Notion.

During the course of the morning Monteith gave a demonstration of the machine devised for testing any given turf for its putting qualities. It consists essentially of a pendulum which swings with mechanical precision and hits the golf ball as would be the case with a legitimate putt on a green. The mechanical swing of the pendulum being the same in all cases the trueness of direction taken by the ball in its passage across the turf together with the distance traveled by the ball as indicative of the resistance offered by the turf all combine to say whether a given turf area is fast or slow. Monteith drew attention to the fact that there was a general impression among golfers that stolon bent greens offered greater resistance to the ball and were harder to putt on but with the aid of this mechanical putter he showed that up or down hill the ball went

(Continued on page 54)



Greenkeepers study the Arlington turf garden plats during the annual mid-summer meeting.

MID-SUMMER MEETS

Record attendance marks the first outdoor meet at Chicago

By HERB GRAFFIS

ALMOST 300 attended the first of the mid-summer meetings of the Green Section, inaugurated August 26, as an annual event to be held at the Mill Road Farm experimental station for the benefit of course maintenance in the central states. Greenkeepers from Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Michigan, Missouri, Kentucky, Iowa and Ohio, and many chairmen from these states gave the new station an inspection, looked over A. D. Lasker's private golf course and played it. They had the work and aims of the national green section and the Chicago District green section presented to them by Dr. John Monteith, Jr., Kenneth Welton and C. M. Harrison of the U. S. G. A. Green Section and Guy Peters, chairman of the Chicago group.

Dr. Monteith opened the outdoor session by displaying several glass tubes in which various typical soils were contained. The bottoms of these tubes had been immersed in water. The demonstration vividly showed the slow movement of water in clay, the fast travel of water in sand, and the various performances of water in other soils. It was a simple and striking reminder of the necessity of varying watering practice according to the soils. Although the station at Mill Road Farm

has not been established long enough to be the source of any information that might be uniquely applicable to its section of the country, it has served to check many observations at Arlington, according to Monteith. He went over the various details of the layout with the crowd and dwelt especially on some of the plots of the same turf, cut to different lengths. Short cutting, so Monteith pointed out, affected fescue unfavorably, but did no damage to the bents. Harrison showed a very interesting array of root growth specimens to reveal the effect of short and long cutting.

Plan Snow Mold Tests

Arrangements are being made for conducting snow mold tests at Mill Road this winter, said Dr. Monteith. He also stated that seed tests were to be conducted on seeds of the same grasses, but from different sources. He emphasized that all grasses were getting an even start at the new station, so all possibility of erroneous conclusions due to varying initial conditions had been eliminated.

An exceedingly interesting demonstration of the putting machine was staged. It was shown that the various seeded and stolon greens varied but slightly in their



Some of the record crowd at the first Mill Road Farm meeting of the U. S. G. A. Green Section.

putting speed. To many of the visitors the tests with the old and new ball were most impressive. The larger and lighter ball goes nearly 7% farther on a level putt. On a slight down-hill slope it goes 18 inches farther than the present legal ball on approximately a 15-foot putt.

A Complete Laboratory

The Lasker golf course itself affords many opportunities of education in means and methods. Although the course is but two years old its condition would do great credit to that of clubs four times older. The greenkeepers who looked it over considered it a shining example of what could be done with money to spend correctly in the early stages rather than spread the same amount of money over a long period of years without ever attaining the shape the Lasker layout is in at the present time. Shining examples of what soil conditioning will do were evident to those who wandered into some of the heavy rough of the incoming nine. A few feet away from properly treated fairways in excellent condition, there was the untreated soil of the rough, cracked open wide enough to lose a caddie.

Lasker, starting his business career as a Texas newspaperman, became the head of one of the largest advertising agencies in the world, and the chairman of the U. S. Shipping Board by virtue of being able to show people how to get plenty for their money. It is his hope that the Green Section station to which he has given a ten year lease on his property, will function notably in the same respect.

In talking informally with a group of greenkeepers he stressed the possibilities of maintenance savings as the result of conclusions arrived at by the Green Section's work at the station. He cited the greens at his own course as an example. As uniformly true putting surfaces these greens have

been put by Supt. Tregillus in condition that defies reasonable criticism. This work, however, on this particular strain, requires such a heavy maintenance expense that eventually the greens are due for replacement. Due to the great difficulty of correctly identifying the strains of bent the Lasker course didn't get what the buyer and seller both thought was being supplied and such errors as this have no place in any enterprise that calls for operation on a business basis, Lasker maintains.

So much publicity has been given the excellence and exclusiveness of the Lasker course that the Green Section visitors fairly mobbed in accepting the invitation to play it. Almost 50 foursomes competed for the prizes given by the U. S. G. A. Green Section. Contestants were in such a hurry to get going that in many cases the alignment of green-chairmen and greenkeepers was not registered on the scoreboard. This left a job for Alex Binnie, Alex Law and "Hap" Martin, in determining the winner of the chairman-greenkeepers prize.

Peters Pilots Diners

The meeting concluded with a dinner at the new clubhouse of the Onwentsia club, with Guy Peters presiding as chairman. W. A. Alexander, one of the prime movers in the organization of the Green Section and a dean of green-chairmen, opened the evening session. Alexander dates back in mid-western golf far enough to have "fit the pesky redskins often the

land" on which now are some of the prize golf courses of the Chicago district. He commented on the fact that golf, thru governmental participation in Green Section activities, is the one popular sport that gets the government's financial help. He stated that golf had made American sport conscious



Kenneth Welton of the Green Section and C. A. Tregillus, superintendent of Mill Road Farm, demonstrate the green testing-putting machine.

and paid high tribute to the pro and greenkeeper as vital factors in the continual growth of the game.

C. A. Tregillus, superintendent of the Mill Road Farm and formerly operating head of the Canadian Green Section, spoke briefly on the work at the Lasker course and experimental station. He told of the intention to tackle problems peculiar to the midwest. In telling of the turf garden construction he related that there was no tile under the experimental plots. Tregillus put in a lot of hard work in making the first outdoor meeting in central territory and to him and his chief, Lasker, thanks and credit was given in full measure.

Guy Peters suggested that the Green Section work on the problem of watering fairways without having the fairways go heavily into clover. He suggested that others make suggestions for Green Section work. The problem of too much clover on watered fairways was one that the St. Louis delegation, headed by Eberhard Anheuser and Walter Reed, shared with the Chicago bunch. Other troubles mentioned were dandelions, plantain, ants and gophers. The greenkeepers suggested that the Green Section go into the matter of proper cutting length further in carrying out the work mentioned by young Harrison of the Section during the morning demonstration.

Jack Patterson of Midlothian was called upon to tell of his experience with arsenate of lead and his testimony concerning the material for weed, grub and worm control in the Chicago district made many "believers." Jack also had some practical statements to offer on drainage, emphasizing the point that surface drainage on slopes wasn't sufficient if one wanted to get good turf at these locations; sub-surface drainage bringing water to the grass roots, was necessary.

Dr. Monteith dwelt upon the plans of the Green Section for sectionalizing its work so it would be eminently applicable to each location and showed what the Section was up against due to its limited funds. He cited the case of a Florida greenkeeper's complaint about the Section not doing enough in Florida. Each club member of the Green Section pays \$30 a year to the Section. In Florida there are 14 members (of which the complainant's club was not one). This made a total of \$420 a year from Florida, where the Green Section spent \$900 last year.

The citation was illuminating. Monteith told of some of the expenses of turf laboratory work and quickly disillusioned any who might have thought that an experimental station could be run properly on a shoestring.

Alex Binnie, president of the Midwest Greenkeepers' association announced that all visitors would be welcome at any of the Midwest's member courses the following day and in closing activities of a crowded session lauded John MacGregor, first president of the Midwest, for his work in stirring up the central states to a keen interest and effort in better golf course maintenance.

J. B. Buckner, Sprinkler Maker, Dies

FRESNO, Calif.—J. B. Buckner, sales manager of the Buckner Mfg. Co., which is headed by his father, died of heart failure August 12. Young Buckner was widely known by greenkeepers in all parts of the country, his likeable personality and knowledge of his business of golf course watering winning him a welcome everywhere.



J. B. Buckner

His passing at a time when he was coming into the rich years of his career is greatly lamented by his host of friends in the golf field.

Northeastern New York Pros Promote Glen Falls Open

GLEN FALLS (N. Y.) C. C. and the Northeastern New York P. G. A. will hold a 72 hole open event Sept. 16 and 17 at the Glen Falls course which is 200 miles north of New York City at the headwaters of the Hudson. Prize money to the extent of \$1,670 is offered, divided fifteen ways, with the winner taking \$500 and the last five \$20 apiece. Entry fee is \$5. Entries close Wednesday, Sept. 11, with Ben Lord, the Glen Falls pro.

sufficiency of soil bacteria and other organisms. You can now plow the soil to a depth of 6 inches and repeat the top-dressing manufacturing process all over again. If, however, you take off six inches of top soil at one operation you strip the land of practically all its soil bacteria and life and it is one hell of a job to do anything with it from that time on. Now, inasmuch as there is unfortunately a certain percentage of human hogs among the polyglot population of this grand and glorious country it follows that some few will take 6 inches of soil and leave nothing. I sincerely trust that such individuals will receive their proper share of hellfire in the hereafter. The vast majority will however confine their operations to stripping off the top 3 inches and otherwise act as reasonable human beings.

Should Have Soil Shed

I need hardly add that all soil operations such as plowing, disking, stripping of the soil, etc., should be done when the soil is in a friable, workable condition. This is especially important when you are taking off the top-soil preparatory to running it through a sieve for application to the green. Wet, sticky soil is very hard to handle. For this reason every golf club should have a suitable soil shed where soil can be stored and the screening and preparation carried out during periods of rainy weather, and where the finished product can be stored and maintained in shape for immediate application to the turf. A suitable soil shed will effect greater savings in the cost of top-dressing golf greens than any other single investment on a golf course.

From a cost angle the preparation of top-dressing material by the soiling method is infinitely cheaper and quicker than by the compost pile system. In the first place all the labor of preparing a plot of ground by the soiling method can be conducted by machine, including the plowing, disking, spreading of manure, etc., and I am not at all sure that it would be such a tremendous job to fashion a rig for scooping up the top 3 inches of soil. Composting, on the other hand, is practically all hand work, and decidedly hard work as any one who has forked over a compost pile is fully aware.

The speed of decomposition of the manure in the upper 3 inches of the soil is much greater than the same manure in a compost pile, at least 4 to 1. Furthermore, the decomposition product in the case of

the soiling method is much more desirable because the decomposing action has taken place in an atmosphere abounding in oxygen with the result that decomposition is natural, complete and the ultimate product is free from toxins.

So much for the preparation of top-dressing material under those propitious conditions embodying a plentiful supply of manure. The same general system can be followed for the preparation of top-dressing when animal manure is scarce or entirely unavailable and I propose to discuss the soiling method involving the plowing under of green crops in lieu of manure in a future article. The green crop method is sound, simple and cheap but not quite as rapid in action as is the case when manure is available.

Hold Mid-Summer Meeting at Arlington

(Continued from page 24)

as far with a given putt impetus on stolon bent as it did on other types of turf.

An extensive series of fertilizer test-plats lay alongside of the grass variety plats described above. The visitors were invited to gaze as long and ardently on these as they desired but it was noticeable that the Green Section technical staff did not go into any great length in discussing them or the results obtained to date. In fact the history of the ultimatums on fertilizers for turf reminds me of what Josh Billings said about the three stages of man, namely that an eighteen year old boy knows it all, at 25 he knows a hell of a lot less and at 35 he gets into the habit of going around to see his old man when he wants to get the low-down on anything in particular.

Next in order was the extensive area of plats devoted to experiments on control of brown-patch and other diseases. Monteith has been in tough luck this year in that there hasn't been nearly enough brown-patch infection at the station to make good experimental conditions. Never mind Doc, there's another year coming.

Make Inspection Tour.

Shortly after noon the visitors began to drift back to Washington for luncheon and in the afternoon various groups embarked on visits to the leading golf clubs around Washington. The writer in company with three tried and trusted friends paid an extended visit to the Columbia C. C., one of

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the de-luxe clubs of the capitol. My three team-mates were—Oscar B. Fitts, superintendent of the Columbia Country club; George T. Cunningham, formerly of the Green Section staff, and now manager of 36 holes at the Country Club of Virginia, at Richmond, and Norman L. Mattice, superintendent of the Pine Valley G. C. at Clementon, N. J. I have always felt that these three boys deserve a great measure of credit in that despite the heavy handicap imposed by their respective college educations they have won through to a dignified success in the greenkeeping profession. Mattice says that it's a good idea

in the greenkeeping profession to knock on wood every morning before breakfast because nowadays the greens may look like a million dollars at 8 p. m. and a dime (Mex.) by 4 p. m.

In the evening we attended a healthy meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Greenkeepers' Association preceded by dinner. This is a young but enthusiastic organization and coming right along. The star performer of the evening was Mr. Hillman of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, who has spent many years in the study of the seeds of various bent grasses and in developing the technique of grass seed identification. He is now in a position to definitely distinguish between the seeds of these various bents and the information has been worked up into such form that it is available to seed analysts throughout the country.

Clearing Bent Confusion.

Mr. Hillman's talk made it very clear that there was considerable of a mix-up in bent seed classification but that the mix-up was just about at that stage where it was ready to be cleared up as a result of technical study. A series of plats at the turf gardens labeled "grass sold as Washington bent" indicates that the mix-up in the various *strains* of stolon bent is equally as bad. In looking over these plats I confess that I had difficulty in selecting the plat planted to *true* Washington bent and could only be sure by inspecting the labels. No doubt the posted agrostologist or grass expert can tell the various strains but the average man is lost. Under the circumstances anyone contemplating the establishment of a stolon nursery will do well to use great care in securing his foundation stock of stolons otherwise he may wake up a year or two hence and find himself the possessor of a couple of carloads of Virginia bent or some other inferior strain when all the time he was kidding

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