

# Leach Answers Some Greenkeeping Queries

## Poa Annua Control

Sir: What is the latest information on the control of *Poa annua* by means of lead arsenate? Last spring, early, we applied lead arsenate to a green heavily infested with *Poa annua*, but cannot see that it reduced the weed to any great extent.

I. I. (N. Y.).

### Answer

The question of controlling *Poa annua* by means of lead arsenate has agitated the greenkeeping profession ever since I announced the results of my experiments with lead arsenate in 1926. We do know that lead arsenate has not consistently controlled *Poa annua* as it has controlled chickweed.

When a chemical will control a given weed in one instance and fail to do so in another, it is fairly obvious that some angle of the problem is not entirely understood. Consequently, some greenkeepers are unwittingly applying the lead under conditions propitious for *Poa annua* control while others are unintentionally doing the exact opposite.

Under the circumstances, I have studied this question for the past three years, have inspected numerous greens all over the east and have closely questioned greenkeepers wherever good or bad *Poa annua* control resulted following the applications of lead arsenate.

I have come to the conclusion that the time of application of the chemical is the governing factor in obtaining success or failure. I make this assertion because, as is generally known, *Poa annua* makes its rank growth in the cool months of the spring and fall and disappears from the green during the hot summer months except in shaded areas. In other words, *Poa annua* is an annual, and the seed, which ripens in latest spring, lays over in the soil until the cool fall months render the soil suitable for the seed to germinate.

In view of these conditions, and where it is desired to keep *Poa annua* out of a given green, I would apply 5 pounds of lead arsenate in the late summer or early

fall just before the cool nights cause *Poa annua* to begin to germinate. The exact time can best be determined by the greenkeeper, who is familiar with his local conditions and climate.

On the contrary, it would seem advisable for those wishing to control worms, grubs or chickweed on *Poa annua* greens to avoid the application of the arsenate during this period of germination and to rather apply the lead arsenate when the *Poa annua* is in full and lusty growth.

In other words, lead arsenate does not seem to affect *Poa annua* grass, but does seem to check the germination of the seed.

B. R. Leach.

## Spring Arsenating

Sir: I recently read an article in regard to "forking" the ground of greens before applying arsenate of lead in the spring. Do you consider this important? And if so, would not the spike roller be better?

The grubs were very bad the past season, as were also angle worms later.

Have arsenated greens this fall. What time and what quantity of lead would be best for spring treatment?

W. Q. (Ohio).

### Answer

Sir: With regard to forking or spike rolling the ground in connection with the application of lead arsenate, would say that I think the spike roller would be the best. It is not necessary or desirable to work the lead into the soil to a greater depth than one inch, and a shallow spike roller would in all probability be of considerable assistance in the case of heavy, tight clay soils.

As regards the amount of arsenate to apply to the greens this spring, I would be governed by the amount applied last fall and also as to whether the fall application seemed to check the grubs and worms. In cases of severe grub and worm infestation, it is best to apply 5 pounds per 1,000 square feet of turf at once and in one application. This dose will usually check the trouble with the possible exception of

very heavy soil types. In handling heavy soil types where quick action is desired, it is often found desirable to apply another 5 pounds with the next top-dressing. However, this is very rarely necessary except with very stubborn, sticky clays.

As a general rule, it is safe to say that in applying lead arsenate keep on putting it on until you attain the desired control and then stop until subsequent trouble develops. Fortunately, the chemical is virtually foolproof, and heavy doses do not affect the turf one way or the other.

*B. R. Leach.*

### What Makes Greenkeeper Listen

Can you explain to me the apparent reluctance of greenkeepers to accept suggestions? As a relatively new green-committee member, I find that our greenkeeper is a good listener, but also good at doing his own way. In justice to him, however, I am compelled to admit that the course is O. K. considering the amount of money we are able to expend in its upkeep.

#### Answer

Greenkeepers are human beings just like all the rest of the world, and it has been my experience that the bulk of the world turns a deaf ear to advice and suggestions, so that in this respect greenkeepers are entirely normal. Furthermore, it is a fairly safe bet that your greenkeeper had the same suggestions you are now making put to him while he was engaged in trying to kick the slats out of his cradle. Ninety-nine and five-tenths per cent of all golf course suggestions were old when Heck was a pup. They appear new and bright to you because you are new at the turf game. If your course is looking O. K., there is every probability that your greenkeeper knows his business and is a safe man to tie to. Under the circumstances, I would sit tight and stick to golf.

As one of the newer members of the green-committee fraternity, you are naturally desirous of making yourself useful to your club, but are in all probability somewhat uncertain as to how constructive action may be taken. In this respect I can probably furnish you a suggestion based on a varied experience with the average golf club. Would suggest that you look into the subject of your greenkeeper's salary and determine whether his pay is commensurate with his services and compatible with the wages of greenkeepers in your section. If you find that your green-

keeper is not receiving adequate compensation, make it your business to see that this condition is corrected. In doing so you will benefit the greenkeeper, but aside from that you will be doing your club the most important of services. Nothing in club management pays any better than paying the greenkeeper well. For every extra dollar the seasoned greenkeeper receives in his pay envelope the club will receive \$10 in return in the shape of economy and keen service. I have no patience with the present system which necessitates a greenkeeper hunting up a new job each time he feels that his salary is inadequate. The club with a good greenkeeper should take care to pay him *more* than he can get elsewhere, thereby making him a club fixture and insuring peace of mind for the green-committee.

*B. R. Leach.*

### Promotes Pros Theory of Golf Stroke

**SIMPLIFYING THE GOLF STROKE.** By Phillips B. Thompson. Published by Laurence Gomme, Fifth ave. and 41, New York. One dollar.

THIS brief presentation of the theory of instruction advocated by Ernest Jones, pro at Women's National G. & T. C., is something that deserves pro boosting, for while they may disagree with the Jones theory (if the hands function properly the rest of the factors in the stroke will care for themselves) no pro can help but give three cheers when one of his comrade's ideas so work on a pupil that the pupil spends his good dough in evangelical work.

Basically, no matter how sound a golf instruction theory may be, plenty of pro personal supervision of the student is required and the reader of these instruction books is quickly made to realize this necessity by the authors. For that reason we have harbored a pet hunch that it wouldn't be a bad idea for pros to have the golf instruction books on display in their shops and loan them to their members. It seems to us that it would be a good lesson sales propaganda. This little book, the classic by Bob MacDonald, John Hackbarth's book, Whitlach's recently revised volume and Sol Metzger's little book on putting, to mention a few of the late golf books, would make a good nucleus of such a library. If any of the boys try the stunt, GOLF-DOM would like to hear how it works out in boosting instruction income.