

N. A. G. A. Meeting Gives Wise Boys Head Start on Season

By HERB GRAFFIS

FEBRUARY 3 to 6, approximately 600 men having major responsibility for golf course maintenance will meet at Columbus, O., for the fifth annual convention and equipment show of the National Association of Greenkeepers. The greenkeepers will comprise more than 400 of this total according to advance estimates. The remainder will be the manufacturers and salesmen of equipment and supplies.

More than half of the greenkeepers will have their convention expenses paid by their clubs and it is this writer's conviction that such expense items are productive and economical details of the well managed budget. In various phases of journalism your reporter has covered many business conventions. Being rather morose he has harbored the opinion that conventions could be dispensed with at no loss to any businesses except those of the bootleggers and broads. Acting, in the present instance, as a stool-pigeon for the greenchairmen, he can say honestly that the greenkeepers' convention is an exception to the usual procedure of frivol masquerading as a matter of major business importance. The greenkeepers haven't the dough or the time to waste. They go at the programs with a seriousness based on a desire to have their own courses handled so well that other greenkeepers will point them out as paragons.

At the exhibits they paw into every chance for making the budget money go farther and making their courses better. With today's greenkeeping slogan being more good machinery and fewer wasteful men, the attention of the greenkeeper is sharply focused on the exhibits.

Set Year's Trends

Sitting around in informal sessions in the evening the boys compare notes on machinery and methods and this undoubtedly has a lot to do in directing the year's trends. The old days, when a greenkeeper tried to keep his way of operating a secret, have passed just as they have in other

businesses where smart men are on the job.

Taking the greenkeepers by and large, it would be hard to find a group of men with a broader policy of helping the lesser lights in the profession. The only aspect of smallness about their conventions is an annual political bickering, which fortunately is of brief duration. The boys have some way to go, judging from some previous meetings, before they learn to look at their association affairs in an impersonal, businesslike fashion. John Morley, president of the organization since its start, has tried nobly in his efforts to eliminate this handicap to the association's progress. As comical and purposeless as some of these torrid wrangles seem to an outsider, they constitute the annual public blow-off of the boys, and as such may have some psychological value.

Theory and Practice on Program

Headliners in the world of turf science have the spots on the program. The lineup is divided about 50-50 between the greenkeepers who are especially successful in the work their addresses describe and the scientists who are laboratory and turf-plot stars with some technical developments the greenkeepers want to consider for practical application.

The practical greenkeepers on the program this year are Al Lundstrom, Tom Winton, Joe Mayo, Ed Dearie and Joe Williamson. Winton is slated as the lead-off man, speaking on golf course architecture and construction. It is expected that Tom will be able to hand out a lot of valuable advice to greenkeepers who have new work or reconstruction to do at their clubs as he has a wealth of experience to draw from. Al Lundstrom, of the Crescent A. C., is reputed to have the best grass tennis courts in the world. Al is a veteran greenkeeper and at present is on the job at the new Crescent courses under construction.

John MacGregor, greenkeeper of the Chicago Golf club, will discuss irrigation

from the standpoint of one of the operators of a pioneer fairway watering system in the middle west. Mac has made an extensive and practical study of the fairway watering problem as it hits the average well-maintained course in the central and eastern states, and knows his stuff to the degree that he won't go to bat stating his own, particular system is the world's last word. This always is a program novelty.

Joe Williamson of Scoto is slated for an address on "Practical Greenskeeping," which has the keynote of aligning effectively the lessons of actual work on the course and the discoveries and suggestions of the laboratory turf scientists. Ed Dearie, another prominent greenkeeper, is ticketed for summarizing his observations on practical drainage of golf courses. With the budget calling for exact figuring by the greenkeepers the remarks of Edward W. Doty, treasurer of the Cleveland District Golf Association, are bound to prove illuminating to the greenkeepers. Doty has been a close student of golf club bookkeeping for some years and the pitfalls of maintenance bookkeeping that trap the unwary greenkeeper are old stuff to him.

A very interesting and practical phase of the program will be the competition in green construction between teams representing the eastern seaboard, the Pennsylvania sector, the mid-west and Canada. Each team will be given the details of a par four hole requiring a green.

On the technical side of the program the association has picked such stars as Prof. Lawrence Dickinson of Massachusetts Agricultural college, Prof. J. W. White of Penn State college, R. H. J. DeLoach, research expert of Armour Fertilizer works, Dr. Howard Sprague of New Jersey Agricultural college, B. R. Leach, Martin A. Davey, of Davey Tree Expert Co., and T. E. Odland of the Kingston (N. J.) Agricultural Experiment station.

Each Worker A Greenkeeper Is Basic Policy

By A. E. ARNOLD

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share of construction and maintenance labor problems.

The first few years of its development and activities, the maintenance labor was to a large extent shifted about from maintenance to construction work and vice

versa. We did not allot any particular area or job to any one man, as our equipment was limited and the work was new. Our greens were watered by a night crew and were whipped and mowed the first thing each morning, the cups being re-set and the grounds in general dolled up by the maintenance crew—this work usually completed at noon, leaving the grounds in the afternoon as free from interference by working men as possible. The crew would be detailed to other work, preparing top-dressing materials, etc., but largely to construction work. Greens were topdressed regularly, weeded and fertilized by a part of this crew but always on a detailed plan, which at that time, seemed to be a conservative way.

As time went on and the construction work nearing an end, the demand began to grow for a higher state of perfection on our golf grounds in general. Together with this desire, the fungus diseases became prevalent, the desirability for a better strain of grass for the greens, the need for a greater and more efficient water supply, and a demand for more efficient service in general, together with the adoption of a budget system, all of which have necessitated a keen study of both labor management and turf culture.

The whole thing has boiled down to a well-established fact in my mind—that the nearer a greenkeeper one can make each man of our golf ground crew and the more interested he be kept in his work, the better one is able to maintain that high state of perfection on the grounds at the least possible cost.

With this belief in mind I am following that plan whereby each man of our maintenance crew is allotted a certain area of ground containing a certain number of greens, tees, traps, trees, etc., of which he has complete care, except, of course, the fairway mowing and the general watering which is done by a night-watering crew. He is equipped with all the tools that he needs, such as mowers, rake, shovel and shears. This system seems to promote a better condition, because it tends to create a spirit of competition between the men to produce the best greens and general appearance of his section. The size of the area and the number of greens and tees allotted to each man depends on the size of the budget which in turn is regulated by the income of the club. Of course, the fatter the budget, the more and better service can be given. But with a reason-