

SIMPLE UPKEEP on MacGregor Course Gives Championship Condition

THAT POLICY of taking their own medicine which is a habit of the employees of the Crawford, MacGregor and Canby Co. in the construction and operation of their own golf course is working out better each year.

This year the 1932 Dayton city championship was played over the MacGregor course and returned Robert Horace Kepler to his fourth consecutive victory in the event.

The MacGregor 9-hole course is one of the model semi-public courses of the country. Its design is for the most part natural, with artificial hazards at the greens, but every shot you play on the course has to be a golf shot.

Bill Sime is the fellow responsible for the maintenance of the course. The maintenance methods employed are simple and economical. While the condition of the

course may not reveal the refinements of some of the ultra establishments, it certainly is up to the highest standard of conditioning of any of the smaller courses and calls for an annual budget so low that the figure encourages the construction and operation of courses.

About his maintenance policies Sime says:

"Before saying anything about maintenance I wish to mention the fact that the construction of the green itself is one of the most important factors in securing a good putting surface. The top 4-in. to 8-in. must be of good soil, and the drainage, both sub and surface, must be properly attended to. Unless this is done during construction it is utterly impossible to maintain a perfect putting surface throughout the playing season.

"With our construction problems properly worked out, our methods of greenkeeping are comparatively simple.

"The greens are whipped with a bamboo pole to bring up the nap and are mowed every day. We have no schedule time for topdressing and fertilizing, but our greens are under constant observation and at the first sign of weakness they are either topdressed with compost or fer-

No. 3 green, MacGregor golf course, Dayton, Ohio, during 1932 Dayton city championship. Robert Kepler, champion for the fourth consecutive year, attributed much of his spectacular playing to the superb condition of the greens and fairways. Kepler unleashed a record-making 63 over this difficult course in the morning round, wielding his putter like a magician. He needed just 29 putts for the round, playing the last nine with but 12 putts.



tilized with ammonium sulphate. In using ammonium sulphate we believe in frequent, light applications, i. e., from 10 to 15 lbs. per green.

"The compost heap is under cover and is always dry enough to go through the compost spreader. Sprinkling is done during the night.

"For fighting brown patch we depend upon the pole whipping which is done early in the morning to break up the mycelia before it can kill the grass, thus preventing the formation of probably millions of new fungus spores. We have had little brown patch trouble. Our greens hold a better color and seem to be in a more healthy condition since we discontinued the heavy use of chemicals.

Birds Help

"Web worms and other grubs have not been very troublesome. There are lots of birds on the course, and we rarely have to use arsenate of lead to keep insect pests under control.

"Our greens are planted with Washington bent, with the exception of No. 8, which is Cocoos bent. This green was the first Cocoos bent green in this district. It was an experiment and has proven very satisfactory.

"With the exception of sulphate of ammonia, used as a fertilizer, we use no other chemicals except when absolutely necessary. We do not believe in 'doping' our greens.

"Without trying to boast, I believe that it is true that we have some of the finest greens I have ever seen. Their color is always a rich dark green (and if you have ever paid any attention to it, this is something which is far from being universal). Their texture is full and heavy, and they putt as true as a billiard table. And yet we probably spend less to keep them perfect than is the case in 90 per cent of the nine greens of any other course.

"The real secret behind our success, I believe, lies in the fact that we consider our greens somewhat as a human being. We are fully convinced that piling on one chemical and stimulant after another is bound to have a stifling effect upon the green. It is a fairly delicate surface and must be treated accordingly. It can only stand so much artificial doping. We believe that nature's subtle methods should be utilized to the fullest extent. And I believe the evidence speaks fully for the wisdom of our judgment."

THE FIRING LINE

ANYONE who ever has any argument with statements made in GOLFDOM, by any of its contributors or its editor, is welcome to fire away in rebuttal.

Here is one of the letters commenting on Arthur Langton's article on avoiding department jealousy which appeared in September GOLFDOM.

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Herb Graffis, Editor:

Mr. Langton states that cooperation between golf club departments is non-existent. This statement is an absurdity.

To state that the different department heads are working from independent standpoints is erroneous, the majority of departments in all golf clubs are working for one purpose and that is to create a place of pleasure for the members.

"It is absurd as Mr. Langton suggests, for the pro to require the services of the average golf course mechanic to repair the pro's machinery. The height of folly is reached when the man who does the mechanical work on the course is called in to repair the refrigerator or the plumbing. This is a highly specialized type of work and anyone would be ill advised to entrust such work to the average mechanic found on the majority of golf courses. A golf course mechanic does not have to be burdened down with a smattering knowledge of all these different types of work and their technique; modern golf course machinery is simple and efficient.

"Mr. Langton states the superintendent is too jealous of any other department receiving any help from any of the employees on the course. Has he employed a staff to make a complete survey of the attitude and thoughts of all the golf course superintendents throughout the United States?

"If and when such a condition of jealousy should exist a cranium analysis is necessary. The majority of issues are economic; this is essentially true when the budget system is in operation. All presidents and green-chairmen should be proud of the department head who fights to keep the expense within the department head's budget estimate.

Signed, W. H. THORNE.