

# Coast Club's Greenkeeping School Aids Workers to Master Jobs

By GEORGE H. OTTEN

Green-Committee, Alderwood C. C., Portland, Ore.

**L**IKE ALL CLUBS, Alderwood has to face drastic curtailment in operation costs. How to meet this without sacrificing playing conditions was the immediate problem. The board of directors passed this job over to the green committee, whose personnel and qualifications are as follows: J. F. Clarkson, the chairman of the committee possesses a lifelong experience of railroad and highway construction, together with a faculty of making men do their work willingly. The second member, A. H. Craig, manager of the Alderwood, is intensely interested in turf, in fact has made it a hobby and thus has a complete understanding of the greenkeeper's worries. As manager his duties at the club virtually kept a green-committee member on the course at all times. The third member is the writer; as the landscape architect who supervised the construction of the course I therefore possess first hand knowledge of the soil conditions.

To meet these new economic restrictions, to better coordinate the working force and to educate each individual worker to his task and thereby relieve the greenkeeper from a host of inspection details, a school for green-workers was decided upon.

## Lectures Timed to Tasks Ahead

We decided to institute a course of lectures in golf maintenance, these lectures to follow closely the work immediately required on the course. The subject matter for the lectures was therefore of current interest to the men and at once enlisted their enthusiastic attention. Because of this support from the men the plan was easily launched, with the result that the golf course has actually improved, and because of it the green-committee has been able to meet successfully still further budget restrictions. There is no secret whatsoever to the scheme; it is open to every sorely distressed green-committee

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Here's something plenty new under the sun. Out in Portland, Oregon, the green-committee of Alderwood C. C. actively sponsors lectures on maintenance subjects of current interest to the men of the greens crew. The plan has resulted in arousing the men to take pride in performing their tasks in the right way. And even more important, it has increased efficiency and thus is lowering Alderwood's greens budget needs.

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and entails no cost except the personal efforts of the committee members.

Classes are conducted every two weeks, beginning in early spring and ending in late fall. The subject matter varies with the work to be performed during the following two weeks. Text-books are the U. S. G. A. Green Section *Bulletins*. Articles in *GOLFDOM* or suggestions in its advertising columns furnishes the subject-matter for the open-forum discussion following the lecture.

The lesson ends with the question-box. Each man has had two weeks to find something he would like to have explained and the green-committee hopes, of course, to be able to answer satisfactorily. If it is unable to do so, the question is laid on the table until the next meeting and you can rest assured that the answer has been found long before the next meeting.

It is impossible for a greenkeeper to be everywhere at the same time. The crew is necessarily scattered over a 140 acres of territory; to watch each man at his individual task is impossible. But since each worker understands his task, is interested in seeing that his particular duties are properly performed, the reason for the success of the school is apparent. The committee knows the allotted task of the man or group of men who performed this task and any failure in the mainte-

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nance schedule is immediately checked before serious trouble arises. The worker speedily becomes an individual and encouragement for a task well performed plays the ever important part of keeping the men enthusiastic about their work.

Early in the spring top-dressing is thoroughly discussed and becomes an item of interest. This goes a long way towards removing the drudgery usually associated with this aromatic but wholly unromantic detail.

The compost heaps are matters for scientific discussion, for the nature of their composition determines the basis of the balance of the fertilizing problem. To the layman this means nothing, but since the perfection of the course a few years hence depends largely on how this compost is constructed today it can be readily understood why several lectures are devoted to this topic annually.

## Modern Equipment Discussed

The art of maintenance is making rapid strides forward and not the least of these is the improvements made in golf course maintenance machinery. Because of its importance several talks are devoted to the new and improved equipment as advertised in GOLFDOM. The course mechanic now has his day in court and he explains his needs and his desires. If the budget will permit, acquisition of new equipment is decided upon. The wisdom of the decision therefore becomes a matter of personal pride and is our insurance against neglect or careless adjustments. Where machinery is desired beyond the budget limit, ways and means are discussed as to how old equipment can be repaired or reconstructed to increase efficiency. All of this is typical subject matter for the school and explains why attendance is 100 per cent.

Reseeding, resodding, repairs of all kinds are also lecture materials. Irrigation experts have been called in and thus this work has been lifted from the depths of mystery to something understandable. It is no longer just a case of letting the sprinklers run, for the dangers of over-irrigation are fully explained. The method of finding out what sections of the green require more water is pointed out, and the quantity needed under certain drought conditions carefully explained. The results obtained and the savings ef-

fectured are more than gratifying to the committee.

Commercial and chemical fertilizers are discussed. The changes in the formula as the season advances are subjects in which the men are interested and are technical and broad enough in scope for a series of lectures. Thus it can be seen that there are no end of subjects available interesting to the green-committee as well as the men.

### Men's Ambitions Aroused

During the time when maintenance becomes a matter of routine, the theory of golf course design is taken under discussion. This subject changes the entire outlook of the worker, for it analyzes to him what golf is all about. He feels that the school is equipping him to some day become a greenkeeper.

Our motive was at first entirely selfish, for the committee desired greater efficiency and thereby a lower maintenance cost, wholly for the benefit of the club. This it has done to a remarkable degree in the face of these most trying times. But the men regard the school as a privilege and cooperate with the greatest enthusiasm.

In closing, I might point out that our efforts have also served to coordinate the committee as a whole. The club membership further realizes that it would not be wise to change the green-committee after each annual election and the committee has therefore been held intact from year to year. As long as it produces results it will be allowed to continue. This permanent arrangement saves the greenkeeper a multitude of difficulty. Differences exist within the committee from time to time, but they are ironed out by a majority vote; it would be impossible not to have diversified opinions between strong-minded and self-willed individuals. But they each stand on the firm foundation of desiring only the best for the club, and because of this each man's opinion is carefully weighed on its merits. The majority rules and the vote having been cast agreement prevails.

## WATER vs. MOWING

### Will Fairway Watering Hike Upkeep Cost of Mowing Machinery?

By E. R. SAWTELLE  
Worthington Mower Co.

**I**RRIGATION, by any of the accepted systems of watering fairways now being so widely introduced, will enable a club to maintain a far more uniform and desirable growth of turf than has ever been possible when depending solely upon natural rainfall. Many of these irrigation systems have proven eminently satisfactory. They arrest the very serious effects of summer droughts upon fairways and bring about an improved condition that cannot fail to be of immense benefit to the general interests of golf.

A few questions have naturally arisen regarding the effect of artificial watering upon the maintenance account, particularly with respect to mowing machinery. It has been asked, for instance, if it will not take more time and wear out tractors and mowers faster if a heavy growth of grass is to be cut during the whole season than if this grass were thinned and dried out as it always has been by our annual summer drought.

The answer to this is that while the machines may have to cut more grass than before, conditions surrounding mowing operations are more favorable.

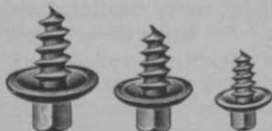
The number of hours mowing machinery is in use is not the only factor that enters into the subject of its durability. There are many others, among them the kind of soil over which it travels and the state of the ground surface at the time the cutting is being done. If the soil is more or less sandy or its surface particularly dry, there will always be grit or dust thrown up by the passing of the machine. This gets into the knives and threatens to a certain

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