

DON'T ARGUE WITH NATURE

At Mass. State College Conference

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PRODUCING and maintaining turf that will provide the desired playing conditions for today's golfers may seem to require growing turf under very abnormal conditions, but we need not be alarmed when we consider what nature has to offer. Nature provides a great many species and varieties of grass, each having a great range of different qualifications as turf producing plants.

The wrong selection of these plants means endless trouble as nature never changes her habits and resents interference. She will, however, gladly cooperate if given the opportunity.

This being true, why argue? Nature controls the deciding vote which means success or failure.

The greenkeeper has to produce turf, having the following qualifications:

1. Longevity.
2. Fine texture.
3. It must stand close clipping.
4. It must be mechanically strong.
5. It must provide a closely knitted even surface.
6. It must be disease-resistant.

In the accompanying comparison of our three species of basic grasses for golf courses, I attempt to explain why, how

COMPARISON OF BASIC GRASSES

Plant Characteristics and Cultural Conditions	Blue Grasses	Bent Grasses	Fescues
Soil preference	Rich garden loam	Medium to light well drained	Light to medium
Food requirements	Heavy	Moderate	Light
Moisture requirements	Heavy	Moderate	Light
Root system	Coarse	Fine	Very coarse
Depth of root.....	Very deep	Shallow	Deep
Range of pH tolerance.....	7.5 to 6.0	6.5 to 5.5	7.5 to 5.0
Compact soil tolerance.....	Tolerant	Not tolerant	Decidedly not
Loose soil tolerance.....	Tolerant	Tolerant	Very tolerant
Disease resistance	Medium	Very susceptible	Resistant
Aggressiveness	Medium	Very aggressive	Very aggressive
Recovery from disease.....	Slow	Very fast	Very slow
Response to fertilizer stimulant	Medium	Very fast	Slow
Response to fertilizer on habit of growth	Causes tillering	Will grow taller	Causes tillering
Response to tonic.....	More tillering	Stooling or tillering	Causes branching
Effect of tonic on maturity....	Speeds up much	No effect	No effect
Matures	Early in June	Late July	Very late August
Growth after maturity.....	Late	Late	Very late
Time of first growth in spring	Very early	Very late	Late
Speed of seed germination....	Medium	Fast	Slow
Turf becomes established.....	2 yrs.	1 yr.	2 to 3 yrs.
Type of turf produced.....	Reproduces by tillering and rhizomes, giving an even turf	Reproduces by tillering and stolons, giving a dense even turf	Reproduces by tillering and stolons, giving a tufty growth
Effect of clipping.....	Causes tillering and production of denser turf.	Causes tillering and production of dense, even, fine textured turf	Rather bunchy, may cause a bald crown

and where the varieties of these grasses can be successfully grown.

The majority of our grasses tiller high and this should be one of our first considerations when selecting plants for golf course purposes. Tillering is the process by which grass plants produce additional shoots. The point of tillering is where the new buds appear in the shoot and their height above the ground varies greatly in the different species of basic grasses. Obviously this governs the height of cut and we are inviting trouble the moment a plant is clipped below the point of tillering.

Some of our grasses reproduce by stolons, surface creeping stems which produce roots, stems and leaves at the nodes or joints. The distance between nodes has a direct bearing on the density of the turf and governs to some extent the height of cutting.

Some of our common lawn grasses reproduce by rhizomes. These are underground stems which root at the nodes, very similar to stolons. This type of reproduction develops stools and some of our slowest spreading grasses are those which reproduce only by stolling. To vie with nature repeatedly means poor or completely destroyed turf. Nature, however, tries to be patient and often is so patient we do not recognize our own mistakes.

Cultural practices will slightly change the habits of some plants but they will never grow satisfactorily if placed under improper environmental conditions.

With these points in mind it is very easy to understand that turf producers must consult nature and avoid arguing because nature has already made her decisions.

If It Ain't Raining It's Too Dry; Weather Is Woe

LARGE areas in the central states and New York sector have been seriously deficient in rainfall this year. In the Chicago area precipitation since January 1 was 9.11 inches up to June 29 against the normal 16.13 inches. Turf is suffering and trees, shrubs and perennials injured last winter are requiring large amounts of water for preservation. Considerable damage by chinch bugs is reported in Illinois areas.

In the New York metropolitan district the most serious drought in years prevailed to almost the middle of June. Lawns, flowers and garden crops have been imperiled in this territory, and many

truck farmers face bankruptcy. Hay, berry, peach and apple crops in sections of New Jersey and New York are expected to be poor because of the drought.

Unwatered golf courses have been badly parched.

Wherein the Outside Gang Sings the Blues

HERE'S something that came into us from an anonymous source. The fellow writes in travail and isn't submitting to any handicap of rhythm so we throw it in as it landed. The manuscript is signed "The Outside Gang."

GOLF CLUB PERSONEL

The outside gets the labor and the inside gets the dough

When you go into the clubhouse there is help to take away your frown

But when you go on the outside hardly a man is found

And still yet a perfect green and fairway is what they want to see around

In years gone by the outside had 20 men or more

But when you go on the outside now your lucky to find 4

The members of the golf club play golf without a hitch

But the gang in the clubhouse always get the tip

When the grass don't grow and things are bad the fairway is not neat

Perhaps the tractor is old and worn, the mowers are antique

"Oh no that's not the trouble, it must be our greenkeep"

The president buys a caddie for others and himself

But never for the greenkeeper who does the job himself

Now just a little tip for the chairman and the rest

Get some help for the man outside who keeps you out of the red.

As you will agree, the effort is earnestly written, but as a job of verse it seems to depend more on the soul's plea than on professional polish which could have gone native smoothly, at least in making out a rhyme for "hitch."

Tillinghast Up Again—A. W. Tillinghast, consulting architect for the PGA, recently spent two weeks in the Mayo clinic at Rochester, Minn. Tilly's legs went bad after carrying him empty million miles over golf courses. He's now O.K. again.