

Detroit and New England Report on Maintenance Problems of the Year

REPORTS on conditions in the Detroit District and in New England by two outstanding course superintendents reveal 1938 kept pace pretty well with play of last year, and despite some unusually wet weather, greensmen brought their courses through in fairly good shape. Excess water caused more headaches in the New England district than around Detroit, where greens and fairways caused relatively little trouble. Herb Shave, Oakland Hills CC superintendent, says of the Detroit section:

"During this past summer we must have cut down on course maintenance cost so far as the fairways in the Detroit district are concerned, as we had a very fine season, with enough rain to keep fairways in good shape most of the time. We only had to water 21 days this year. Another thing, weather conditions were very good as regards brown-patch trouble. Very little of that, owing probably to the steady use of preventives. Nobody took the chance that they'd be immune.

Weeds Still a Problem

"Our great trouble in this district is weeds in fairways, clover, chickweed, dandelions, etc. However, I think by steady operation of seeding and fertilizing that this can be overcome. I know a club in this district that 5 years ago was smothered in dandelions, but by seeding and use of fertilizer every year, is now in wonderful shape and has less weeds than any other course around here.

"There has been quite a lot of clover in greens this year, but at the present time the grass seems to be getting the best of it. There was more play and business at clubs, especially public courses.

"All in all, I'd say course maintenance was kept normal, notwithstanding continuance of some sharp operating economies, because of the efficiency of course superintendents who again had to exercise great ingenuity. We built a beautiful swimming pool between the 18th green and locker-room at Oakland Hills this year. It has had a definite effect in enlarging the club's family appeal."

Guy C. West, Rhode Island CC greenkeeper, West Barrington, R. I., in writ-

ing to GOLFDOM on conditions in New England this year, mailed the letter just before the flood and hurricane on September 22, and his report covers conditions to just prior to the storm. He says:

"Golf club memberships and the amount of play probably averaged about the same as last year. From the greenkeepers' standpoint, this year has been very difficult; indeed the most difficult by far that many greenkeepers have ever experienced. Courses dried up faster than normal in the spring, but were in good condition through most of the spring and into late June, when some 7 in. of rain in two days started the troubles.

Too Much Rain Is Common Woe

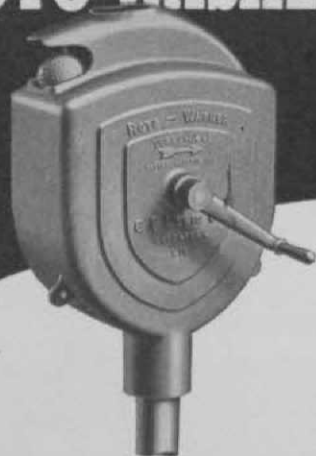
"In the middle of July came some 5 to 7 ins. more rain, in a week's time, and left practically all courses waterlogged. Practically every course suffered to some degree, and many had permanent damage, even to the extent where greens that had been under water for days, had to be rebuilt.

"Following this week of rain, hot humid weather set in, and scald was a prevalent trouble. During this condition many greens were over-wet except for the top surface and this dried out too fast, actually killing the grass. There was much root rot during this period. Large brown-patch was present almost daily during the rainy period, and the usual sprayings only controlled until the next shower. Greens that had poor drainage, surface or sub-surface; greens that were surrounded with trees so that there was little air circulation, and greens that were acid to excess suffered the most. Strains that stood up the best seemed to be colonial bent, Washington and Metropolitan strains, and the darker colored velvets.

"Most greenkeepers have used some or all of the following treatments in bringing back their damaged greens: spiking or tine forking, light lime applications, scarifying, sodding or reseeding, topdressing and fertilizing. These treatments have

One of the most attractive golf club "house organs" is the new "Hooks and Slices" published for its members by the Mount Hawley Country Club, Peoria, Ill. It's 12 pages, letter-head size, and plentifully illustrated with pictures of members and course scenes taken by a member. Art Andrews, Mount Hawley pro, turns columnist in the magazine, and does a nifty job.

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1939 Budgets should
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brought back most of the greens so that most of them do not show the damage they suffered this past summer.

"Considerable pink-patch was noted this spring on fairways as well as greens. Dollar-spot gave the usual trouble but was controlled by regular spraying treatments. Large brown-patch was controlled except for the wet weather period. Dusting with the mercurials was used by some greenkeepers in combatting the trouble during this wet period.

"Sod webworms were noticed, but were not so troublesome as last year. The manure beetle, which caused so much damage to some near-Boston clubs last year, was seen again this year, but did less damage than last year. White grubs have been very troublesome this year to some clubs.

"The other difficulties that usually beset the greenkeeper have not been any more troublesome than normal. The extra heavy rainfall kept the fairways and rough growing better than normal, and many greenkeepers had trouble getting wet portions cut. Crab grass and clover have been plentiful, especially where the weather conditions hurt the sod, and gave these weeds more of a chance than they need.

"To sum up the year, we have had plenty of trouble, caused mostly by too much rain, but we are on the way back, and feel that the season has taught its lessons, and we hope to profit from them.

Another communication received from West since the big storm revealed an entirely different picture of the section. He says:

"Our course is a shambles of washed-up debris, greens in terrible shape from the beating of salt-laden, debris-bearing flood waters from the tidal wave. Only seven of our greens were not covered with salt water. Our course equipment was scattered all over the course, and shelters were blown to bits. Months will be needed to repair the damage wrought by this storm."

L. D. SHREVE, furniture manufacturer of Union City, Pa., planted 85,000 trees on his private 9-hole course in addition to those in the 75 forested acres of the 150 tract of hill and ravine land in which the course was built.

Par is 36 on the course. Shreve lets his friends play without charge. He has lots of friends for two reasons, one of which is Shreve himself.