



The great turn-out for this year's convention of the GSA

Greenkeepers Meet — Refute

HOLDING the Greenkeeping Superintendents' Assn. annual convention west of the Mississippi for the first time proved to be a performance that really scored.

More than 500 attended the equipment and supply demonstration and educational conference that was held in the Municipal Auditorium, Kansas City, Mo., Feb. 7-10. There was a light representation from the Eastern seaboard states, as was expected, but many new faces from the Pacific Coast, the southwest and central west appeared, to give the organization and greenkeeping in general an extension of its educational and public relations program.

Streamlined Equipment Shown

Again the equipment display, although not as large as in some previous years, registered a spurt in buying. New streamlined maintenance equipment showed strikingly by sheer looks—to say nothing of construction improvements—that equipment obsolescence is a handicap in the constant struggle for course maintenance efficiency on tight budgets.

There was talk around the convention of testing, during the next two years, a plan whereby the association would take over the operation of a series of outdoor sectional demonstrations to replace the indoor show, but to retain association

financial aid from the manufacturers' participation.

Frank Ermer, course superintendent of Lakeshore, Dover Bay, Ridgewood and Hawthorne Valley courses in the Cleveland (O.) district, was elected president, succeeding Joe Ryan of Philadelphia, who turned in an administration of substantial progress.

This year the greenkeepers publicized their convention as the feature of a national campaign to step out of their roles as "golf's forgotten men." The initial campaign was conducted by Charles A. Burns, veteran newspaperman who now is manager of the J. Edward Good Park municipal course at Akron, O. The campaign hit strong and wide, securing national recognition of the greenkeepers' activities in self-education for the advancement of golf course maintenance standards.

Professors from seven state agricultural colleges were on the educational program, together with Dr. John Monteith, Jr., technical chief of the USGA Green Section, Dr. O. J. Noer, Herb Graffis, Editor of *GOLFDOM*, and five practical greenkeeping authorities who led a round-table discussion.

New York was selected as venue of the 1940 convention.



is indicated by this photograph of the annual banquet.

"Forgotten Man" Tag By HERB GRAFFIS

The "Heart of America" Greenkeepers' Assn., which engineered the selection of Kansas City for the convention, were great hosts. They put on their own show at the annual banquet, one of the liveliest entertainment features ever presented at a greenkeepers' convention. Chester Mendenhall, secretary of the Heart of America organization, gave the lads his teammates' welcome and introduced Jack Shannon as chairman of the education sessions.

First of the speakers was H. H. Haymaker, prof. of botany and plant pathology at Kansas State College. He illustrated his lecture on the way a plant lives by slides. He explained the fundamental construction and functioning of plants, and enlightened the superintendents on the processes controlling plant variety development. He pointed out that toward the edge of the stem there are non-living cells filled with chemicals that make them waterproof and enable the plant to retain moisture.

Prof. Haymaker cautioned that over-watering retards the development of root hairs, and is a grave handicap to the plant's food manufacturing process. He reminded that the amount of food stored in the root system accounts for the plant's capacity to survive winter.

Dr. Monteith, speaking on "New Developments in Golf Course Maintenance,"

related that in 20 years greens surface generally in this country had changed from mixtures to uniform strains. This change, made with speed that's rare in agricultural activities, was accompanied by many new problems of disease and pest control and maintenance practices. Pressure of the time element has been hard in greenkeeping research. Grass breeding work is proceeding with the idea of developing disease resistance as a prime factor.

Weeds Are Live Topic

Weed control has been another subject of intense research lately. The background of the entire Green Section research plan and the increasingly close cooperation it is getting from greenkeepers is predicated on the elimination of preventable wastes and raising the standard of playing conditions, thus making it possible to get better courses for less money, Monteith pointed out. He went into the reason for emphasizing the scientific side of the greenkeepers' education work, explaining that the greenkeepers wanted to know why some methods succeeded and others were on a hit-and-miss basis.

Prof. Jack White, veteran of the Pennsylvania State College faculty in golf course cooperative work, spoke on the "Agricultural College Experiment Station

1939 Officers Greenkeeping Superintendents Assn.

President, Frank W. Ermer, Ridgewood GC, Cleveland; V. Pres., Jack A. Gormley, Wolferts Roost CC, Albany, N. Y.; Secy.-Treas., A. L. Brandon, St. Charles (Ill.) CC.

Board of Directors: (two years to serve) Don Boyd, Portage CC, Akron, Ohio; Ed Cale, Canoe Brook CC, Summit, N. J.; Ray Rolfs, North Hills CC, Milwaukee. (1 year to serve) John Gray, Essex G&CC, Sandwich, Ont.; Arthur Snyder, Alcoma CC, Wilksburg, Pa.; Harold Stodola, Keller Park GCse, St. Paul.

and the Golf Course Superintendent," reviewing the history of the relations between the two factors and showing how the two have made a blending of theory and practice that has been of inestimable value to clubs. Prof. White told about the work done by Prof. Musser in the breeding and selection of finer turf grasses, the State College soil fertility experiments and other enterprises conducted in close association with a committee of Pennsylvania greenkeepers. He emphasized that the state stations were public utilities and that in each state the experiment station was eager to work hand-in-hand with the state's greenkeepers in contributing to the golfing assets of the commonwealth.

Prof. F. D. Keim, chairman of the University of Nebraska dept. of Agronomy, gave an illustrated lecture on "Grass Selection and Improvements," detailing how the Nebraska authorities have worked to select and propagate most desirable native grasses for the widely varying conditions in the state. His address contained numerous pointers on the principles and practices involved in the promotion of most suitable native grasses.

Beat Members to Punch

In talking on "How the Superintendent May Improve Relations with His Members," Herb Graffis of GOLFDOM said that the basic job is to let members know discreetly that trouble is inevitable in golf course turf culture, otherwise there would be no need for expert greenkeeping. Therefore, Graffis said, the greenkeeper should beat the punch with explanations of course activities, such explanations to be vividly presented on golf club bulletin boards, house organs and in frequent written reports to officials covering out-of-the-ordinary work. He reminded the

superintendents that they were up against two tough problems; one being the frequent change of officials and the necessity of re-educating the new draft, and the other being that of contending with the city man's patronizing and lofty attitude toward the good provider who has to harness nature to keep the city man's belly full and his feet caressed by contact with rich, green, uniform sod. The solution of this educational problem is the same method the city man employs when he wants to get closer to the buyers of his services—publicity.

Graffis cited the achievement of American greenkeepers, in developing turf of the old English standard in a twentieth of the English pace and against adverse weather conditions, as constituting a popular exhibition of the talents of American greenkeepers. From the publicist's angle he expressed astonishment that the greenkeepers had done so well, so quickly, in attaining more extensive recognition and attributed this to the professional attitude the greenkeepers take toward their work.

Prof. George Scarseth of Purdue, in his address on "Plant Tissue Nutrient Deficiencies," presented an outline of the work being done in determining soil requirements by analysis of the plant. Prof. Scarseth's presentation of this exceedingly interesting development will be printed in an early issue of GOLFDOM.

No Peace Against Pests

"Tree Insects and Their Control" was the subject of the talk made by Missouri University's Professor of Entomology, Dr. Leonard Haseman. A bug recently damaging juniper cedars in Missouri is being attacked by soil treatments. Sticky band and arsenate of lead sprays were recommended for handling cankerworms. He illustrated his remarks on borers with slides. Four-fifths of all animal life on the globe are insects, said the Missouri man, and there can be no let-up in the course superintendents' war against pests that threaten his course. Dr. Haseman answered a number of questions at the conclusion of his address.

Dr. O. J. Noer's talk on "Turf Maintenance in 1938" was illustrated by slides. Noer divided the country into three belts; a southern one, in which the main turf culture problems are those of summer; the next belt north, in which both summer and winter origins of trouble must be contended with; and a northern belt, in which troubles are due to winter weather.

In a number of districts last summer, rain and humidity injured fairways far worse than greens. In comparing 1938 with 1928, Noer pointed out that the greens injury in 1938 was less than in 1928 despite similar weather conditions, and attributed this to the advance made in the application of turf research to greens rather than a general application all over the courses.

He explained various situations depicted by his slides and expressed the confident opinion that greenkeepers had made a notable advance in offsetting damaging and unpredictable weather conditions to which courses are subjected.

Prof. George C. Decker, Research Associate of Entomology, Iowa State college, read a paper on "Turf Insect Pests," in which he gave case histories of major pests and methods of their control. This paper will appear in an early issue of **GOLFDOM**.

The address of Prof. C. O. Rost of the University of Minnesota's Soil Staff on "The Modern Conception of Soil and Its Relation to Plant Growth," an interesting survey of fundamentals, also will appear in **GOLFDOM** in the near future.

Discuss Bent in South

Dr. Monteith was chairman of the round table discussion on the bent question in the South and West. This was introduced by showing slides of bent greens in the South. Claude Whalen related that seaside bent planted from seed in Fort Worth, Tex., Oct. 1935, after testing several varieties of bent, has withstood local conditions well. Soil is 50% dairy loam and 50% very fine sand. Whalen believes this soil has largely enabled the seaside to withstand air temperatures as high as 116 degrees F. Very little brown patch has been experienced after the first year. Preventive treatment is employed every 5 days if the weather is bad. Greens are poled early in the morning. Topdressing is done in March and October with a 50-50 sand and manure mixture. During the winter, if the bent is slow, about 10 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. of 4-4-2 fertilizer is applied. In the summer cottonseed meal is applied weekly; 3 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft.

Perley Hill of Salt Lake City related successful experience in employing a native grass. Winter moisture and freezing give him serious threats of snowmold, for which he treats each October with corrosive sublimate. Prior to the use of this



Frank W. Ermer, Supt. at Ridgewood GC, Cleveland, and new president of the GSA.

treatment his course suffered badly from snowmold. Hill stated that his watering was on the light side although temperatures run between 90 and 100 from July 4 through August.

Jim Haines of Denver said that unless he waters during the winter dry spells, his turf is spotty and dies out before spring. The major effort with bent during the past three years in Denver has been to obtain a variety that will keep color during the winter. Present bent goes off color early and colors up late in the spring. Seldom do they have sub-zero days and not much humidity to give them brown-patch worries.

Bug-Proof Greens Early

W. E. Langton, one of the pioneers in successful introduction of bent greens in Southern California, strongly advocated bug-proofing greens when they're put in. He has found about 10 lbs. of arsenate of lead per 1,000 sq. ft. of greens will virtually eliminate the sod webworm attacks that have many Southern California greenkeepers in trouble. Wide variation in soil and climatic conditions, especially fog, make it difficult to recommend standard maintenance methods for bent in this section of the country.

Langton cautioned against over-watering. At his own course he uses very little fertilizer in the summer; about once a month light applications of 4-4-2. Night watering, he has observed, produces more brown-patch than daylight watering.

