

# Greenkeepers KNOW THEIR STUFF

By EDWARD B. DEARIE, Jr.

★ There are a number of things that have impressed me at the various greenkeepers' association meetings. In my mind there is no question of the value of this work to the clubs we work for.

The one outstanding development of the courses and meetings has been the greenkeeper himself. The greenkeeper of today knows more about turf problems, course management and upkeep of the entire property than anyone else employed today in club work. The time has passed when the green chairman or the Board of Directors should give inexpert orders as to what should be done for the proper maintenance of turf. After twenty years of organized scientific investigation of the problems of course care and upkeep the greenkeeper is today a man qualified for his position and competent to make the correct decisions in maintenance matters, due to his constant effort and study of the problems at hand.

There will be many changes in the near future of greenkeeping. The club that accepts the greenkeeper's advice will profit from his years of experience in turf development and maintenance and his knowledge of sound trends.

There have been a number of golf clubs that have considered the greenkeeper just a foreman to supervise the workman. Well, any club member who attends any of the short courses will decide there and then that greenkeeping is a science and not just a job.

Greenkeepers know very well that each golf course is an individual problem and one that calls for considerable study and understanding of the local conditions before the greenkeeper is able to pass judgment on what action to take in an emergency. The greenkeeper is the only man able to make such analysis, for he is the only one who clearly understands his club's course problem. Any attempt to solve turf problems otherwise is purely guess work. There are many factors involved in the operation of a golf course that must be considered. No generalities will explain except in a vague and unhelpful way the loss of any green or fairway in a season unfavorable to turf growth.

Also there are many factors that as yet are not apparent or fully understood but which undoubtedly play an important part in all turf losses, and certainly

the layman is not familiar with such factors. There again I say the greenkeeper today has become a highly skilled and trained man, an individual who is compelled to solve his own problem and decide what to do. The future greenkeeper will be required to make changes in the present greenkeeping methods to meet new conditions and change quickly to new ideas developed by a number of the short course schools and universities throughout the country. The representative greenkeeper today is constantly at work on a sound plan for improvement to his course and himself.

Some golf club members may ask what benefit has been derived from the educational programs and greenkeeping associations to advance scientific improvement in greenkeeping. The courses still have diseases and pests, despite expert vigilance. In their demands for turf perfection a great number of club members fail to recognize the difference between progress and perfection. Progress in greenkeeping methods in the past ten years has been clearly demonstrated by the large number of cases where courses are maintained with little or no loss of turf and no help in very trying weather conditions. The day of perfection in greenkeeping has not dawned yet. It is something for golf players to hope for, and for greenkeepers to look forward to, although the greenkeeper knows that he never can expect to control nature.

The future holds great promise for the alert greenkeeper. The use of the educational short course work and greenkeeper association meetings will help develop some of the finest turf cultures in the country. Greenkeepers are coming into their own. I would like to see the country clubs of America interest themselves more in the greenkeeper and his problems. After all, it's the golf club that benefits from his achievements and good work.

Greenkeeping success has been won the hard way but the future holds bright promise of somewhat easier work, more certain results and deserved recognition for the greenkeeper who will associate himself with the educational facilities available to him. Today greenkeepers must begin to plan now with all their foresight and energy for a professional and business career of greater reward in golf's great future.