

# A Plan for Rejuvenating Run Down Greens

**M**ANY golf courses are suffering the pangs of defeatism because the greens have deteriorated to a point where they appear to be beyond redemption. Bare spots prevail, the bent grass is thin and feeble and weeds are prevalent. Now what to do?

Here is the way a badly run down set of greens were brought back to good condition in a single season. The greens on the Ames G&CC (nine-hole course) had a serious setback in late July of 1943 because of a week of torrential rains which were followed by warm weather, and a serious epidemic of brown patch which could not be controlled because of inexperienced help.

To add insult to injury, excessive rains until about the first of June in 1944, leached out the fertilizers which had been applied in April. The greens were water-soaked for four to six weeks and by June 1st were a thoroughly sick looking set of greens. Club members were "grousing."

I was chairman of the Green committee, and my face was red. It is difficult for the average club member and golfer to understand why greens should ever get that way. Ralph Phillips, our greenkeeper with 12 years of experience behind him, wasn't saying much. I had a few weeks' vacation in June so we got our heads together. Says Ralph, "We can bring those greens back if the ground will only get dry enough to let us go to work." On No. 3 green, lying at the foot of a hill, the bent grass appeared to be nearly all gone. Water seeped out of the surface of that green for a full month. I felt that here was one green where restolonizing was the only remedy. Phillips says, "Let's give that green frequent topdressings. I believe that that will bring No. 3 back, at any rate we will see."

The rehabilitation program in brief was as follows:

1. Liberal topdressings were applied to each of the nine greens beginning about June 10 and repeated at intervals of each three to four weeks throughout the summer.

2. Milorganite—10 to 20 pounds per 1,000 square feet each three to four weeks beginning June 1.

3. Ammonium sulfate applied with a proportioner at the rate of one to two pounds per 1,000 square feet at intervals of three to four weeks.

4. Thiosan until our supply ran out, followed by Special Semesan, was applied as frequently as the disease situation called for.

The response to this treatment was

marked within a week. By July 4, the greens were in fair to good condition and by August 1st were in good to excellent condition. The bare spots were well filled out and the surface of the greens was smooth and presented a nice putting surface. Needless to say the club members were well pleased with the results and were full of praise and enthusiasm. No. 3 green, which looked so hopeless, began to fill out and by the end of the season was as good as any green on the course.

The topdressing used was perhaps unique. We had on hand about 18 truck loads of sewage sludge which was aged two years. The sludge was in good physical condition due to its ageing. A sandy loam soil near by the sludge pile was mixed with the sludge, approximately 50-50. We wanted black peat for the mixture but none was available until the latter part of the season.

Topdressing materials are often hard to get. However, in times like these, where the traditional compost piles may have disappeared, it is believed that a good fertile sandy loam alone is better than no topdressing at all. There is considerable evidence that this is true, because experienced greenkeepers have in many instances achieved good results with such soil. If the loam is on the fine, or clay, side it is advisable to mix in one-third coarse sand. A mixture of equal parts of loam, sand and black peat is a topdressing used with great success in Iowa.

From the standpoint of experimental research, the Ames G&CC greens presented an excellent opportunity to study the possibility of rejuvenating a badly deteriorated set of greens. My connection with the Iowa Greenkeepers Ass'n and as director of the Fine Turf research project of the Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station at Ames, made it desirable that we determine whether poor greens could be brought back to normal, how to do it and what materials were needed. Because of the experimental design, we were able to secure needed amounts of ammonium sulfate in connection with this work.

By H. L. LANTZ  
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Our contacts with the Iowa Greenkeepers Ass'n have led to numerous inquiries from golf clubs as to what can be done to rehabilitate run-down greens. The experience gained last year, as recited above, is offered for what it may be worth. We recognize, of course, in some cases greens will need restolonizing. We also had some experience in this last year. On the whole though, if a green has a scattering of live bent grass, it can be brought back into good condition more easily by a program similar to the one described above than by restolonizing, and much more cheaply.

## Preparing to Meet Our Postwar Competition

By EDDIE DUINO

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★ UNDOUBTEDLY GOLF, like many other sports, is in for a tremendous boom and like any other group of professional men pros should be prepared to meet the situation.

There isn't any doubt that with the expansion of golf, it will attract the vigorous and smart efforts of merchandisers who will be competing for the professional business, and of course our problems will be to develop weapons to combat any type of competition that will arise.

As far as competition, that will never be eliminated, and shouldn't, because after all, competition is the American and democratic way of living. Our weapons are going to be improvements in pro personnel, pro business, pro education, pro-club relations, pro-manufacturers' relations, instructions and advertising.

The PGA has already started its educational and teaching program and though the surface hasn't even been scratched I know that this program will be definitely enlarged upon and this unquestionably will improve the standards of our profession.

I believe that our Association should seek the aid and service of a high-class professional man to carry out the work of its educational program. In this work, of course, should be included pro business, pro-club relations, and civic and community relations. This man should be employed somewhat in the same capacities as our Tournament Bureau chairman.

He should visit all sections and conduct clinics. We have held a few of these clinics in our section with very favorable results. This man could organize and systemize this educational work and ex-

press it through our monthly national magazine.

This is the first step that must come, and every energetic professional who has ambitions of success and improvement will avail himself of the opportunities. In line of educational and professional problems, I think the booklet, "Golf's Professional Man", as edited by our National Advisory Committee covers the situation as completely as anything I have ever read. It will be up to us as an association to put into practice some of the many suggestions that will make us as individuals more indispensable to our clubs in the way of service.

Previous to the war, it was estimated that 65% of the first-grade merchandise sold in the United States was sold through golf professional shops, and it would seem only natural that the reputable manufacturers would want to maintain that relationship. We can't get along without the manufacturer, and I don't believe that the manufacturer can get along without the professional. Therefore, it will be only by mutual and closer cooperation that we and the manufacturer will be equipped to meet arising competition.

If we as individuals, as well as an association, will endeavor to develop and elevate our standards, we will have the support of the leading manufacturers and be prepared to better meet any competition.

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