

A Gauge To Assure Correct MACHINE Maintenance

By
CLINTON KENT BRADLEY

THERE ARE two schools of thought on peacetime maintenance: one group wishes to have more time and men for attending to hand work or "puttering"—attending to little details that make for the "niceties of upkeep"—and the other hopes to mechanize work to the extent of having a minimum of labor costs.

Middle-of-the-road thinking is adapting the course to fit machinery which will take care of the major, costly jobs that can be mechanized so that crewmen have more time for detail puttering, without running up too much of a bill.

In the latter vein, the 3 photos accompanying show a bank of green, which was built by common labor. The slope was too steep for a tractor to safely operate on, and the contours too sharp to mow with gang units without scalping turf on high spots, and missing it (high cutting) in the low spots. To cut it by hand mower required a half hour (at least) weekly.

After the bank was regraded, a tractor-drawn gang mower could do the job in 3 minutes or less. The cost of recontouring was written off in 2 years by the labor cost saving of hand mowing. This cost was transferred to better care of brook banks near the green, which raised the maintenance standard. Due to the change, golfers were pleased, lost fewer balls and there was less tie-up of play, besides better appearance of the course. When several greens were recontoured, the advantages totaled up to a substantial meaning.

The trouble began with original grading construction. A foreman experienced in road shoulder or embankment grading has a different job on golf contouring which will be mowed in future. The usual method of keeping slopes flat by trying them with a rake handle laid on the surface, does not necessarily mean gang

mowers will cut the grass properly when the mowers ride the contours.

Often it is not possible for the golf architect or greenkeeper to be on hand all the time a regrading job is done. The stick gauge helps guide the grading gang in this instance. The gauge is made of 3 common 1 in. by 2 in. "furring" lumber, each 48" long, fastened with $\frac{1}{4}$ in. by 3 in. bolts for hinges, with holes drilled 2" back from ends. No more than 2" of daylight should be seen where the joints bend, as the sticks lay on grade.

Fig. 1 shows part of original grading. Center stick shows where bed knife of 30" mower would scalp. Fig. 2 shows gauge on regraded area with sod replaced. No possibility to scalp or miss on mowing in this instance. Fig. 3 is same bank looking the opposite direction, and approximates bed-knife lines of gang mowers. Reading from left on Fig. 3 note first section of gauge, where mower would



Fig. 1—Original grading at top. Note how regrading gauge shows where gang-mower cut would be. The stick extending from center section is folding rule opened to 5 ft. to show center section length.

cut grass high, then cut low and high on the second section, and the same on third section. Gauge can also be used to grade in direction of mowing, so that undulations are not too steep.

Before alteration work begins (and this



Fig. 2—Regraded bank in foreground is shown by gauge to be right for machine mowing. Compare with original grade at rear.



Fig. 3—Note how gauge shows bed-knife lines of gang mowers, in determining how bank should be regraded.

is important to mention) an experienced golf architect should be consulted. Other changes that would improve the hole, as suggested by the architect, could be done in conjunction with the regrading job.

Note the leaves are off the small tree in background, showing this work was done in slack play season. Regular greensmen would do their routine work, then in spare time the regrading.

The work was done in strips or sections. Sod lifted, top soil put on side, subsoil regraded, top soil and sod replaced, each time the job was worked on. This left a minimum of ground under repair, between times the regrading was done. In many cases, lengthening out the slopes requires no more fill than is already present. On this green, one load had to be hauled in, and this was excess from a similar job on another green.

The 48" length of each of the 3 grade gauge sections was determined by trials, and noting banks which were cut perfectly by gang mowers. Sections could be shorter where odd conditions exist, but they should not be less than 36" each, if the grade is to be mowed truly.

Says OPA Mower Edict Halts Manufacturing

The Clapper Co., New England course equipment and supply house, is writing golf clubs suggesting that they ask for revision of OPA ruling which virtually stops mower manufacture. The letter "To All Golf Clubs" says:

"On October 10, 1945 the Office of Price Administration issued Order No. 3 under the Maximum Pricing Regulation No. 188 covering the manufacture and distribution of Hand Lawn Mowers.

"One large hand mower maker, whose line we have never sold, claims that he has canvassed 85% of the hand lawn mower manufacturing industry and that they

agree with him to the extent that they cannot and will not produce on the basis of Order No. 3 and the result will be that very few hand lawn mowers will go on the market until this Order is properly corrected or eliminated.

"This manufacturer says that gray iron casting are 35% higher, that malleable iron castings are 45% higher and that labor is 50% higher yet they have been granted under this Order an increase or mark up of only 17% over 1941 prices.

"He also states that another penalty is that old time producers must furnish a complete assortment of mowers, including low end numbers and in the same proportion as prewar. The newcomers in the industry, also those factories which have changed ownership and are now considered by O.P.A. as newcomers are not penalized in this respect. They are permitted to offer higher priced numbers only without restrictions on quantity. This is also most unfair.

"He also claims that the order provides for price tagging with the exception of those furnished to Mail Order Houses and Chain Stores with no provision for freight cost. How can manufacturers place a price ceiling tag on a lawn mower with the same price for resale in Richmond, Indiana as in California or Texas. The dealer cannot absorb this freight cost when the dealers' percentage of profit as directed by O.P.A. is only 27% of his selling price.

"Lawn mowers are nonessential so far as actual living costs are concerned and O.P.A. should immediately remove all controls and restrictions. Manufacturers could then go quickly into full production and competition would keep prices in line. All they want is the chance to go back into production, give full employment, supply the pent up demand for lawn mowers and make a living profit.

"You are interested in lawn mowers as a necessary product to keep your course in operation and open for play. You can help this by telling your Congressional Representative and the two Senators from your State how you feel on this matter.

"While we do not sell his line we thought his ideas worthy of passing on."

YOU'LL BE SORRY! —or will you?

Golf Management will have plenty of \$64 questions to be answered this year.

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