

# So. California Greenkeepers Ask Turf Research Aid

Southern California golf course superintendents are urging the state legislature to provide funds for establishing at the University of California, Los Angeles, turf research comparable to that conducted by the state colleges of Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Iowa, Purdue university and other educational institutions in eastern and central states.

But the campaign, so far, apparently has found the legislature indifferent and the UCLA administration not particularly receptive. UCLA has in its dept. of agriculture Dr. V. T. Stoutemyer, formerly in charge of turf research at Iowa State college and richly experienced in making an effective tie-up between a state university and commercial and home turf interests. In the person of Stoutemyer UCLA has one of the best qualified men in the country for inaugurating the sort of a turf research program the southern California greenkeepers seek, nevertheless there's been no appreciable response to the greenkeepers' requests thus far.

Southern California greenkeepers are at a loss to account for the failure of the state legislature and UCLA to give them a hand in solving an extensive and unique array of turf problems. The only explanation they can advance is that the demands of the citrus fruit industry are so predominant and forcibly lobbied that other agricultural interests run out of the money.

Greenkeepers all along the Pacific coast comment on the backwardness of California, Oregon and Washington state schools and legislatures in bringing turf research anyway near to the standard maintained in central and eastern states. This deficiency is especially surprising in the northwest where bent turf grasses constitute a substantially profitable crop.

Limited finances of the USGA Green Section and membership of less than 60 clubs in a territory experiencing a tremendous golf boom also have been factors in throwing Pacific Coast greenkeepers pretty much on their own in turf research work. This weakness, some say, reflects unawareness of Pacific Coast green chairmen in the possibilities of extensive turf research and may account for their not participating vigorously with the greenkeepers in putting the case for

turf research before state universities and legislatures.

## Home Owners Share Research Need

In the case of southern California, especially, the private lawn owners are paying heavy penalty of not having turf research advanced on a comprehensive basis. The greenkeepers, through their individual and association research and exchange of experience, have done an impressive job of solving turf problems peculiar to that area. But with the passing of the Jap gardeners private lawns have deteriorated seriously.

The Jap-made lawns generally were put in with seed the Japs bought at their co-ops and it was definitely not weed-free. The fertilization applied was of no great help in reducing weeds nor, in many cases, was the watering. Weeding was by hand and that meant more pay to the gardeners, hence weeds were the lawn owners' tough luck. Expense of hand-weeding in prewar days wasn't too much but now is stiff.

Establishment and extension of sound standard practice in developing and maintaining weed-free healthy turf would be a reasonably early result of state university cooperation with the greenkeepers, so the greenkeepers declare, and would be of vast value to residence property in the Pacific slope.

## Pacific Turf Problems Many

Considering the high standard of maintenance at the better clubs on the Pacific slope the average member probably doesn't realize what the greenkeeper has to contend with in growing conditions that are favorable to weeds as well as grass. By far the greater part of the golf turf weed control methods on the Pacific slope have been worked out by the greenkeepers' own research. They have not had such assistance as state colleges and the Green Section have provided, in the case of 2,4-D for instance, by close-up association with golf course superintendents. The result, according to pros who've played many courses this year, is that Pacific slope fairways and rough are not up to the general standard of turf at better clubs in central and eastern states although west coast greens at the good clubs are superb.

Pacific slope green-chairmen with whom the greenkeepers' plea for organized turf research has been discussed are convinced that the greenkeepers generally are operating their courses on the lowest possible budget compatible with good turf condition, but some greenkeepers hesitate to concede that there is the utmost economy in course operation. They base their doubts on the possibility of turf research pointing out substantial economies, especially in southern California, by developing a strain of fairway grass that will require less water, as just one of the opportunities for saving. The reluctance of the Southern California greenkeepers to say that they have attained the ultimate economy in high grade course maintenance is evidence of an ambitious and inquiring attitude that's a strong element in accounting for the high standing these men hold with club officials and members.

Among golf course equipment and supply men one hears that if research or anything else can effect economies without lowering the maintenance standard, first application of the saving should be devoted to an increase in course superintendents' salaries which have not gone up

commensurate with the increase in living costs in numerous areas along the Pacific slope.

The Pacific slope boasts that it has a generally higher standard of golf course architecture than that prevailing in other sections of the country. Now the greenkeepers of that part of the nation want the best grade of expert help in doing the research work required to have the turf on these fine courses of comparable excellence.

#### So. Cal. Supt's. Case

In setting forth its case to the UCLA the Golf Course Supts. Assn. of Southern California said:

"We come here with a request to have you consider in your postwar plans the extension of your activities in ornamental horticulture and floriculture, to include the establishment of a turf garden at UCLA.

"The purpose of this turf garden is to further the best interests of the taxpayers of this state. It would eliminate an enormous waste of money each year by determining the proper selection and maintenance of turf for airports, athletic

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#### CANTERBURY CONTOURING GIVES SPECTATOR BREAK

Third hole at Canterbury during 1946 Open. This shows how golf course architecture that gives spectators vantage points for witnessing play on or near greens contributes greatly to gallery enjoyment of the competition. With galleries now growing so large comparatively few can see strokes made, the qualifications of a "championship" course may have to consider spectator factors as well as golf testing elements. Marshaling of a stampeding golf gallery can't be done perfectly. The incident of Byron Nelson's caddie having to elbow through the gallery and kicking Nelson's ball for a stroke penalty that cost Nelson the National Open title is evidence of the impossibility of crowd control even by marshaling that was much above the average.

O. J. Noer Photo



## Southern California

(Continued from page 29)

fields, parks, home lawns, golf courses, cemeteries and similar areas.

"Hundreds of thousands of acres are planted to turf in California for these various uses, and the necessity for an authentic source of help and research, covering grass selection, fertilization, insects, disease, weed control, drainage, soil structure, erosion problems, etc., has long been recognized.

"Turf in California is an asset that represents hundreds of thousands of dollars in its production and maintenance and is the means of the livelihood of many people. It involves the expenditure of millions of dollars of supplies and equipment, such as irrigation systems, seed, fertilizer, sprays, hose and other construction necessities, as well as sports playing equipment.

"In Southern California we have approximately 60 golf courses of 9 or 18 holes each. This represents at least 6000 acres in golf turf alone.

"The costs of maintaining these recreational fields are equitably distributed according to the tax-paying brackets. Those in the higher income brackets pay the costs of the private club maintenance and the hundreds of thousands of citizens of average means bear their share in their payment of green-fees at the public and semi-public courses.

"The Southern California Golf Assn., representing the private clubs, have expressed their whole-hearted endorsement of our proposal to you. Players on the public and semi-public courses likewise have endorsed our proposal. Many of them too have been on courses in other parts of the country where beneficial results of turf research cooperation between university scientists and course

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superintendents have resulted in improved playing conditions with reduction in operating costs.

"The tremendous advertising asset Southern California should have in superior turf for sports, home, decorative and commercial purposes, already has been exhibited at certain golf courses in this region. This has been a definite factor in attracting energetic people to Southern California; first for winters and now for all year. The problems of establishing and maintaining such turf are numerous and in many cases peculiar to this section. They are problems that call for the organized and closely coordinated research that we request in connection with the establishment of a turf experiment station at UCLA.

"We trust that you will take favorable action on our request in providing Southern California with a turf development program of the character and extent now being conducted successfully, and with pleasure and profit to taxpayers, in other states."

The association also submitted an outline of the proposed program.

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## George Harrington Returns to USGA Green Section as Asst. Director

George Harrington, who's been renewing his acquaintance with the personnel and problems of greenkeeping, as asst. director of the USGA Green Section, has



George Harrington

been splitting with Director Fred Grau the vastly enlarged travel and personal service program of the section. Harrington was with the Green Section from 1931 until May of 1941 when he went into the Army Air Force. For some time he

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