

Southeastern Turf Men Meet at Tifton, Ga., Station

By TOM CORDELE

The second annual Southeastern Turf Conference was sponsored jointly by the Georgia Coastal Plain Experiment Station and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, at Tifton, Ga., on April 21-22. Approximately 100 people were in attendance from 12 states. Practically everyone present was associated with golf in one way or another. Keen interest was shown throughout and hardly a man left until the final gong sounded.

"Better Golf Greens" was the subject for discussion on the morning of the first day. Dr. O. J. Noer, Agronomist, Sewerage Commission, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, approached this subject from the standpoint of water management. He pointed out that many of the problems on golf greens have arisen from improper use of water. Many times too much is used, and there is no substitute for the intelligent greenkeeper who waters not on the schedule but when the grass needs it.

Dr. Fred V. Grau, Director of USGA Greens Section, emphasized the importance of proper drainage. He pointed out that many greens will not grow good turf because proper drainage was not provided when they were constructed. He offered a number of suggestions on methods of overcoming in part, at least, the difficulties experienced on many greens that are now improperly drained. The final discussion was led by Dr. G. W. Burton from the standpoint of better grass breeding and selection. Dr. Burton is in charge of the

turf research project at the Tifton (Ga.), Coastal Plain Experiment station. He pointed out with colored slides that many of the problems now facing greenkeepers might be solved by utilizing superior strains of Bermuda developed by breeding. Several of his Bermuda selections developed at Tifton are making much better greens than could be obtained from the varieties now available on the market. Some of these are making such excellent spring growth that the transition from rye to Bermuda greens was hardly perceptible.

Following lunch in the college dining hall, Dr. Burton conducted a tour of the grass and turf experiments where more than 100 different selections of Bermuda, many from some of the best greens in the area, are being compared. Great differences have shown up in these strains. A number of the best selections are far superior to plots established from seed, indicating that better greens can be obtained by sprigging in superior selections. The Tifton station hopes that greenkeepers throughout the southeastern area will continue to send in cup cutter plugs of some of their best greens to be included in this test.

The research work which Dr. Burton is conducting at this station is divided into five parts, the first of which was described in the above paragraph. Fertilizer and lime appliance for all turf in the southeast is another branch. Dr. Burton pointed



Southeastern golf course men and visiting experts line-up at their second annual turf conference.

out on this tour that all grasses do not have the same pH requirements for optimum growth. While some of the grasses responded favorably to lime applications, carpet grass turned yellow and was making very little growth with such treatment. Weed and insect control have been an important phase of his work in the last few years. The effectiveness of DDT, calcium arsenate, benzene hexachloride and 2, 4-D are some of the things that have been used in this test work. Topdressing of greens has long been a problem for southern greenkeepers. Many problems now encountered are a result of the use of improper topdressing material in the past. He has done research work on the suitability of sawdust as a source of organic matter in topdressing material. One hundred forty-four different other mixtures are also being tested. Some of them look very promising.

Breeding for Seed Production

Breeding for seed production is the final phase of research conducted at this station. Many feel that no other section of the nation has such a critical problem in seed production from desirable strains and varieties of grasses. Dr. Burton has been able to make several of these grasses produce seed suitable for golf course use.

After the tour demonstrations were given with various types of turf equipment that were on display at the conference. Several new pieces of equipment were shown that offer great promise to greenkeeping.

At the banquet held on Wednesday night, Fred Grau introduced the program by stating that three men are essential to a golf club: first, the architect who designs the club, the greenkeeper who maintains it, and the professional. Robert Trent Jones, sec.-treas. of the Society of Golf Architects, led the discussion while slides were being shown of famous golf clubs. Jones explained outstanding features of these clubs and commentaries were given by T. M. Baumgardner from the standpoint of the greenkeeper and by Ed Dudley, pres. PGA, from the standpoint of the professional. Slides were shown of the famous St. Andrews course. He stated that architecture cannot be copied from such old courses because of the difference in climatic conditions, primarily from the standpoint of maintenance because they do not have heavy rains and at the time those courses were designed, hand labor was very cheap. Today with the high cost of labor, everything must be mechanized. Jones explained the penal, heroic and strategic types of golf course architecture. Colored slides were shown of well-known golf

courses at Cypress Point, Calif.; Jasper Park, Canada; Augusta, Ga.; and Pinehurst, N.C.

The following morning was devoted to a round-table discussion dealing with various problems confronting managers, superintendents and greenkeepers. The interest was very keen for the three and one-half hours.

Plans were made for the turf conference next year and several suggestions were welcomed concerning the program and how to get more of the proper people interested in the work being done at Tifton. Tifton is centrally located in the southeastern area and has a supply of land, office and laboratory facilities for this work. Much of the equipment is at hand. The great need is for personnel. The research fellowship which the various golf associations have established will help to solve this problem but the challenge that southern turf problems are making can never be met until sufficient funds are raised to carry on the needed work.

Pacific N.W. Turf Meeting, Pullman, Wash., May 24-25

A Pacific Northwest turf conference program at the State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash., May 24 and 25, has been announced by Asst. Dean E. G. Schafer, college of agriculture. In two talks Fred Grau, director USGA Green section, will outline a turf program for the Pacific Northwest and discuss grass varieties and the improvement of turf.

Also on the program are A. L. Brandon, secy., Greenkeeping Supts. Assn.; G. A. Amsbury, Spokane foreman of city parks, who will talk on turf equipment and maintenance and O. J. Noer, Milwaukee, Wisconsin Sewerage Commission, who will speak on principles of turf fertilization. Other speakers will include staff members of the State College of Washington and University of Idaho who will discuss control of turf diseases, the use of fungicides, management practices, seed bed, seeding time and rates, and weed control by selective sprays.

Schafer is being assisted in the planning of the program by State Extension Agent E. J. Kreizinger, Prof. A. G. Law and Prof. Lowell Rasmussen, both of the Department of Agronomy.

The conference is being sponsored by the college of agriculture in cooperation with the Inland Empire Greenkeepers' Assn. of which Bill Southerton, Spokane (Wash.) CC, is pres. Louis J. Schmidt, Indian Canyon GC, Spokane, will serve as chairman of one of the five sessions of the two-day conference.