

# Florida Holds First Annual Turf Conference

THE nation's youngest turf research and development program made its official debut in August when the Sunshine State had its first annual University of Florida Turf Conference co-sponsored by the Florida Turf Association, the Univ. of Fla. Exp. Station, and the Agri. Extension Service.

Over 125 persons were on hand to attend the educational sessions, review the research plots, participate in the golf tournament, and enjoy a superb banquet at the Gainesville G&CC.

The conference was opened with a welcome address by Dir. Willard Fifield, Univ. of Fla. Agri. Exp. Station, who pointed out the economic importance of turf in Florida and reaffirmed the interest and intent of the Experiment Station in expanding the turf research program.

Dr. O. J. Noer graced the conference with his wisdom and personality despite the inconvenience of close scheduling. After attending the Metropolitan GA meeting in Detroit the previous night, he was on hand at the Univ. of Fla. as the kick-off speaker the next morning. Dr. Noer discussed factors affecting the root development of turf grasses. He pointed out, among other things, the importance of proper soil structure to root growth.

B. P. Robinson, turf specialist, with the Southeastern Turf Research Center, Tifton, Ga., shared with the conference the benefit of his wide experience in dealing with weed control problems in the south. "Robbie" pointed out that chemical weed control had a place in golf turf, but that sterilization of compost, prior to planting, and proper management were important.

Dr. Gene C. Nutter, in charge of turf research and development in Florida, discussed the various angles of the State Turf Research Program. He pointed out that the tremendous tourist influx in Florida to enjoy the climate, also enjoyed other facilities, and that one of the principal facilities was ornamental and recreational turf. Dr. Nutter discussed the aims and progress of the new turf program and presented data from the bermuda grass testing and evaluation program.

Other outstanding speakers on the program included Dr. Roger W. Bledsoe, agronomist with the Agri. Exp. Station,

who discussed some fundamental aspects of plant physiology as related to the growth of turf grasses. Prof. John V. Watkins, the College of Agriculture, brought out the importance of proper care of ornamentals, and J. Russell Henderson, Extension agronomist, pointed out five important soil characteristics held the key to proper



Plots shown above are in the Bermuda Grass Testing and Evaluation Nursery, a part of the turf research and development program at the Univ. of Florida Agri. Exp. Station.

grass production in Florida. They are: soil texture, organic matter, reaction of the surface soil, depth of clay sub-soil, and the water table.

Two interesting and informative panels contributed greatly to the conference. Jimmy Blackledge was moderator of one which discussed "Major Problems in Different Fields of Turf" and included as speakers, Nash Higgins, representing athletic and recreational fields; T. A. Johnson for cemeteries and memorial parks, and Clinton Van Cleef speaking on public parks. The second panel dealt with insect pests and diseases of turf grasses, Dr. Nutter served as moderator and presented a talented group including entomologists A. N. Tissot, F. E. Guthrie, D. O. Wolfenbarger, and E. G. Kelshimer; and Mycologist Erdman West, all with the University Agri. Exp. Station system.

The second afternoon was devoted to a Field Day program in which J. Russell Henderson conducted a bus tour which included stops at the turf research nurseries (where the thatch reduction properties of the new West Point Verti-cut ma-

chine were demonstrated), a visit to the golf teaching facilities where head golf instructor, Conrad Rehling, discussed the golf program at Florida, and reviewed maintenance procedure on the Univ. grid-iron and athletic fields.

An important phase of the conference included the business meeting and election of officers. Outgoing President Joe Konwinski, supt., Lake Worth GC, and vp Norm Johnson, supt., San Jose CC, were highly commended for the excellent way in which they steered the new turf association through its initial year. (The old Florida Association of Golf Course Superintendents is now defunct and replaced by the Florida Turf Association.) Real workhorse of the combination was William L. Barton, pro-supt., Carpenter's Home GC, Lakeland, who was re-elected secretary-treasurer. John Shabinger, supt., Palm Beach GC, was elected pres. for the coming year, and Lloyd Clifton, supt., Daytona Beach CC, was elected vp. New directors are: Nash Higgins, Dir. of Recreation, Hillsborough County Dept. of Education, Tampa; Joe Konwinski; Clinton Van Cleef, supt. of parks, Orlando; Ward L. Wood, supt., Everglades CC, Palm Beach; T. A. Johnson, mgr., Sylvan Abbey Memorial Parks, Clearwater; and Col. Frank Ward, supt., Bradenton CC.

### 200 Attend Turf Field Day at Ryewood Country Club

**A**BOUT 200 greens superintendents and others interested in fine turf production attended the fourth Annual Turf Equipment and Supply Field Day sponsored by the New York-Connecticut Turf Improvement Association held Sept. 23 at the Ryewood CC, Rye, N. Y. A well-planned program of demonstrations and contests, and perfect weather combined to make this a highly successful field day.

Twenty companies had exhibits of equipment and supplies used for developing and maintaining turf grasses, and a number of these participated in machinery demonstrations held during the afternoon. A putting green was available for demonstrating greens mowers and greens cultivating machines, and a large lawn area was used for demonstrating fairway tractors, gang mowers, leaf mulchers, and sprayers. A hole-in-one contest and a weed identification contest completed the afternoon's activities, with Henry S. Mattson as master of ceremonies.

Following the dinner held in the Rye-

wood CC dining room, Edward P. Brady, president of the association, introduced the Field Day Committee responsible for the day's events, guests present, and the speaker for the evening, Marshall C. Farnum, superintendent of the Philadelphia CC and former GCSA pres.

The Field Day Committee, headed by Ted Joswick as chairman, included William Doyle, John Edgar, Herb Johnson, William Sloan, Ben Zukowsky, and Townsend Keeler. Guests were Farnum, Dr. Ralph Engel of Rutgers Univ., Dr. John Cornman, Cornell Univ., Agar Brown, secy., GCSA, and Alexander Radko, USGA Green Section.

Mr. Farnum in reviewing "Golf Course Maintenance from the Days of the Horse and Buggy to the Mechanical Monster" noted that more is demanded of turf men today as machines have reduced the time required to complete certain jobs. He emphasized the need for investigating the cause of such problems as *Poa annua*, crabgrass, and clover rather than merely looking for a control measure, and suggested that each superintendent try new materials on a small scale under his own conditions until he is thoroughly familiar with them. Finally, Mr. Farnum cited the great progress in turf maintenance which has been made through cooperation between turf organizations, the agricultural experiment stations, and the members of the agricultural extension service.

Record attendance seems assured for Fourth Annual Central Plains Turf Conference at Kansas State College, Manhattan, Oct. 21, 22, 23. Benefits of previous conferences have caused smaller clubs in area to follow larger clubs' standard practice of regarding supts.' conference expenses highly profitable investment of a small part of the maintenance budget.

#### MAY GIFT CINCHES SCHOLARSHIP FOR MALARA, CADDIE RUNNER-UP

Because of a fellow who has made the grade, another young fellow named Frank Malara, just starting up the grade, is getting off to a strong start. George S. May contributes \$1,000 to the PGA-Nat'l Caddie Assn. Scholarship fund which will provide a scholarship for Frank, this year's runner-up in the National Caddie tournament. Frank, an Elmsford, N. Y., boy, was sent to the event by the PGA Metropolitan Section.