

# Course Supts. Advised on Turf Problems in "Cool" Zone

**C**OOLED SEASON grass section of the GCSA educational conference had as its chairman John A. Gormley, supt., Wolfert's Roost CC, Newtonville, N. Y. Particularly accented in all talks was the point that procedure on each course has to be adjusted according to the sound judgment of a competent supt.

Joe Valentine, veteran supt. of Merion GC, Philadelphia district course that has provided the test for five USGA championships, told of preparing a course for a major championship while keeping members happy. Joe said that as far as course condition is concerned it is the policy at Merion to keep the championship layout in such condition that only provisions for the gallery and press coverage involve any special care.

With Merion having two courses members never get unduly inconvenienced by major championship play. Divot and tee repair after major championships is quickly completed. Valentine's talk which appears in full on page 60 outlines procedure for handling big championships.

In his case the architectural revisions national championships often involve are not necessary.

Informal discussion following Joe's informative talk related arduous experiences of supts. in adding alteration work to maintenance. Supts. said that if a club is going to be host to a major championship that calls for any course construction changes the work had best be done at least a full year before the event.

## Reports on Soil Conditioners

R. W. Schery, Monsanto Chemical Co. development engineer, told of satisfactory use of soil conditioners when properly introduced into soil. He cited interesting tests of Krilium in opening soils for water and air circulation. He advocated use of the material in seedbed preparation, topdressing or cultivation.

Schery reported that numerous tests by supts. now were in progress and in every case of recommended procedure there has been improvement in porosity without unfavorable effects on plant growth.

The Schery address was especially interesting to supts. as soil conditioners had

been introduced to the general market with a circus rush instead of with the cautious and comprehensive tests supts. require before they are disposed to use and endorse materials presented as miracle gimmicks. Schery undoubtedly set the stage for more golf course tests and far more extensive use of soil conditioners if, as and when warranted.

The Better Turf Management round table, with James E. Thomas, supt., Army-Navy CC, Arlington, Va., as moderator, had Raymond C. Davis of Medinah CC, Medinah, Ill., describing fairway work; Andrew Bertoni, Meadowbrook CC, Northville, Mich., on tees and Beryl Taylor, Iowa State College course, Ames, Ia., on greens.

## "Love At First Sight" of Tee

Bertoni referred to the psychological, construction and maintenance aspects of tees. He reminded supts. that on the tee everybody is even and hopeful and that pleasant attitude should be capitalized on by the tee beautification. He accented the beauty and condition of the first tee in particular as the place where the player should fall in love with the course at first sight.

On construction he favored very slight slope for drainage from right to left and forward to rear. He said players hit tee shots better when the ball is very slightly above the stance. He mentioned that this construction might handicap the lefthanders but was best for the great majority and for maintenance.

His present program calls for building one new tee a year.

Bertoni's remarks appear in full on page 95 of this issue of GOLFDOM.

## "Crabgrass Committee" Helps

Ray Davis' talk on renovating fairways that had pretty much been taken over by crabgrass told of a "crabgrass committee" being appointed at Medinah to educate and reconcile members to a severe job of renovating 16 fairways on the club's championship No. 3 course.

Following establishment of a program set after three meetings with consulting experts Al Radko of the USGA Green section, Bill Daniel of Purdue and Midwest Turf Foundation, and O. J. Noer of Mil-

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waukee Sewerage Commission, the "crabgrass committee" informed members of the job being done and progress of the work.

The result was that instead of members complaining to and about employees the members took an informed and cooperative attitude toward the work.

After heavy discing, 7 applications of sodium arsenite were applied at intervals. The first two applications were 1 lb. per acre, then two at 1 1/4 lb. per acre, then two at 2 lbs. per acre, after which the fairways were seeded. Then the final sodium arsenite treatment was applied at the rate of 2 lbs. per acre.

Work was started in July. By Labor Day new seeding was coming along and by Nov. 1 the fairways were in good condition for the winter.

Beryl Taylor's greens paper applied to conditions involving a weather range from 110 F. in summer to 30 below.

#### **Uniformity Seldom Possible**

In telling of his procedure, which will be presented fully in GOLFDOM, Taylor said he hesitated to make hard-and-fast recommendations in too many respects because of variations in controlling factors. On his own course he said there seldom are two greens that can be treated the same. He implied that design, construction and grasses had plenty of room for improvement in providing uniformity for a supts.' program.

Taylor strongly recommended watering greens early in the spring after an open winter as chances are the roots had been deeply dried. He said he no longer raked greens in the spring but Verticut them, not setting the machine too severely at first but "sneaking down" gradually.

Taylor remarked that there is no reason to have mat or grain on greens and remarked that he doubted if golfers know what grain is.

#### **Thatch Still Research Job**

Ralph E. Engel, Associate Prof., Turf Management, Rutgers university, presented a short course in basic training on thatch control. Engel described thatch as an accumulation of stems, roots and leaves on turf surface that interferes with growth.

Getting water and air through thatch in proper amounts to work and getting food through thatch to soil bacteria is an impossible job, he said. Removal of thatch has become another essential expense and although the job now is well done the primary work is to discover how to prevent thatch.

Just why organic matter doesn't take

care of the thatch research now is trying to determine.

#### Explains Plant Disease

Dr. Wm. Klomparens, plant pathologist, The Upjohn Co., showed on the screen vastly enlarged slides of fungus growths that account for plant diseases.

Klomparens, who has conducted valuable grass disease clinics for several regional organizations of supts. told of elements of attacking fungus and parasitic growths and the principles of control measures.

He said that without moisture and certain temperatures plants cannot become diseased.

Prompt and accurate identification of the disease of the grass, shrub, tree or flower is a "must" in any control measure, Klomparens stressed. He described some methods of application of toxic materials and called attention to variable susceptibility and resistance to disease as complicating the fungus disease control problem with which supts. must contend.

#### New Turf, New Labor Practices Needed

By A. M. LOCKE  
Supt., Longmeadow (Mass.) CC

To satisfy the demands of golfers today for a well groomed golf course at all times — with fairways cut at ½ in., greens mowed practically every day, rough cut and held at 2 in., with sand traps, tees, aprons and approaches in perfect condition at all times, having a constant run of tournaments through the complete season, (April through October) including the regular routine of play — requires the constant attention of the maintenance staff during the playing season. This work should not be interrupted with major construction operations such as, building traps, causeways, bridges, etc. Any major emergency construction during this period should be done by an outside contractor. The time for this type of work is after the playing season is over.

The demand for close cutting of fairways is creating a very serious condition on many of the older golf courses that were seeded with the old stand-bys, Kentucky bluegrass and the fescues. Regardless of constant attention, fertilization and aerification, close cutting is constantly killing these grasses off; consequently, the old menace poa annua is taking over. Fertilizer and aerifying does help the old grass to survive longer.

This is a problem that must be over-

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