



## BULLRUSH MOWER RESTORES LAKE TO LAKEWOOD

Walter De Lisle, at controls, and Joe Jester, inventor, cut tules (formal name for bullrushes) from channel at Lakewood course, Long Beach, Calif.

The barge is 14 by 6 ft. A 6 hp engine propels the barge and a 7 hp engine operates the sicklebar mower.

**L**IKE a lost paddle boat, a Rube Goldberg-like contraption has been sliding over the lake at the Lakewood Golf course, near Long Beach, Cal. cutting tules from the lake bottom.

The Lakewood course, built in 1932 by William P. Bell for the Montana Land Co., was wrapped around a 20-acre lake and appropriately named Lakewood. But in recent years the tules have taken the lake out of Lakewood from the pictorial standpoint and have been choking out the water supply.

In addition to adding zest to golf shots, cooling breezes to the player and beauty to the course, the lake water is used for watering the golf course. Due to the fact that the lake was the source of the water supply, operators over the years have ruled out the use of poisons and chemicals to control the growth of the tule.

The tule is a rush—or bullrush—found in many western water lands, being classed as either *Scirpus lacustris* or *Scirpus acutus*, and is the scourge to irrigation ditches, lakes and waterways throughout Southwestern United States and Mexico. It grows to the height of 15 or more feet and in the case of Lakewood was choking out a 20 ft. channel from which the water was pumped into the circulating water system. Field tests indicated that each tule stem contained at least a pint of water, hence the loss of water soared to astronomical figures as millions of tules were soaking up expensive water.

Irrigation districts in central California were experiencing the same tule problem in miles of irrigation ditches—the tule was getting the water.

Into this picture stepped an ingenious inventor Joe Jester and after months of experimental work, out of his workshop waddled a queer looking machine bearing the name Jester Lake Maintenance Service.

In simple words it is a sickle-bar mounted on a barge. The hull of the barge a mess of gears, chains and pulleys all driven by an automobile motor. The sickle bar is mounted on a movable arm which can be lowered to mow any lake bottom up to 5 ft. deep. The auto motor is geared via an ordinary transmission to two large paddle wheels which propel the barge up and down the channel.

The cutting procedure used at Lakewood is to cut the tules first at the water level. Then the barge is backed away, the sickle bar lowered and another cut made about 6 in. above the lake bottom. The cut lengths of tule then pop out of the lake like so many stalks of asparagus on the loose. After the tules have been cut free they drift to the sides of the lake where they can be removed, spread out to dry and finally burned.

Those expert in things tule hope that by a good program of cutting and the water level maintained at a high level, the tule may eventually give up the struggle and "just fade away." This hope is an optimistic one and only time will tell if a permanent cure has been found.