

# Grau Answers Turfgrass Questions

From many courses Dr. Fred V. Grau gets and answers the problems handled in this monthly department of GOLFDOM. Superintendents and club officials can avail themselves of this service without charge or obligation. Address your question to Grau Queries, GOLFDOM, 407 S. Dearborn, Chicago 5, Ill.

The year 1955 will be remembered by some who work with grass as a year of disastrous extremes of weather. And they have good reason to remember it that way. But from such a year we also learn things about grass that we would not discover if all years followed a blueprint.

To attain our goal of grass that is more and more satisfactory, we try to learn more about its physical nature and needs. As these things are learned, accurate information must be disseminated for use in the field.

There must be men in the field skilled in observation and procedures or they won't know how to use this information.

There must also be committee chairmen who are willing that the skilled supt. take the time to keep himself informed of the progress in turfgrasses and who will allow the supt. to use the superior grasses, tools and methods that research discovers.

The men in the field must keep the research workers informed as to what are current, practical problems. Research stations, in turn, must be alert and interested in the practical needs of the turf in use. It is a continuous circle of interdependent needs and services that has brought turfgrass management to the high standards it has attained.

The Golf Course Supts. Assn. is to be congratulated on its contributions all along the way. It sponsors the National Turfgrass Conference and Show which will be held this year at Long Beach. This is the 27th conference. More and more clubs and chairmen are making it possible for supts. to attend these annual meetings. It would be wonderful if more supts. could interest their chairmen in accompanying them.

I should like to turn the tables, so to speak, and ask a question myself. Drop me a post card, signed or unsigned, with a one word answer to this question:

Is your greatest single headache due to

soil, water, grass, chemicals, insects, disease, fungus, machinery, equipment, fertilizers, labor, golfers chairman committee members or budget?

Depending upon whom I last talked to, I get at one time or other the impression that each of these is the most serious headache, I omitted weather because there has been no practical progress in controlling it for our benefit.

**Q** — What grass would give us the best tees? The tees are not as large as we might wish and watering facilities are limited. (Wis.)

**A** — I believe Merion bluegrass will be your best bet because it takes less water than creeping bentgrass. It has deeper roots and will stand more wear and recover better from injuries. It will have to be fertilized every two weeks very much the same as you would fertilize your putting greens. I would suggest that you aerify every time you fertilize and use only enough water to keep the Merion from wilting. As we have stated before, the best way to establish Merion on a tee is first to grow it in a sod nursery for a year, then move the solid sod on to the tee.

**Q** — Would you outline to me the way in which you would advise a rank amateur to build a putting green. We have a heavy black soil, willing hands and no money. (Minn.)

**A** — First, send a representative sample of your soil to the Soils Department at your State Experiment Station, and ask what proportion of coarse sand by volume you must add to develop a sandy loam soil. Get a pH or lime test also and add dolomitic limestone to bring the pH to 6.5 or 7.0.

Prepare the sandy loam mixture in a convenient place off the site of the new green and haul it to the site after the base has been properly graded. You should have a total of 10 to 12 in. of prepared soil be-