

Reports on Research from Across The Nation

Technical Speeches at GCSA Meeting in Louisville Point to Progress That's Being Made in Lab and Field

Golf's Growth Calls for Steady Advance in Research

By WILLIAM H. BENGEEFIELD

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Mainly due to overcrowded conditions, several Western courses reported over 10,000 rounds of golf played every month during the summer of 1956. This is a lot of golf and presents the supt. with a multitude of problems. He is looking to colleges and other agencies for the solutions to these problems through research.

In 1956 research workers at Texas A&M and UCLA came up with data on soil mixtures for putting greens that will minimize compaction. The 85 per cent coarse sand, 1 1/2 per cent organic matter, and 7 1/2 per cent clay particle was the No. 1 research contribution to Western courses in 1956. Many experimental greens were established using this formula.

What about the grasses? Merion performed outstandingly on tees in the Northwest. It came through the severe winter of 1955-56 much better than any other grass. Alta and Kentucky 31 fescues provided good turf for roughs in the desert as well as in humid areas.

Of the bents, new greens of Congressional, Arlington and Congressional, Cohansey and Pennlu, were established last year. From early observations, all seemed to be an improvement over Seaside. Elmer Border, supt. at Olympic CC in San Francisco, had very good results in plugging Congressional into poa annua greens. Bill Beresford's bent selection, called Los Angeles CC bent, performed well on his course.

Seed of U-3 Bermudagrass received considerable publicity last year but in plot trials it was disappointing. Dr. V. Youngner of UCLA commented that in tests made at his station seeded plants were extremely variable and definitely not U-3 Bermuda.

In the fertilizer field a new material containing approximately 39 per cent potassium was introduced by a Los Angeles ceramic firm. The potassium is slowly released and the product reacts much like Urea-Formaldehyde materials. It may find a real place on light sandy soils, under heavy irrigation.

Weed control is one of the West's weakest

points from the research standpoint. Kikuyugrass, English daisies, Dallisgrass, and oxalis are major problems.

With golf enjoying such tremendous growth, we in the turf business must continue, indeed increase, our research activities if we are to have any hope of maintaining even present standards.

Courses Are Trial Plots for Laboratory Findings

By CHARLES K. HALLOWELL

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It is normal that there is a preparatory step before the research findings become standard practices on courses. Trial plots or field demonstrations constitute this step. These convince if the new is practical. Demonstrations often show an improved strain of grass growing alongside a strain long in use, or trial applications of herbicides, fungicides or insecticides may determine their action on grasses.

Development of better putting grasses on trial greens by John Monteith, formerly with the green section, and a number of golf course supts., showed that Arlington, Congressional, Cohansey, Collins, Toronto and Old Orchard, were the leading creeping bents.

Pennlu is a stolon bent and Penncross is a seeded bent, both having been developed by H. B. Musser of Penn State. They are now being carefully studied under playing conditions to determine if they are equal or superior to other improved putting green bents.

The Bermudas, developed in Florida and at Tifton, Ga., showed how important it is to continually carry on research work in developing better strains of grasses. Tifgreen shows promise and is being thoroughly tested by members of the Tidewater Turfgrass Assn. U-c Bermuda, after careful testing, is being grown on tees and fairways.

Merion, released more than six years ago, is coming into its own more and more each year. It is a superior grass but has limitations that must be determined by those using it.

Story Behind Aeration

Aeration by power-operated tools called for studying new management methods. First, facts were assembled by supts. getting together and pooling their experiences. Then in 1947, '48 and '49 a summary of the findings of members of the Philadelphia GCSA on how the aerifier assisted in reducing soil compaction and in aiding water and plant