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# Grau's Answers to Turf Questions

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If you've got a question you want Dr. Fred V. Grau to answer, please address it to Grau Q&A, Golfdom, 407 S. Dearborn, Chicago 5, Ill.

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## Lawn Clinics

A statement made by Edwards comes to mind: "If you would know anything thoroughly teach it to others."

Another statement made by Dunlap also comes to mind: "If you have a dollar to spend on your lawn spend 90 cents on fertilizer and 10 cents on seed."

At first glance the two statements appear unrelated. But when applied to the subject of lawn clinics they are quite closely related.

It has been our pleasure to have participated in many lawn clinics held in different parts of the country. Most of them have had technical information supplied by local supts. In every instance interest has run high. The information developed has fed garden columns for months. For the first time, many homeowners have had an opportunity to obtain authentic information on lawn-making and to ask questions.

Requests from garden clubs for speakers on "Lawns" have reached great proportions. Many clubs have not been able to secure the speakers they have wanted. How much better it would be if all lawn interests pooled resources once a year and held a real bang-up lawn clinic.

A committee composed of representatives from the press, agricultural extension service, radio, garden editors, garden

clubs and course supts.' associations would be responsible for planning the affair. A large auditorium with good acoustics and projection equipment is essential. Displays of sods of adapted grasses could be an integral part of the show. A well-developed plan of procedure with good speakers would help to assure success.

Basic facts supported by evidence could be the keynote of the clinic. It would be to the everlasting credit of the organizers to dispel the confusion which surrounds many advertising claims and to cut through the mists of doubt with clear-cut statements.

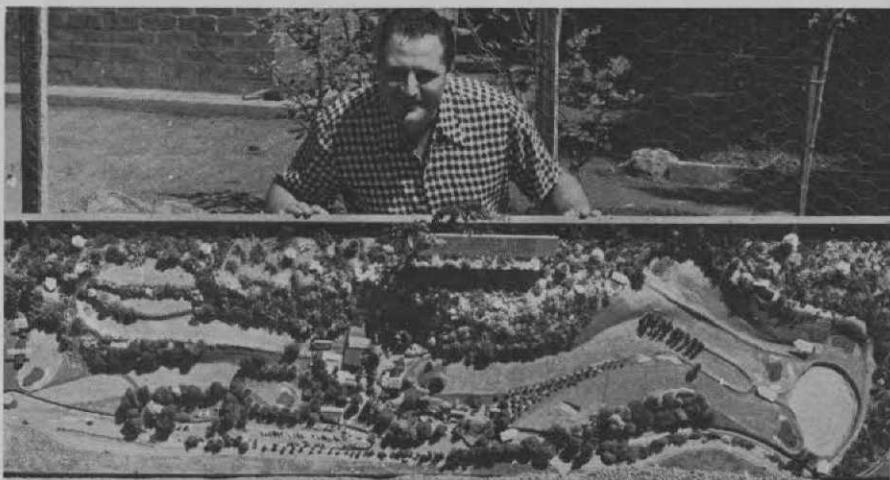
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Q. In Missouri we have two serious greens problems. Each year, around July 1 we have an invasion of crabgrass which, with high temperatures and humidity, just about ruins our greens. We have tried, for a number of years, picking the greens, but this has been unsatisfactory. Is there any chemical that we could safely use which would kill or control crabgrass? We have two kinds — one is the silver crab and the other we call ordinary crab or water grass. Our greens have been good early in the season, but trouble starts coming with hot, humid weather and this crabgrass invasion. Is there a grass that you could recommend for this climate that could better stand the heat and humidity than the Seaside bent we have been using? (Missouri)

A. In answering your second question first, we can say quite definitely that there are better bents that Seaside for greens in your part of the country. One that has been quite outstanding has been Cohansey (C-7) bent. This grass is stolonized and it has a good record for resistance to heat. It is rather light yellow-green in color and you can see excellent greens of it at the Tulsa CC. There are several instances in the St. Louis area where Cohansey bent has done an outstanding job. Two inch plugs of Cohansey bent sod introduced into Seaside greens can, in a few years, take over the Seaside greens without taking them out of play. I have several pictures of things that you describe, the grass going out during heat and humidity, where Seaside was completely ruined, but where plugs of Cohansey introduced the year earlier, stood up and were healthy in spite of all heat and humidity.

Your questions prompt me to ask a few of my own, and one is concerning your water management. Judicious use of water during these periods can have a great deal to do with the success or failure of grass. Just planting an improved grass in no way guarantees that you will have good greens. Management is the key to success with any grass.

Di-sodium methyl arsanate is a chemical that has been used quite satisfactorily on putting greens to control common crabgrass. In itself it is not sufficient for the silver crab, or so called goosegrass or crowfoot. In this case, a little



Adobe Creek Lodge in Santa Clara County (Calif.) has been converted to a 9-hole course, a three-dimensional model of which is shown. Formerly a picnic area, the course was constructed under the supervision of Frank Martinelli, Jr. (above), who headed a group that purchased the property. An artificial lake (extreme right) is being hollowed out by the new owners.

2,4-D or Brush Killer 2,4-D and 2,45-T should be added to the di-sodium to effect a kill on the silver crab. If, however, the grass is already in a weakened condition, this treatment easily should get rid of the bent as well as the crabgrass. In contemplating a chemical treatment on the greens, every step first should be taken to strengthen the grass so that it can withstand the shock.

Another factor is topdressing. If you are using unsterilized topdressing, it may be that you are planting the crabgrass into your greens.

One of the good tried and true methods of reducing injury during these hot, humid periods is light dusting with hydrated lime. This seems to have a very good effect on the grass, reducing diseases and strengthening it against heat and humidity. About two lbs. of hydrated lime dusted on dry to 1,000 sq. ft. seems to do the trick.

If the soil drainage is poor, if there is compaction, if you have very shallow root systems and if you are not following a good fertilizer practice, practically everything that I have told you can be thrown out the window. First, you must make the conditions right for the successful growing of the grass. Then you can begin to expect better results.

**Q.** We greatly appreciate your answer concerning control of crabgrass and a grass better adapted to our hot, humid summers. We are interested in learning more about the Cohansey (C-7) bent, including the proper time to plant, the best way to plant and some idea as to cost.

I feel that you hit the nail on the head in suggesting we may be planting crabgrass with our topdressing. I have been trying for years to get this fact across to our green chairman, but with only little success. With your letter to back me up, I believe we can now correct this fault. For the past two years we have watered by hand only when the temperature is 90 or above. We hand water in the morning

and during the heat of the day we go back and hand water just enough to cool down the grass and the surface of the soil. When the temperature is below 90, we usually water in the early morning for about an hour. There are several members who insist that we should really soak the greens during this hot weather, but I have agreed with our supt. that to do so would be to invite more trouble. Are we right in this, or should we keep them soggy? We do have some trouble with compaction which we reduced greatly by aeration. We open the greens as often as they seem to need it. In this manner we have been able to keep our bentgrass growing much better during hot weather.

We are forced to use city water. It is deep well water and very hard, containing lime and other minerals as well as chemicals used for purification. In your opinion is it likely that this kind of water could have an important bearing on our problem?

When we begin to prepare our topdressing, what method do you recommend for the sterilization? (Missouri)

**A.** The best time to plant any creeping bent in your area is in the early fall. The only way in which Cohansey can be planted is by stolons. These are scattered, usually at the rate of five, seven and sometimes ten bushels to 1,000 sq. ft., rolled, lightly topdressed, rolled again and kept moist until they have caught. I cannot give you

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