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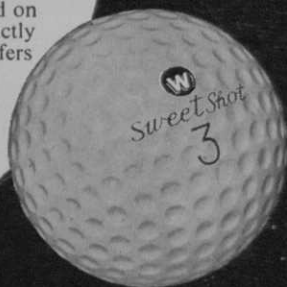
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Grau's Answers (continued)

Storing Topsoil

Q. A club where a friend of mine is one of the directors has a good supply of topsoil for use now and then when required. The problem is how to properly store the topsoil so it will keep its character and not deteriorate from rain or moisture, sun, dust or other elements. It has been suggested that it can be stored under polyethylene sheeting or, possibly, rubber-coated sheeting. What do you recommend? (Rhode Island)

A. The best way to store the topsoil is to leave it out doors in the wind, rain and sun, covered with live growing vegetation. Pile it as you wish, then follow the pattern established by the Pennsylvania Highway dept. Apply lime, if needed, then fertilize with 5-10-10 at 1,000 lbs. to the acre (25 pounds to 1,000 sq. ft.) Sow a mixture of 40 lbs. of ryegrass and 40 lbs. of inoculated Penngift crown vetch seed to the acre.

Cover with a light straw mulch, one ton to the acre, and go away and let Nature take care of it. No mowing will be required. If a few large weeds grow up, cut them off with a sickle. The crown vetch will take over the weeds and will keep the topsoil in a loamy, crumbly condition, ready for instant use.

The piles of topsoil could be covered with

poly sheeting but there would seem to be no advantage except that the soil would be dry whenever needed. The vegetative covering offers the greatest advantage.

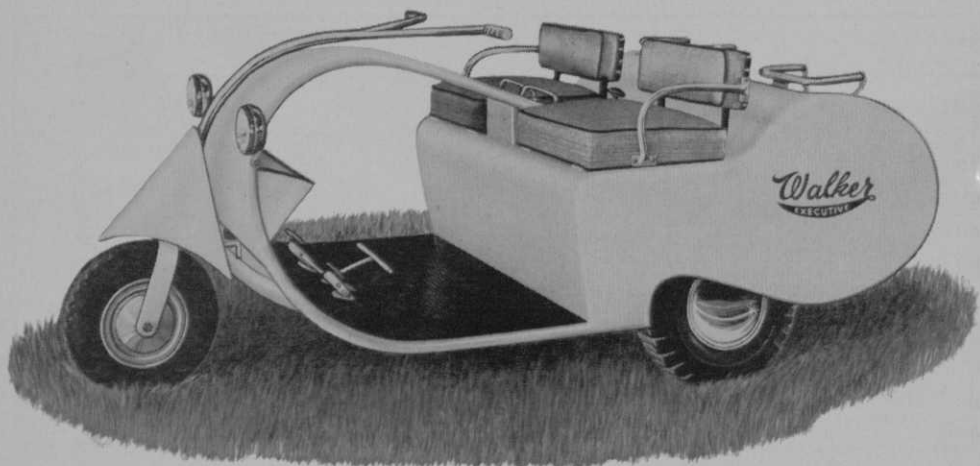
Grass Requiring Less Care

Q. I have maintained about 14,000 sq. ft. of Washington bent for the past 20 years or so. It requires close attention and prevents me from making summer trips of very long duration. I have decided to go into some other lawn grass that would be beautiful and, at the same time, would not require as much attention and give me as much grief as the bent. In making this change I'd like to know what kind of grass to plant. We live in south-central Minn. and have good sandy loam with clay sub-soil. I presume it would be well to make the change in Sept. and remove all the bent sod. About how deep would you suggest we cut the sod? (Minnesota)

A. I can think of no combination that would be more suited to your conditions and to your climate than a mixture of Pennlawn creeping red fescue (70 per cent), Merion blue (30 per cent). This mixture should be seeded at the rate of 2 to 2½ lbs. to 1,000 sq. ft.

Yes, the bent sod should be stripped and removed. I would suggest cutting it about one inch thick. If the grade of the lawn is exactly the way you want it, I doubt if I would do any seedbed preparation beyond going over it

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6 or 8 times with an aerating machine to cultivate the soil and to punch it full of millions of holes. During this process incorporate whatever lime, phosphate and potash may be required according to the soil test. The soil test can be made in advance of stripping so that you can have all materials available when aerating is started. The various passes of the aerating machine will help work the materials into the seed-bed.

As a last item before sowing the seed, I would spread 20 lbs. to 1,000 sq. ft. of nitrogen fertilizer. This will provide adequate nitrogen for rapid establishment of the fescue and Merion and feed the turf for an entire season.

I would start immediately. Mid-August would have been even better. Merion needs warm soil to germinate quickly and to establish turf before cool weather sets in. Pennlawn fescue thrives under almost identically the same conditions.

You may expect to find some of the Washington bent coming back into the lawn. That which reappears can be discouraged by treating the patches with 2,4D. Bent is very sensitive to 2,4D and can be killed while fescue and Merion will not be injured. The height of cut should be about 1 in., no higher.

These grasses will require infinitely less maintenance than bent and probably need to be irrigated only two or three times in a season. One fertilization a year with a controlled release is all that you will need.

It is recommended that the clippings be re-

moved, especially when they are heavy enough to lie on top of the turf and become unsightly and a harbor for insects and diseases.

A Pair of Pests

Q. I have some patches of clover and also some patches of silver crabgrass on the fringe area of my greens. I would like to kill this grass. What do you think would be the best material to use. I want to replant these areas in bentgrass. (Kansas).

A. Clover largely can be eliminated through the use of nitrogen fertilizer. Nitrogen feeding on a good grass can choke out clover without the need for chemicals if soil conditions are good and management practices are favorable. Overwatering and starvation are sure ways to bring in clover and other unwanted growth.

In replanting these areas in bentgrass I suggest that you consider using Penncross creeping bentgrass seed. Penncross has been proved to be a highly desirable grass for putting greens with great vigor and sturdiness and ability to keep out unwanted growth. Be sure to fertilize generously in the seedbed before sowing the Penncross seed. One lb. of seed to 1,000 sq. ft. ordinarily is sufficient to produce an excellent stand of turf. Superior grasses adequately fertilized and intelligently managed are your first defense against weeds.

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