

GRAU'S ANSWERS TO TURF QUESTIONS

Wanted: A Reliable Course Building Code

The Penn State conference for February lists a discussion on "Relationships Between Construction and Maintenance." Without a doubt several other conference groups will discuss these and related topics. These efforts represent an attempt to develop a body of facts in an open, impartial study. Out of the mists of confusion and uncertainty can be evolved a guide a "building code," which can be made available to a committee in charge of planning a new course, hiring an architect, buying the land and working out details pertinent to completion of a successful course.

No one is more keenly aware of the need for a course building code than the supt. who must maintain the course after it is built. The pattern seems to be more and more traffic per square foot involving both machines and people. There are more players than ever before. Players start earlier and stay out later. There are more cars and carts. With more and more traffic, the players demand less and less interference from maintenance. And why not? They pay their money and they deserve to play. This dictates that every device known must be brought into action to promote easy, rapid maintenance. The place to start is in the planning committee, so that mistakes can be corrected before they are made.

There is little doubt as to the compatibility of good design and easy maintenance. A skillful builder can take the plans of a brilliant architect and create a course of beauty that offers a test of skill, yet embody all of the known and proved principles of agronomic science so that the finished course will be a joy to maintain. It's possible that perfection can be so



outstanding that players will ask in awe, "Who designed it? Who built it?" (They probably will not ask, "Who maintains it?")

Since 1927, when we started maintaining our first course, we have constantly seen the need for closer coordination of efforts among those who plan, design, build and maintain courses. There is no real desire on the part of any segment of the industry to invade another domain or to usurp the rights of another. There is a wholesome desire, and an urgent need, to provide for the players the very best course possible, playable the maximum number of daylight hours, with a minimum number of built-in maintenance headaches.

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Winter Play Damage

Q. We would like to have your opinion on the controversy raging at our club as to whether or not damage can be caused to greens by keeping them open for winter golf. (Pennsylvania)

A. You may be quite sure that there will be damage from winter and early spring play in your district. The damage can be corrected but, in extreme cases, it may take most of the summer to bring it about. Also, considerable expense may be entailed in re-sodding, aerating, and re-seeding.

The greatest damage will come when the ground is frozen. Under these conditions damage can be very severe. The area around the cup may look like a "hog wallow" after a sunny day if many tramp in that limited area. Because of the frozen ground it is not possible to move the cup around and, therefore, damage tends to be severe.

In some areas where damage was severe and



One of the country's most complete golf setups is being built near Hartford, Conn., where a 6,500 yd regulation course, 9-hole Par 3, 40-tee range and miniature are going in. The Par 3 will be ready this spring and the other facilities at a later date. Called Grantmoor, the project will cost around \$2 million. It is being built by Newington Turnpike Assoc., composed of 11 Hartford businessmen headed by Robert M. Grant, former New England and Connecticut amateur champion. Geoffrey Cornish is the golf architect and Lou Galby, former pres. of Conn. PGA, already has been named pro. The Par 3 is lighted, fully watered and holes range from 90 to 140 yds. Half of the range tees will be protected.

there was much opposition to winter and early spring play, the supt. prepared temporary greens in front of or to the side of the regular greens. When the conditions became excessively bad, play was simply put on to the temporary greens and nobody was inconvenienced.

Not Rooted Down

Q. We have 9 grass greens and a putting clock. Our grass is good and the greens seems in good shape but they have not rooted down the way they should. Is this on account of too much water? We have fertilized plenty with fertilizer that is supposed to be the best for this locality, but maybe this is one reason why roots do not go deeper. We kept the greens plenty wet all summer and they will take water as late as August. Some say they have had too much water and are too soft, but if the greens are hard the players gripe. (Kansas)

A. From what you say the greens undoubtedly have had ample supplies of water and perhaps they have had more than they need. Yes, too much water easily can prevent or discourage roots from going deeper. I appreciate what you say about players griping if the greens are too hard, yet if they're too soft the divots are large and rarely are they fixed properly. Regardless of gripes, I would advise you to keep the greens on the firm side and try to keep them on the dry side. Dry grass is healthy grass and if there is an attack of disease, it is much easier to control it if the soil is not completely saturated with water.

It is entirely possible that the soil in your

greens is rather tight and will not let air and water easily into the soil and neither will it let the roots grow deeply. In most cases where this occurs, the situation can be corrected by thorough aeration and by adding sand to create a more mellow, open, friable condition, so that the soil and roots can breathe. Rebuilding might be necessary.

The fertilizer that you have been using carries a high percentage of phosphorus, and it is quite likely that your soils have developed a very high phosphate level. It would be well for you to send a soil sample to your Experiment station and have it checked. When results are returned, I would appreciate seeing a copy so that I may help you interpret for future fertilizer usage.

Do you have questions concerning your turf? Send them to GRAU, c/o Golfdom.

Third International Miniature

The third annual International Miniature golf tournament will be played in Asbury Park, N.J., Sept. 10-11, according to George Zuckerman, promotional dir. of the event. Inquiries as to how miniature course operators can get tournament franchises should be sent to Zuckerman at Convention Hall in Asbury Park. Last year's International winners were Brian Boor of Toledo and Raymond Paige of South River, N.J.