

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.

• • • • •

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