

interesting views;

4. Scale before you plant; i.e., take into consideration the width of walks before surrounding them with shrubs, and the height and breadth of buildings before ringing them with trees;

5. Don't block out windows or block entrance ways with tall shrubs;

6. When planting flowers don't select colors that will clash with the colors of your buildings;

7. You'll occasionally be pestered by well-intentioned members who want you to plant a certain type of shrub that may clash with the design of present plantings. If you can't dissuade them, you'll probably have to join them;

8. Check all plants, shrubs, etc. for disease before planting.

Preventive Maintenance Discussed

The final speaker on the Wednesday afternoon program, Purdy Carson, a Worthington Mower sales engineer, told the supts. how to use preventive maintenance methods to prolong the life of maintenance. He said that much of the malfunctioning of power equipment is due more to neglect of proper and simple tuneup and maintenance measures than to operating abuses. Carson cited these examples of poor maintenance: Air cooled engines cease to remain air cooled because vents are allowed to become clogged; Dirty grease, oil and gasoline too often are used in cleaning and lubrication work; Mower blades aren't properly sharpened, throwing an extra burden on the engine to rotate them and causing an early breakdown of the machine.

"The sad part of it is," Carson declared, "that the manufacturer is blamed for most of the trouble that results from nothing else but pure neglect or improper maintenance work."

The Worthington engineer then gave a demonstration of how to adjust and grind reel type mower blades. He showed how too tightly adjusted reels cause premature blade wear and how grass can be injured when the reels are set too loosely. When the blades are ground. Carson said that a good deal of care has to be taken in gauging to insure proper sharpening. The same holds true with bed knives, since if the grinding setting is more than 1/16 ins. off, stresses can be caused in the metal that eventually may cause serious damage.

In his concluding remarks. Carson said that many more miles could be gotten out of all types of equipment if course maintenance depts, religiously consulted their servicing records.

Sixth Session

You Haven't Lived Until You've Gotten Ready for an Open

The educational program was concluded on Thursday morning when three turf conditions in different parts of the country in 1959, and four supts., who had gone through the throes of preparing for National Open tournaments in the last 20 years, described some of their experiences. The USGA group was composed of Bill Bengyfield, representing the Far West, Alex Radko of the East, and John B. Moncrief of the Southwest. Supts. who went back and sweated through the months preceding the Big One included Elmer Border, then of the Olympic Culb in San Francisco, Sherwood Mocre of Winged Foot, Elmer J. Michael of Oak Hill in Rochester and Marshall Farnham formerly of Philadelphia CC.

The Woes of 1959

The verdict on the 1959 weather by the three green section men who spoke was summed up in one word — woeful. It was particularly poor in the east and northeast sections of country, according to Alex Radko.

He ticked off at least a half dozen ways in which the elements worked against the supt. last year. Among them: There were no warm spring rains to speak of and as late as mid-April, greens along the Buffalo-Boston line were still straw colored; Fairways were hard hit and didn't really come back all year; Knotweed thrived like it never thrived before; The sod webworm had a field day, and not the kind that's held at Rutgers; It wasn't a good season for poa and fall renovation was either delayed or had to be postponed entirely.

But, concluded Alex, the supt. learned a few things which will help to carry him through in the future if there is a play-back on the 1959 weather. He found, for example, that fungicide treatment and green fertilization has to be reduced in summers such as last year offered. New respect for pre-emergent treatment was impressed upon him. He had to use more hydrated lime to hold the fungicide that was being washed away by heavy summer rains, and perhaps, he rediscovered top-dressing.



Sherwood Moore Marshall Farnham Elmer Michael Elmer Border
... they told harrowing tales about preparing for the Open.

Beware the Amateur Salesman

Bill Bengueyfield of the western section also dwelled momentarily on 1959's dreary record and added that a new type of menace came along last year to plague the supt. That was the inexperienced salesman giving incorrect advice. He seemed to be in abundance. Supts. who should have known better gave him an ear because the weather in some cases was driving them to desperation.

"Last year," said Bengueyfield, "can't be written off as a total loss, by any means. The majority of supts. got smarter as the year progressed. They say they couldn't always depend on old methods and adopted more flexible management programs. It armed them for the future."

Bengueyfield reported that a few old standbys were resurrected last year. For example: Iron sulfate, that John Monteith recommended back in 1932 as a weed killer, and to restore a needed element to the soil, reappeared from June through August and proved to be the answer to one of several problems.

The USGA's western dir. also gave quite a lengthy report on Penncross' behavior in 1959. It was both a hero and goat, proving to be a fine desert strain but not holding up too well in Southern Calif. where play on it may have been too heavy.

Report on Bent in the South

Jim Monteith, who patrols the Southwest for the USGA, said that the disease and weed problems in that sector were more in evidence in 1959 than in the previous four or five years. Supts. found that these are things that can't be whipped

in a single season, but have to be overcome in perhaps not less than three years. Irrigation also continued to offer its share of headaches since rainfall ranges from 60 ins. a year in the eastern part of the section to practically nil farther west.

Montieth also read a report by Jim Latham, Southeastern USGA agronomist, who told of bentgrass tests being carried on at the Athens (Ga.) CC. Numerous strains have been given a trial in plots with 10 ins. of topsoil made up of the following: Sand, 60 percent; loam, 30 and peat, 10. No major difficulties were encountered in any strains although it was emphasized that the experiments have been carried on for only one year. Old Orchard, Penncross and a mix of Arlington and Congressional, in that order, appeared to thrive best in the southern setting. A tentative conclusion is that given proper soil and management, bent can be grown in the Southeast.

Nothing Like A Bonus

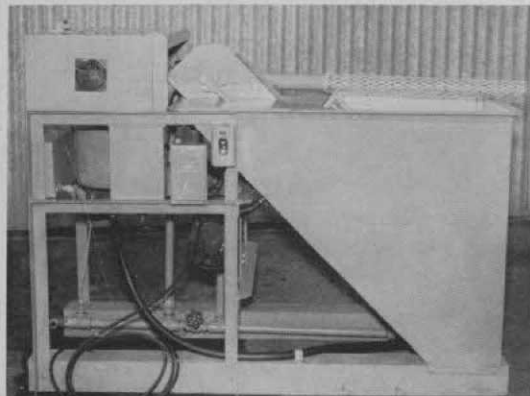
If the good or best is saved for last, there was something of a dessert course in the accounts given by the foursome of Border, Michael, Moore and Farnham, who described their experience in preparing for various Open tournaments.

There is no denying that a supt. who grooms a course for a USGA extravaganza has his share of tribulations, but at least there are compensations. It often helps him salarywise; he may be able to purchase equipment that the club has backlogged over the years; but probably most important, it vastly improves his stature in the eyes of the members.

(Continued on page 144)

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Houston Convention

(Continued from page 54)

One of the significant points about the business of preparing for the Open that was emphasized was that the USGA should be more generous in rewarding the supt., who in all probability, has spent at least a year worrying and working in getting his acres ready for the big event. A plaque is nice; the possibility of being seen on TV for a brief second is something to contemplate; but there isn't any tribute that quite stacks up alongside a substantial bonus check. These, incidentally, were the sentiments of the audience and not of the speakers.

Catastrophe Strikes

Something in the way of catastrophe struck at three sites shortly before the Open was to be played. Sherwood Moore at Winged Foot had a fire in February that destroyed his maintenance building and practically all his equipment. Elmer Border, then at Olympic, woke up one March day with a strike on his hands. It went on for three weeks. Elmer Michael had a rainy 10 months to contend with prior to the big event at Oak Hill. What's more, when reconstruction was to be

stepped up in the spring, the weather turned even more perverse. Marshall Farnham was the only one to escape fire, strike and rain, but as he said, "Things were less complicated in 1939 when the Open was played at Philadelphia CC."

Witness the woes of Border: He came to Olympic Club seven months before the 1955 Open and was faced with the job of rebuilding seven tees, one green and all traps. Around four acres of sod were moved in the process and 300 tons of sand were imported. Dry winter and spring winds didn't exactly work in his favor; neither did the strike. Members helped with the green and fairway mowing and one parked a sorely needed tractor too close to a tree trunk.

Rough Lost in Tall Grass

To further aggravate things, one person in authority at Olympic, said Elmer, decided that the course was really going to be toughened up for the Open. He wouldn't allow the rough to be cut. When Joe Dey, the USGA executive director, came to inspect the property a few days before the tournament, the rough looked like African bush. Air had to be pumped into Joe on the spot. It was finally decided that the only thing that could be done

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was to cut a 6-ft. swath adjoining the fairway to normal rough height. When the tournament was ended and the entire rough restored, 280 truckloads of grass were hauled away.

The fire that destroyed Winged Foot's maintenance building and equipment turned out favorably for Sherwood Moore since he got complete new replacements of both. For the next four months things went quite smoothly but a cloudburst caught up with Moore on the next to last day and resulted in the West course, which was used as a parking lot, being turned into a morass. It took almost a month to get it back in playable shape.

Compensations in Work

"A supt., however, shouldn't get the impression that getting ready for an Open is just a succession of headaches," Moore said. "There are compensations. For one thing, it raises your standards of maintenance. For another, it forces you to get things done that may have been put off before. You work with a lot of different committees at your club and, therefore, you become better known. Finally, most supts. I know have done better financially after having handled an Open."

Elmer Michael expressed the opinion that perhaps many of the changes that are dictated in getting ready for the USGA event are unnecessary. "Some, at least," he asserted, "seem to be made merely for the sake of change. Or, maybe it's a plot against the supt."

Spell of Poor Weather

Oak Hill, as mentioned before, got a prolonged spell of poor weather preceding the 1955 Open. Reconstruction work was slowed up to the extent that 2,000 yards of gumbo had to be stacked up behind the 11th green only a day or two before

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the practice rounds started. Parking facilities surrounding the club became so churned up that the West course had to be opened up on the first day of the tournament to take care of the traffic. Due to the poor weather and heavy foot traffic, the area around the clubhouse took a terrific beating. It took at least two months after the final putt to restore this and the West course, Michael said.

In view of all the trials and tests that Border, Moore and Michael were put to, Marshall Farnham said that he suffered a slight pang of conscience in finding that he got off so easy. "Perhaps the course requirements weren't quite as stringent 20 years ago," Marshall remarked. "We knew a year in advance that we were going to have the Open. The ceiling was taken off the budget, equipment manufacturers gave us a hand and so did many other people, including Joe Valentine. All in all, things went quite smoothly. Yet, I'll say that one Open is enough for any supt."