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FRED GRAU

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with the needs of the grass; that maintain slow, steady firm growth that is highly resistant to traffic injury; and that promote rapid healing of scars.

4) Sensible irrigation as needed to avoid soft rapid shallow-rooted growth and to promote firmness with deep rooting and resistance to diseases.

5) Close frequent mowing with clippings removed.

6) Chemical treatments for pests and diseases, applied as needed.

7) Topdressing as needed with weed-free material to maintain true surfaces.

8) Soil cultivation and thatching, as needed.

Here are some of the flagrant violations of good agronomic practices that I have come across:

1) Starvation. It is inconceivable that a club will spend good money to build and turf their tees, then fail to apply adequate nutrients. Some have said frankly, "We can't afford fertilizer for our tees." Yet, when annual bluegrass and other weeds become unacceptable, there is money to return.

2) Overwatering. There is a quaint but prevalent notion that water doesn't cost anything—or not much. Water makes grass green—so let's use water. Saturated soil rots roots and favors Poa. Soil becomes baked so hard that more water is needed to soften. Merion gives way to Poa. Bermudagrass sickens and loses its body. Bents can take it somewhat longer but they, too, let Poa in. I've seen soggy tee turf, mostly Poa, with perfectly beautiful weed-free turf at the ends and edges where—and this is true—"The sprinklers don't quite reach!"

We have the grasses, the fertilizers, the water, the mechanical equipment and the know-how to produce near-perfect turf for teeing grounds. Need more be said?

Q.—At the G.C.S.A.A. Conference in Washington, D. C., we heard about "FLAMING" to facilitate thatch dis-

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FRED GRAU

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posal *in place*. We would like to learn more about this but we don't know where we can get burners. Do you have any suggestions?

(Indiana)

A.—The flaming method essentially is that of 1) dislodging thatch by suitable mechanical equipment, 2) allowing the thatch to dry on the surface of the turf, 3) burning the dry thatch by passing a burner over the area. This has been done in California and Pennsylvania.

Flamers may burn oil or L-P gas. Some work has been done in several states operating flamers to control alfalfa weevil. Several manufacturers offer information: AFCO Flame Cultivator Company, P. O. Box 231, Little Rock, Arkansas 72203; Barrentine Manufacturing Co., Inc., P. O. Box 697, Greenwood, Mississippi 38931; Brunner Manufacturing Co., P. O. Box 559, Bedford, Indiana 47421; Consolidated Manufacturing Co., P. O. Box 1100, Englewood, Colorado 80110; Gotcher Engineering & Manufacturing Co., P. O. Box 670, Clarksdale, Mississippi 38614; Manchester Tank and Equipment Co., P. O. Box 318, Lithonia, Georgia 30058; Western Tank and Steel Corporation, P. O. Box 1338, Lubbock, Texas 79408.

Note: There is no known published information on flaming for thatch control in turf at the present time.

Q.—How effective is overseeding fescue greens with Pennncross bent seed? Is the bent strong enough to take over?

(Michigan)

A.—Pennncross will take over if your operations and subsequent management favor the bent. Thorough spiking will provide resting places for the bent seed. I favor hydroseeding (if you have a good sprayer), and fertilization with a slow-release organic fertilizer. If *Poa annua* is a problem, the takeover will be slower.

Fescue greens are a rarity. Is it possible that they might be good enough to be preserved? ●