



INNOVATIONS

Someone said to me recently, "Watch a lazy person and you will probably learn how to do a hard job the easy way." There must be some logic in that remark, but I cannot subscribe wholeheartedly to the concept. Some of the innovations in the profession of maintaining turf had to be originated by people with drive and ambition. The lazy person might be able to get through a job the easy way, but the question to be asked is, was the job done professionally?

In 1935, before there were combs for putting green mowers, I helped a man put together three stiff stable brooms so that they could be pulled across the green ahead of the mowers. In this way the "nap" (grain or thatch) would be raised, be cut off and removed. This method provided a smoother putting surface and avoided some "thatch" troubles. Later, we had combs and brushes to do the same job simultaneously with mowing after we had power mowers. Twenty years later the principle of vertical mowing was galvanized into action. These developments required creative thought and action and plenty of energy to get them built, tested, demonstrated and sold.

I can visualize the energy that brought about the innovation of Dr. William Daniel's Purr-Wick greens and what it took to get the first greens built. Also I recall what it took to get greens built to USGA Green Section specifications. There isn't a lazy one in the bunch!

The Soil Modification Plots at Penn State are the product of straight thinking and a tremendous amount of energy. In 10 years the research results will be val-

uable to golf course architects and builders throughout the world. There is still no place here for the lazy person.

Was a lazy person responsible for developing soil cultivation tools, hydraulic seeders and mulchers, machines that scarify and drop seeds into the grooves, so that they are in intimate contact with the soil? What about the many thousands of plots that proved the efficacy of a myriad of weed killers, pesticides and fertilizers? Lazy people didn't do these jobs.

One of my favorite energy-driven people always has been Dr. K.G. Clarke, who developed ureaform fertilizer. I could name others who are driven by their desires to accomplish something worthwhile. Perhaps I have over-reacted to the idea of "lazy people" getting things done the easy way. Maybe the lazy ones have benefited by taking advantage of labor-saving machines that have been built for them. Just the same I'll put my chips on the people with restless, creative energy. They see that something needs to be done, then they go ahead and do it.

Q—We are rebuilding the greens at this Army installation and plan to plant Penncross bent. Everyone says to use two pounds to 1,000 square feet. I say that this is too much. Also they want me to put bermudagrass on the banks. Would you comment on this matter?

(Kentucky)

A—I have to go along with you on the rate of seeding Penncross bent. I, too, consider two pounds excessive. One pound is maximum in my book. More seed is thought by some to compensate for a poor seed bed, low fertility and the like. No such

thing! Bermudagrass may be okay for the banks, but I am very partial to zoysia. It does not need mowing as often, it chokes weeds better, takes less fertilizer, and is easier to control at the edges of the bent greens and bunkers. There is a lot of good zoysia in your part of Kentucky. Set in some plugs and overseed with a good turf-type perennial ryegrass, such as Pennfine or Manhattan. The zoysia spreads slowly, but surely. Be sure to specify Greens Quality Penncross. All Penncross is Blue Tag Certified. Greens Quality is higher quality, less inert, zero *Poa annua*.

Q—We heard about the new way of building greens, called Purr-Wick. Is it a practical method? What kind of putting surface does it present? Are many in use?

(Michigan)

A—Dr. William Daniel of Purdue is credited with the new idea. He tells me that there are more than 70 greens in play in nine states. "Consistency" is the word he uses to describe the playing qualities. Player response has been good. In chip tests the ball responds predictably. Yes, it seems to be a practical method. For full details write to: Dr. William Daniel, Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind. 47907. □

Questions for Dr. Grau may be sent to Fred V. Grau, GOLFDOM Magazine, 235 East 45th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017.

CORRECTION

An error inadvertently appeared in Dr. Grau's March column on page 96 in the answer part of the question from West Virginia, next to last sentence. That sentence should read: "Remove all screens to avoid clogging."