

Pest problems had their share of attention, with discussions of turf diseases by H. W. Thurston of Penn State and various insect problems by F. L. Gambrel, J. A. Adams, and J. G. Mayhyse of New York. Crab grass control with chemicals was covered by R. E. Engel of Rutgers, with comments and discussion of practical experiences by other speakers.

Another aspect of weed control was discussed by J. A. DeFrance of Rhode Island in his talk on weed-free compost and weed-free seedbeds. Roland Schultheis, Superintendent of the Flushing Cemetery, covered the management of cemetery turf. Discussions of problems allied to turf management were those on Labor Management by W. F. Whyte of the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell, and the use of trees and shrubs in the landscape by R. W. Curtis of the Cornell staff. One evening was devoted to a spirited Question Box and Bull Session and the evening just before the opening of Conference, March 1, was devoted to a popular Open-House on the campus.

While bad weather and slippery roads decreased attendance somewhat this year, the good attendance in spite of these con-

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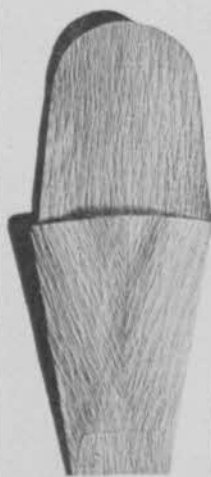
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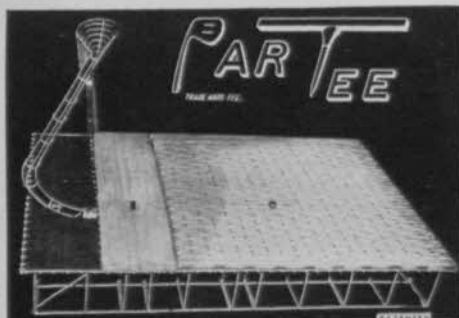
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ditions indicates a keen interest in turf problems in New York State.

A definite need in New York turf work was met at the Cornell Turf Conference by the organization of the New York State Turf Association. Stated objects of the Association are: to develop an attitude of solidarity among persons interested in turf; to encourage the betterment of conditions in the field of turf culture in the State of New York; to handle collectively the problems of turf growers; to disseminate information concerning activities in the field of turf culture and generally to further sound learning and adequate instruction in the field. Active membership is confined to persons whose residence or place of employment is in New York State, but any person in sympathy with the objectives of the Association may join.

During the first year the Association will operate under a set of provisional by-laws. Inasmuch as it is highly desirable that the Board of Directors and the Officers of the Association be chosen to be representatives of the several geographical areas as well as the major occupations most concerned with turf the New York State Turf Advisory Committee appointed several years ago was



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asked to serve as a Board of Directors during the coming year. The New Board of Directors is made up of the following persons; Chairman — John Gormley, Wolferts Roost CC, Albany, Vice Chairman — Roland Schultheis, Flushing Cemetery Assoc., 46th Ave. & 163rd St., Flushing, L. I., Secretary-Treasurer — A.A. Schardt, Box 42, Lake View, Ass't Secretary-Treasurer — Richard T. Lord, 22 Orchard St., Middleport, Timothy Gagen, Schuyler Meadows GC, Loudonville, Floyd B. Gallagher, Cortland Rural Cemetery, Cortland, Roy Jones, Hempstead CC, Hempstead, L. I., Harold LeFurgy, Winged Foot GC, Mamaroneck, Robert L. Mitchell, The Edison GC, Rexford, James Reid, Brooklea CC, Rochester, K. W. Troense-guard, Box 255, Rye, A. R. Twombly, Pelham CC, Pelham.

An immediate activity of the Association will be the publication of a periodical dealing with matters of interest in the field of turf culture. Through this publication summaries of the discussions at the Turf Conference will be made available to those who were unable to attend and as a matter of record for those who were able to be present. Complimentary copies will be available to any interested person.

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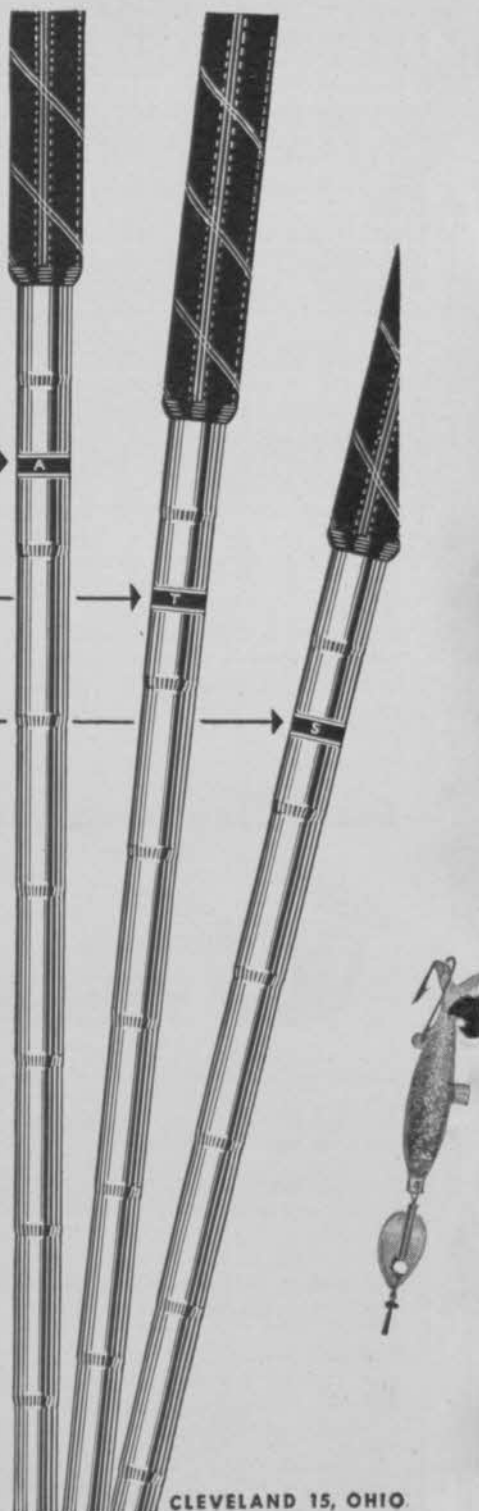
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APRIL • 1949

How Much "Mind-Reading" Must a Pro Do?

By HERB GRAFFIS

Late last year a pro I thought was a good man and a hard worker was let go after several years at his club. I thought the fellow had received a rather raw deal but the more I looked into the case the more I was reminded of what a veteran New England pro — I think it was "Skip" Wogan — once told me. He said "To make good with your members you have to be a mind-reader, but that's not hard if you think of the members first."

On most pro jobs the officials and members haven't a clear idea of what they want from the pro. That's understandable enough. They're not pros and don't know how the job should be handled. Unless they've made a study of golf club operating they are hazy about what the pro should do. The pro has to do what they want done before they think of it.

Clubs differ so much that a major factor in a pro's qualifications for a job is his judgment in determining what the club needs. One club may need energetic promotion of golf activity to get all of the members playing more. This generally is the case. Pros who study records of number of rounds played by various members usually are surprised to see how many members don't play much more than 20 times a year at the club. With times tightening up a bit those members are going to be the first to resign.

At other clubs the older men who constitute the greater part of the membership don't want any more play on the course. As long as they are willing to pay it certainly isn't the pro's job to increase play so cost per member will be reduced. In such instances the pro still has a plenty tough job for those old gents are fussy about having good caddies available and

having a pro who can teach them in 15 minutes something that will enable them to win a couple of bucks from another old pirate.

Pro Gets "The Rap"

The pro may say the caddies are the caddymaster's problem at such a club, but the members don't think that way. They hold the pro responsible for the entire golf operation, except the course, and if the caddymaster isn't on the job, it's the pro who takes the rap.

With the caddy situation uncertain on account of the attitude of the kids and the widespread use of bag carts, the pro these days has more of a task trying to get the right answer to caddying than he ever had before — and that's true regardless of the competence of the caddymaster. Rarely is a caddymaster paid enough to attract a thoroughly well qualified man to the job. That means the pro has to handle any part of the job in which the caddymaster is weak. The pro doesn't have to be much of a mind-reader to learn if he listens to a few beefs from men or women members.

Lessons on Wise Basis

Certainly the pro doesn't have to be psychic to learn that in the lesson part of his business he has fallen heir to an illogical tradition which established the time for lessons at a half hour. Anybody who's made good as a golf instructor can relate many cases of having given highly effective golf lessons in five minutes; he may make a slight alteration in the grip or have the player move up or back on the ball in the address, and that's enough for the pupil to absorb in one lesson. The other 25 minutes are devoted to monotony or confusion.

Yet, with this situation being acutely

realized by pros and the pros knowing well that members who could make best use of lessons are scared away by the time demands, does the pro have to be a mind-reader to see that his members need education in their attitude toward lessons? The pro doesn't have to sell the member who is content to stay on the lesson tee for a half hour, and hour or longer. He has to sell the lesson idea to people who now think lessons are dreary but rather necessary performances, like paying income tax.

Or does the pro have to be a mind-reader in seeing where he could be discreetly helpful to committees, especially those responsible for preparing the club tournament schedules for men and women and mixed events. Of course the pro is expected to conduct these events and frequently sees the same winners week after week. If, without making any tactful suggestions for altering the nature of events to give the suckers a chance, can the pro wonder if the suckers have no particular concern about the pro's welfare?

Pro Shop for Member Service

For 22 years GOLFDOM has been pounding away on club officials with the idea that the pro shop ought to be at least up to the class of the rest of the club's appointments — and in the case of many small clubs, a whole lot better than the restaurant, bar, locker-rooms and show-

ers. The idea has caught on with officials and members.

The pro need not be a mind-reader of impressive qualities to learn that today golfers get around a lot and compare one pro shop with another as indications of the relative ratings of clubs. If a member or his guest comes into a pro shop that isn't up to the rest of the club the pro is going to be held accountable although the pro may be handicapped by an architect's errors of omission or commission.

Golf is a sunshine game, so golf selling must be sunshine selling. The darker and more unattractive the pro shop the easier it is to revolutionize by comparatively small expense in lighting fixtures which the local electric company will suggest, by bright paint, gay window drapes, soap, a broom and a dust cloth.

And for stock in the shop the pro doesn't have to read a member's mind deeply to learn that merchandise out of the member's price range won't move. When the pro himself goes shopping he wants to know the price on what he's looking at. The member's mind works the same way, but in too many pro shops the merchandise isn't price-tagged.

Without exception the most successful club pros are good practical psychologists who have the happy habit of being able to

(continued on page 93)

TAKING A SHOT AT THE NINETEENTH



This bar in grill room at Skycrest CC (Chicago dist.) is uniquely constructed and its beauty is commented on by members and visitors. But to Skycrest mgr., A. C. Perkins and bartenders it would be more beautiful if the bar were closer to the back-bar. It now calls for extra legwork by bartenders and lost motion in handling rush business of golfers at bar and those to be served at tables in the room.



A well developed Bent Grass fairway at Milwaukee Country Club that is cut closely and fertilized regularly.

Controlling Factors in the Development of Better Turf

By O. J. NOER

The modern golfer is more critical of turf condition in every way than his predecessor ever was. At one time players were content when greens were perfect. Now, they demand the same kind of fairways and tees. They want weed-free roughs. Golfers expect a good lie for every fairway shot. There is an insistent demand for closely clipped fairways, since it is impossible to control the shot when there is grass between the club head and ball. Some players urge fairway watering to provide green grass all season and to make walking less arduous. They do not realize that water complicates fairway maintenance, especially when the existing grass or grasses are not amenable to water.

Bermuda grass and carpet grass in the South, and the bent grasses in the North are the only ones which will withstand constant close cutting. In the South, choice of grass is a simple matter because Bermuda and carpet grass make good fairway turf and perform exceptionally well on areas where soil conditions are favorable. Centipede and zoysia are possibilities, but widespread use is not likely for some years

to come. It will take time to demonstrate or disprove their worth. Both have their good qualities, but they may become even more matted over a period of years than Bermuda grass. Choice of grass is more difficult in the North because existing varieties have more serious drawbacks. Fescue and Kentucky blue grass cannot withstand continuous close cutting. They grow best when mowed at $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches or higher. Disease plays havoc with fescue during hot wet spells in midsummer, and leaf spot takes its toll of blue grass during cool wet weather. There are some good unwatered Kentucky blue grass fairways in places where soil and climate are very favorable. The turf is cut at about an inch in spring and fall, but in midsummer the mowers are raised to cut at $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Where coverage is uniform and the turf is dense these fairways satisfy the average golfer, even though the cut is seemingly high.

Dense Turf Suppresses Weeds

The discovery of 2,4-D focused attention upon weed control and created widespread interest in turf improvement. Many over-

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looked the part played by dense turf in weed suppression and thought 2,4-D the sole answer to good fairways. Some clubs have learned the fallacy of that belief to their sorrow. The use of 2,4-D has speeded the turf improvement program by eliminating broad leaf weeds quickly, but they have come back in larger numbers, or their place has been taken by clover, crab grass, etc., unless something was done to develop a dense turf in the voids left by the weeds. Good fairways existed long before 2,4-D was known. It took a longer time to crowd-out weeds and develop dense turf.

There is a place for 2,4-D. It is a useful tool to speed turf improvement. Broad leaf weeds can be taken out quickly, then turf improvement is a matter of fertilization, with or without reseeding.

All permanent turf forming grasses spread by vegetative means to form a dense turf — provided environmental factors are favorable. This fact is the basis upon which any turf improvement or maintenance program must be formulated, yet this truth is either overlooked or ignored. Creeping bent and poa trivialis in the North and southern grasses, such as Bermuda grass spread by means of surface runners called stolons. The colonial bent grasses are said to spread mostly by short underground stems. The blue grasses, and fescues spread by underground stems called rhizomes. Failure of these grasses to spread and make good turf is the result

of one, or possibly several, unfavorable factors. Impoverished soil is common, and generally blamed first. Excessive acidity and other unfavorable soil factors; bad drainage, unsuited grasses, or the ravages of destructive insects and disease may be equally or more important.

Determine Cause for Poor Turf

A determination of the reason for poor turf is the first necessity before deciding upon an improvement program. The answer can be found on the property in almost every instance. For example, improvement from fertilization cannot occur if existing grass is unsuited to soil or climate. In that event, reseeding to introduce suitable grasses must accompany fertilization. Bad drainage or something else may be a contributing cause. A careful examination of the vegetative cover including grasses and weeds, and a survey of soil, drainage, and all other factors is the first task. Then it is a simple matter to devise a workable plan which will eliminate all adverse factors and transform poor or mediocre turf into a beautiful dense sward of grass.

Loam soils, ranging from sandy to silt loam, are best for fairway turf because of their capacity to hold and ability to deliver, capillary water and plant food.

Developing Good Turf

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