

MARCH • 1951

Managers Plan Adjustment to Defense Economy

Problems of adjusting clubs to the national defense economy highlighted the sessions of the 23rd annual convention of the Club Managers Assn. of America, held Feb. 4-7 at Baker Hotel, Dallas, Tex. With a registration of about 600 men and women managers the convention was the association's largest. But despite the size of the attendance the Lone Star chapter of the CMAA smoothly handled the staging of the sessions and the entertainment events in which host chapters demonstrate to guests from all parts of the nation how to put on club parties. Suppliers, as usual, cooperated enthusiastically with the hosts in presenting the entertainment program.

With higher taxes certain to affect the club situation the managers listened studiously to the address by Harry Fawcett, mgr., Kansas City (Mo.) Club on "Taxes in Clubs" and probably learned plenty to suggest a careful overhauling of the tax set-ups at many clubs. Fawcett urged that clubs look at their charters and see just how the charters of clubs organized "not for profit" fit with the accounting and actual operation. He pointed out that proper accounting would disclose that club taxation in reality made a showing that gave no justification for hotel critics' statements that the clubs were, in some instances, competing with hotels but didn't have comparable tax loads. Fawcett warned that the lobbyists who wanted to pass tax loads onto others might bring clubs into the fire that's being put under co-operative enterprises.

Urges Accounting Revision

He said that proper accounting with provisions for replacements, reserves, depreciation and other charges frequently slighted in club accounting was necessary to get clubs in proper condition for determining fair taxation and to give club officials and members an accurate picture of club financial condition. Fawcett referred to the inconsistency of a club operated "not for profit" requiring the

manager to operate at a profit. He recommended that club officials have their attorneys go over their charters and accounting specialists go over their accounting systems to bring themselves up to date.

Fawcett remarked that taxes on dues and initiation fees in the case of one representative club represented more than 200% of a good year's net income of the club's operations. He said that because of the usual conception of a club all clubs are exposed to the danger of getting a very rough and unfair deal in taxation. He suggested that the clubs get themselves represented in Washington and advocated a sliding scale of from 5 cents to 10 cents a member to finance this representation and make a national study of the club tax situation.

O. P. Greathouse of the Missouri AC, St. Louis, Mo., Howard Welt of the Old Pueblo Club, Tucson, Ariz., and Al Deichler of the Midday Lunch Club, New York City, conducted a session on relationship of management with membership in which it was brought out (as no novelty) that common causes of managers' difficulties are pressure from members who insist on selling to the club regardless of price and quality differences, and from managers yielding to some members' demands for services that can't be given to all members.

Basis for Complaints

Managers agreed that the majority of complaints from members were well founded and in many cases it was best to take the rap diplomatically for committees. Over-familiarity of managers and other employees with members was reviewed as a dangerous fault. It was the consensus that any requests for special favors should be referred by the managers to their committee or boards. It also was emphasized that the manager and his department heads should discuss club operating matters daily and that the manager must make himself an example

of self-discipline and member relations for the guidance of all employees.

Thomas C. McGuffey, Indianapolis AC mgr., in speaking on principles of good management and selection of employees said a clear definition of employees' duties is the first factor in selecting first class employees. He told of the necessity of the club officials and manager clearly understanding the financial results expected of the manager as a primary element in successful club management. He remarked that often the lack of clear and

those which received at least two publicity pushes, in addition to the program notice, prior to the parties. Failure of entertainment committees was cited as main reason for the flop of club parties. This was avoided in several cases by having large entertainment committees with husband-and-wife teams taking over responsibility for running the various parties.

Lack of adequate planning and push for golf programs also was noted as a weak spot in numerous clubs.

O. C. DeView of Ernst and Ernst, Detroit, told of a five-year plan that co-ordinated income with foresight and protected a club against the unsound experiments that frequently result from the annual turn-over in club officials. Bob Berry, Rotunda Club, Richmond, Va., spoke on modified accounting systems for clubs and said that club accounting often is seriously out of date because bookkeepers and sometimes managers are unwilling to change methods that have been used for years although an improved method which gives the financial picture more accurately would involve less work.

Ormand C. Chapau, Druid Hills GC, Atlanta, Ga. in speaking of "Foods in Clubs" outlined a food control system he uses. He said there generally are unfair comparisons between club and commercial restaurant food prices because club quality and portions are much higher. In guarding against over-preparation he advised being governed by one's own experience at the club rather than by experience at other clubs and restaurants.

William B. Bangs, Jr., University Club of Chicago, was re-elected pres. of the CMAA and L. Roy Leonard, Cuvier Press Club, Cincinnati was re-elected sec'y-treas. Page Curran, River Crest CC, Ft. Worth, Texas is the newly elected vp. New directors elected are: Joseph E. Primeau, Ranier Club, Seattle, Wash.; O. P. Greathouse, Missouri AC, St. Louis, Mo.; Thomas C. McGuffey, Indianapolis (Ind) AC; and Eugene F. Sweeney, Empire State Club, New York.

Holdover directors are: John J. Pomeroy, Red Run GC, Royal Oak, Mich.; Robert H. Thompson, Detroit (Mich.) GC; Granville B. Hollenbeck, Cherry Hills CC, Denver, Colo.; James B. Montfort, National Press Club, Washington, D.C.; and Carl Jehlen, Glen Ridge (N.J.) CC.

prompt reports that can do the arguing for the manager is the source of management trouble. Failure to maintain the property in attractive and efficient shape also is source of discontent with management, McGuffey declared. He said there's got to be an improvement in working conditions at many clubs if they want to have the class of working personnel that club members expect.

Must Pep Up Parties

Granville B. Hollenbeck, Cherry Hills CC, Denver, Colo., spoke on "Arrangements for Club Activities and Parties" and strongly urged that considerable more planning of attractive special events be done if most clubs are to continue to draw to the extent they'll compete successfully with increased taxation and inflation for the members' recreation money. He detailed a number of interesting parties. Hollenbeck's talk was followed up by lively discussion in the Country Club Managers' round table session.

Most clubs represented at the convention reported they had programs for the season scheduled in advance. It was noted that the most successful club parties were

What Qualifies Good Manager

Herb Graffis, GOLFDOM'S editor, gave a round-up of what qualities successful club managers had in common. He reviewed early club history and related that the same good judgment required in other executive capacities was required in a superlative degree from a successful club manager due to so many members thinking they own the club. He said distinctive food and food service, attention to the small details of house appointments and operations before the members complained, love of the work, diplomacy, ability to inspire the help, cheerful but dignified service without sacrificing respect, keen financial capacity and health and temperament to withstand murderous hours, seemed to be points about every good manager. He also said one of the first things about having a good manager was to have a club of good members.

The Ohio Valley chapter presented an interesting collection of colored films of food items which it supplies to its member managers. Members come to the managers, view these food pictures, get

(Continued on page 77)

Golf Programs Demand Pro Planning NOW

By HERB GRAFFIS

Pro-managers who sat in the country club round-table sessions at the Club Managers' Assn. of America national convention in Dallas heard a lot about how special parties get and keep club members and push up club income. But managers who also were pros noted that no comment was made on the wisdom of accenting the golf program.

This omission of reference to the golf programs struck the pros as a sharp reminder the pros had better be doing to the golf programs what the managers are doing with the social programs. The managers brought out the fact that the committees can't always be depended on to arrange and publicize the parties to success but, in most cases, the manager has to keep diplomatically pushing when he doesn't wind up doing most of the job himself.

George Calderwood of North Hills, Milwaukee, Wis., disclosed in a GOLFDOM article last year the significant discovery that members of a representative first class private club played an average of only a few more than 20 games of golf a year. That makes golf per game cost too much for a lot of the members. The swimming pool for the kids and the parties for the older people—and the teenagers, too—therefore become major factors in keeping club members.

Tax Push on Golf

The managers at Dallas forecast that the tax situation and other effects of the defense situation would be adversely reflected in clubs unless the clubs pepped up their appeal with unusual events. Members get tired of the same old program repeated year after year. The golf program, in many clubs, suffers from the same annual monotony as the entertainment program.

Generally the complaint of golf committee heads is that they don't have enough of a budget to put on an attractive schedule that'll bring into fair competition members of all grades of golfing capabilities. If that actually is the case the budget can be raised as one of the best investments the club can make in increasing house revenue and keeping members sold on their memberships. How-

ever, it's often the case that the committee doesn't do its job.

There's where the pro's organizing and executive ability has to come into play. Either he has to get the committees to work effectively or do the work himself and let the committees think they do it. Some of the managers at Dallas related that they found large entertainment committees most valuable as, in such cases, members of the committee could take charge of various events and compete in seeing which event was the greatest success.

It is a sure thing that pro income, as well as entire club revenue, is in exact ratio to the amount of play at the club. Nothing else increases golf play among men, women and junior members as much as lively competitive programs. An indication of that is reflected by the large annual demand for the booklet "Golf Events," a free booklet furnished to pros and club officials by the National Golf Foundation, 407 S. Dearborn, Chicago 5, Ill. Many of the events listed among these suggestions for competitive events are for giving a prize-winning chance to the duffers who seldom get anything from the club except bills.

One thing that was emphasized during the managers' discussion was that the publicity campaign on the events can't be confined to mere mention in the yearly calendar or one announcement just prior to the event. There's got to be some circus publicity with two—and sometimes three—publicity mailings on the events. Even if the publicity doesn't always score in bringing out big fields it keeps the members aware there's a lot going on at the club and subtly reminds that many of the community envy the members' chance to get in on the program.

According to the managers this year is a critical year for cementing members onto the roster and preventing an unduly large turnover. That means the pros will have to give more attention than ever before to the golf competitive programs at their clubs and the pro whose committee hasn't already planned the golf season for operation in high gear had better look into the situation and get it corrected for the good of the club and his own business year.

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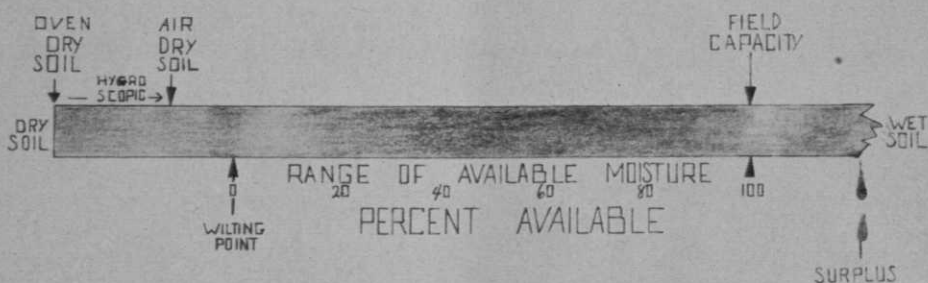


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SOIL MOISTURE RELATIONSHIPS



ADAPTED FROM LYON + BUCKMAN "THE NATURE AND PROPERTIES OF SOILS"

How to Measure Soil Moisture and Conserve Water, Labor*

By WM. H. DANIEL

Asst., Agronomy Dept., Purdue Univ.

Perhaps over the years Greenkeepers have heard more about soil and water relationships than any other phase of turf maintenance. Slowly our information on soil moisture conditions has increased, and now more scientific methods of measuring and controlling soil moisture are available. A method is suggested which can be applied to fairway and tee areas. It will provide a sound practical basis for supplemental irrigation as well as conserve labor and water.

Let us briefly review the various moisture fractions in the soil. If we let a sponge represent the soil, which holds water in a similar way, and apply water, the following forms appear: We get runoff, a form of gravitational water, and if we sprinkle it long enough, percolation occurs, that is still gravitational or surplus water. When the sponge stops dripping it has its "field capacity" or water holding capacity. That represents the amount of water held by the soil against the pull of gravity. When the sponge is squeezed, the available water is removed. In a similar way roots would take up available moisture from the soil. The sponge is still damp, just as soil is still

slightly damp when the roots can no longer attract moisture from between the soil particles. That then represents the wilting point of soil.

Another way to represent available water is by a line graph as shown above. From left to right are points indicating oven dry soil, field capacity and free water. Unavailable water is indicated on the left. It is of limited amount and includes hygroscopic as well as some capillary water. The range of available water between the wilting point and field capacity is of the most interest. To the right of that is superfluous water, which is usually within the root zone only a limited time.

If we consider the available water, which we are interested in measuring, then the chart in Figure 2 at the right applies. On the left hand side the percent of available water is indicated. The number of days following water applications is indicated at base of graph. Within one day after water application, the soil moisture tends to reach an equilibrium. After field capacity is reached the upper slope of the line indicated that water is rather uniformly available to grass roots. When the available moisture is below 20%, it is difficult for the plant to obtain enough

* Presented before Annual Turf Conference, Chicago, Ill., Feb. 1, 1951.

moisture to prevent wilting. Therefore, in hot afternoons the turf begins to wilt. That is followed by progressively more severe wilting until, when the available water is zero, the turf goes dormant or dies. Notice that the slope of the line flattens out after 20% is reached. Therefore at that soil moisture content, irrigation should be applied.

Greenhouse Tests

In the greenhouse four soil moisture ranges were maintained for three months. Fifteen cultures each of bent, fescue and bluegrass were planted on one soil type. Twelve cultures of each grass were fertilized with 10-6-4. Moisture blocks were placed four inches from the surface. These indicated the soil moisture available to plants in the cultures and water was applied only when the available soil moisture was at the lower limit of the range in which the turf was growing. Cultures which were in the lowest soil moisture range were allowed to wilt for as much as five days before water was again applied.

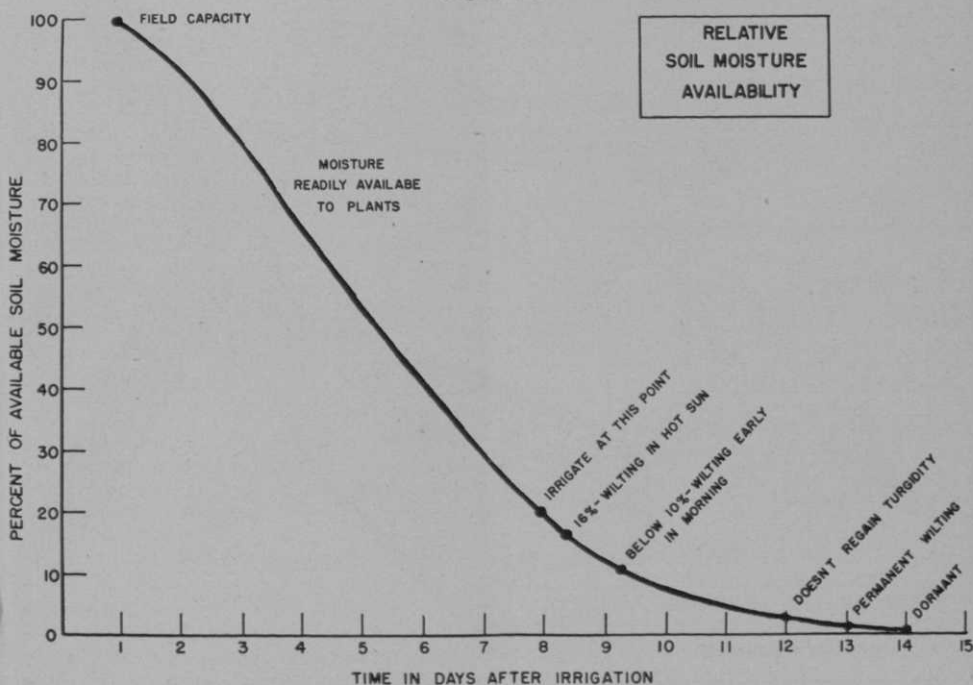
After the grasses were well established, the variations in soil moisture were started. However, under excess moisture conditions it took considerable time to kill back the roots. When that occurred, there was a sharp reduction in growth. This was primarily caused by a lack of nitrogen availability as indicated by yellowing of the grasses. The yield of clip-

pings was highest from culture under high soil moisture range conditions and least on those under excess soil moisture conditions.

Even more important than the yields of clipping was the amount of roots found in the soil after 100 days of growth under a given moisture condition. Cultures that were "too wet", under excess soil moisture, had roots less than two inches deep and little feeding area in the soil. Such turf responded very quickly to applications of soluble nitrogen. Cultures maintained in the high soil moisture range, from 50-150% available, had a vigorous growth as they were not limited in available soil moisture. The roots were extensive and the rhizomes of the bluegrass cultures indicated a very healthy condition. When cultures were maintained between 120-20% available water, a well distributed root system was found. Such cultures had a root distribution that contacted as much soil as possible in order to secure adequate water and nutrients. Turf that was forced to wilt between water applications has fewer roots, but they were well distributed. Under these conditions the rhizomes of bluegrass were dark brown, very small and inactive when compared to those cultures maintained under more moist soil conditions.

When fertilized and unfertilized soil was tested under the same soil moisture conditions, as determined by the soil

(Figure 2)



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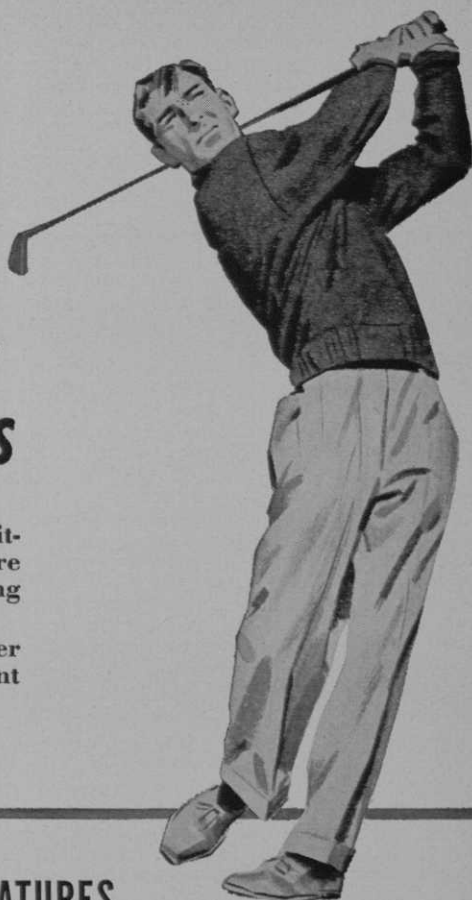
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moisture blocks, what was the comparison? Compared to the fertilized cultures, the unfertilized produced only one-half as much clippings, three-fourths as much roots and yet, required the application of 85% as much water. Thus a low fertility level gave only a slight saving in the amount of water applied.

Field Plot Tests

We had found in the greenhouse that the soil moisture blocks were satisfactory for indicating available soil moisture. Therefore, a series of five rates of supplemental irrigation was conducted on bluegrass and fescue in field plots. The amount and number of irrigations depended on the soil moisture content maintained in the individual plot. In 1949 one plot received 20 irrigations, another four, another two heavy, another two light, and finally no supplemental irrigation. In Michigan during that year there were two drought periods when irrigation was badly needed. At one time the unirrigated turf turned dormant only two or three days before a rain came, but it took several weeks for it to produce a satisfactory turf after going dormant. In contrast the plots that received only two light applications of water but at times when the grass would have gone dormant otherwise, were able to remain green until a rain came.

In turf research one of the most difficult problems is to find a satisfactory measure of the response to a treatment. The percent of bare ground, yield of clippings, ball support, turf composition and turf rating were all used. This paper summarizes them as affected by the available soil moisture and number of irrigations applied.

The percent of bare ground was estimated with the aid of a grid. Particularly where the available soil moisture approached zero percent, no irrigation, there was a large amount of bare ground. This was most obvious where the fescue made a clumpy-type of growth. High-cut fescue that was unirrigated had 22% bare ground in September. At this same time similar plots maintained with above 20% available soil moisture averaged only 2% bare ground.

The yield of clipping increased as the available soil moisture increased. Plots maintained above 50% available soil moisture had a very vigorous growth. However, the very high yields produced under high available soil moisture did not reflect improvement in the turf rating.

Another measure of the effect of controlling soil moisture was the distance between the ball and the ground level. With both bluegrass and fescue, all plots which were maintained above 20% available moisture had little difference in ball support. However, where the soil moisture

was not maintained above 20% available moisture, the turf became open and pitted during drouth and lies were very poor.

Rating Turf

Ratings of the turf produced under different soil moisture levels were made during August, September and October 1949. In August the drouth had just started; in September fall rains had begun; and by October the fall growth of the grass had been made. These ratings were based on ground cover, density, uniformity of ball lies, color and vigor. All plots which were maintained with above 20% available soil moisture had rather close rating. Thus, the more the water applied the more the yield. However, heavy water application did not improve the turf ratings above that of plots receiving only two good irrigations.

The questions of how to judge irrigation needs and how to save labor are old ones. And the problem of water conservation is becoming very important.

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