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GRAU'S ANSWERS TO TURF QUESTIONS

BY FRED V. GRAU



This portion of the annual roundup will not be all-inclusive because the writer was not able to cover every part of the U. S. and Canada. Missing will be specific references to the Pacific Northwest, the Southeast and the North Central States. It is believed, however, that many of the topics will apply across the board. The roundup is being presented in two sections, the second of which will appear in January Golfdom.

Qualified Field Reps

Top-ranking golf course supts. have expressed themselves forcibly on the subject of qualifications of field men who make periodic visits for purposes of sales or recommendations. The common complaint is that there is a regrettable lack of background training and up-to-date information on widely-used products and techniques.

The days are not gone when ill-trained inexperienced salesmen continue to attempt to sell products that most supts. neither need nor want. The experienced supt. has nothing to fear because, with his superior knowledge and training, he can quickly determine the salesman's worth and whether or not he can improve the supt's lot with his product. Tragedy arises when a supt, neither too well trained nor experienced, becomes the victim of a "product peddler". Too often the salesman can not name the active ingredients in his product. Too often he isn't fully aware of the effect of the product on various turfgrasses.

The letter "S" stands not only for sales but also for service. The question is not only, "Will the product do a better job?" or "Is it more economical?" or "Will it last longer?" or "Will it save on labor?" but, more important, "Will the distributor and the manufacturer stand behind it?"

Progressive supts. welcome visits from those who can offer information and experiences which help them. Products are

essential in maintaining turf. It is paramount for the representative to truthfully, fully and accurately describe his product so that there is a clear understanding of how it works and how it can be of benefit. Then, and then only, can the supt. make an intelligent decision as to how it fits into his program. Many supts. have implied that what they need is fewer but better trained salesmen.

A Course Architect's Question

A prominent golf course architect asks: "Why is it so difficult for a new supt. to recognize the different in practices between new seedling turf and mature established turf?" At once, we inquire, "What do you mean?"

First is the item of fertilization. The only time we get our materials mixed deeply into the soil is during construction. After turf is established, we are limited to surface applications. Why not get the maximum quantity of nutrients incorporated when the soil is being stirred? In this way we have a chance to develop deep roots.

Next, the architect cites watering practices. The worst sin with young seedling turf is flooding or overwatering. New grass needs only to be kept gently moist. Old turf can stand deep soaking but young grass doesn't need this kind of irrigation.

In the fall when nights are cool he finds
(Please turn to page 76)

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Here's how Frank Miscoski (r) helped to ease the crop surplus . . . He took his land out of production and built something that's needed—a golf course

By LESTER FOX

U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service,
Upper Darby, Pa.

Six years ago Frank Miscoski got his fill of farming. In one season he struggled in slimy, knee-deep mud to help a neighbor install irrigation pipe. Then he watched in despair as 105 acres of his own sweet corn withered in a drought. That was enough. He liked farming but figured the cash returns were too slim for the hard work, risks and large capital investment involved.

"What can I do that's something like farming, that will keep me outdoors," Miscoski wondered. Then he had it. Golf! He'd turn part of his 208-acre farm near Cream Ridge, N. J., into a golf course.

Miscoski had no illusions about the trials ahead. He knew he was in for more hard work and new problems. But he had



New Jersey Farmer Sows Greens, Fairways and Reaps A Profit

an inquiring mind and boundless energy. And he had to do something.

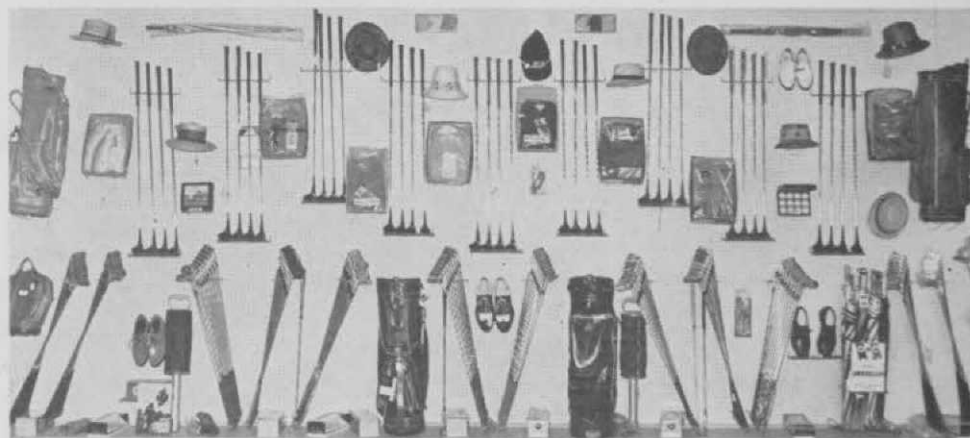
Studies the Situation

As soon as he decided to go into the golf business, he started studying. He walked a number of courses, noting their layouts. Pros gave him their ideas on what makes an interesting course. Pointers came from supts. and golfers. He buried himself in "Turf Management," that classic by H. Burton Musser, professor emeritus of Penn State University and consulting agronomist for the American Society of Golf Course Architects. From the book he learned what grasses would be best

for his fairways and greens. Checking into the need for another course in his area, Miscoski discovered there were more players and potential players than could be accommodated comfortably on existing links. The public course at nearby Trenton, for example, was usually crowded.

Miscoski took stock of his own resources. He noted several advantages. He owned land and his credit was good. His gently rolling, tree-splashed acres were pretty to look at. They'd make a pleasant setting for golf. His land was in an area where outdoor recreational facilities had not kept pace with population growth. He

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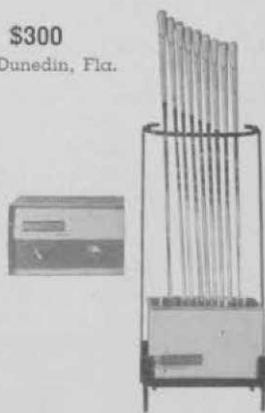
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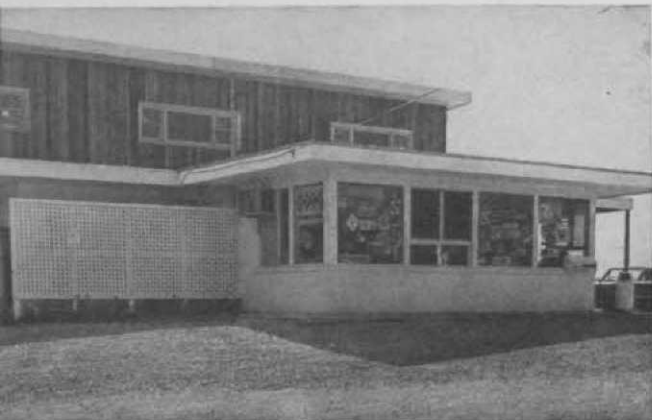
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(Left) Cream Ridge clubhouse has been enlarged in recent months and now has a pro shop, snack bar, shower and locker rooms. Club started humbly in 1957 with shop shown at right. It's now used as a storage building.

owned a barnful of costly farm equipment that he could use in building and maintaining a course. The work he had done on the land as a cooperater with the Freehold Soil conservation district would enhance the course.

"With U. S. Soil Conservation Service help, he had installed a tile drainage system to get rid of excess water quickly after a rain. For irrigation water he had built a pond. He had grown cover crops and had turned the residue of corn and wheat crops into the earth to keep the soil soft and spongy. All these conservation measures would benefit a golf course.

His studies over, and confident he was on the right track, Miscoski started work on a 9-hole, 35-par course. He did all the

work himself with his own farm equipment except for the hiring of carryalls and draglines and their operators. The first job was grading. Then Miscoski dug several ponds for water hazards and built a pro shop and a drive-in-sit-in snack bar to serve passing motorists as well as golfers. While all this was going on, he planted the fairways and greens to the grasses he had read about in Musser's book.

The planting alone wasn't a cheap operation. It cost \$320 for the 40 bushels of Penncross bentgrass stolons required to plant each green. The Pennlawn red fescue planted in the fairways was another expensive item.

On a clear, sunny April day in 1958, Frank Miscoski opened his 9-hole course to the public. Eight players showed up.

Adds Second Nine

Business picked up quickly, however, and in 1961 the onetime New Jersey farmer added 9 holes to make a 150-acre, 18-hole, par-70 course. He built more ponds for a total of nine. The original farm pond provides irrigation water to keep the greens in top condition. The other 8 ponds serve as traps. He laid additional tile to keep the course playable during and after heavy rains.

Miscoski is now out of the farming business. He rents the other 58 acres of his original farm to a neighboring farmer who produces wheat and potatoes.

The past summer Miscoski enlarged the snack bar at an additional cost of \$20,000 over the original \$8,500. The enlarged



Frank Miscoski's daughter, Janice, helps out in the pro shop. All five members of the Miscoski family help to operate the New Jersey course.

building provides much more space for the pro shop which now stocks a larger and more varied supply of golfing accessories. It also contains a spacious shower room and a small locker room. A second floor was added to make an apartment. The original pro shop is now used for storage.

Family Helps Out

In running the golf business, Miscoski has the help of his whole family: his wife Ellen, their daughter Janice, 20, and sons Jim, 19, and Bill, 16. In addition he employs six girls in the snack bar, five young fellows on maintenance of the course and a fulltime manager of the pro shop.

Fairways are mowed twice a week, greens at least every other day. Maintenance also includes liming, fertilizing and treatment to control insects and fungi.

"I get up at three in the morning to pour water on the greens to help control the fungi," Miscoski said. "Fungi, of course, thrive on dampness but the water knocks the dew off the grass and so it dries faster. Besides, in humid weather we spray the greens with a mercury solution twice a week to stop fungus growth."

Has 500 Players

Today Miscoski's Cream Ridge GC represents an investment of more than \$50,000. It has more than 500 members and a weekly payroll exceeding \$600, not counting the work of the Miscoski family.

Most members pay \$9 a year plus \$2 every time they play on weekdays, \$3 on weekends and holidays. Twenty-five members pay \$120 a year and play as often as they like without paying any additional fees. Members may bring guests at \$2.50 each for a round of play on weekdays, \$4 on weekends and holidays.

Other revenue comes from the snack bar and the sale of golf clubs and balls and other accessories. Pull carts rent at 50 cents a round, electric cars at \$7.50.

Not All Gravy

"It's not all income and no outgo," Miscoski emphasizes. "Forty per cent of my gross goes for operating expenses. That's lower than average because my whole family works on the course. The federal government takes a 20 per cent tax. Liability insurance nicks me for \$2,000 a year. You're always plowing income back into the business because you just can't stand still. No sooner do you get one improvement finished then it's time to start another. Maintenance is contin-

uous. On top of everything else, my taxes have gone up three times since I changed from farming to golf. While I'm better off than when I was farming, and the future looks promising, I'm still in debt to my bank."

While Miscoski does his financing through a commercial bank, today qualified farmers can get long-term government loans for installing outdoor recreation facilities on their farms.

Government Assistance

Miscoski is one of thousands of farmers throughout the U.S. who have converted part or all of their land to paid recreation, including golf. In the year ending June 30, 1963, more than 250 farmers throughout the country requested technical help in the installation of courses on their land, a Soil Conservation Service compilation shows.

The farmers' purpose in turning to paid recreation is to bolster sagging income. Acres that farmers put into recreational enterprises — including golf — are acres that ease the current national headache over the production of crops not now needed. At the same time, paid farm recreation gives a lift to the whole economy.

Indiana GA Joins in Caddie Scholarship Program

The Indiana Golf Assn. became affiliated with the nationwide Evans Scholars Foundation last month by establishing a caddie scholarship program. Actually, according to Richard H. Stackhouse, president, IGA is taking over a going operation since six Evans scholars from Indiana currently are attending college on grants from the Western GA, which administers the scholarship program. There are 135 clubs in IGA which hopes to annually help 50 or more boys obtain educations within the next few years. Chapter houses at Purdue and Indiana U. are planned for the near future.

Twenty golf associations in the U.S. have scholarship programs and more than half are affiliated with Western GA. A total of 467 Evans scholars will be in school this fall.

Senior Women's Amateur

The USGA's Senior Women's Amateur (for women 50 or over) will be played at the CC of Florida, Delray Beach, Oct. 30-31 and Nov. 1. The field is limited to 120 players.



Turf Talk by Bob Miller

In many areas, the spring and summer of 1963 will long be remembered as one of the driest on record. In our Wilmington, Delaware area, we were behind 6 inches of rain in the first six months, and a total of 16 inches since July 1, 1962.

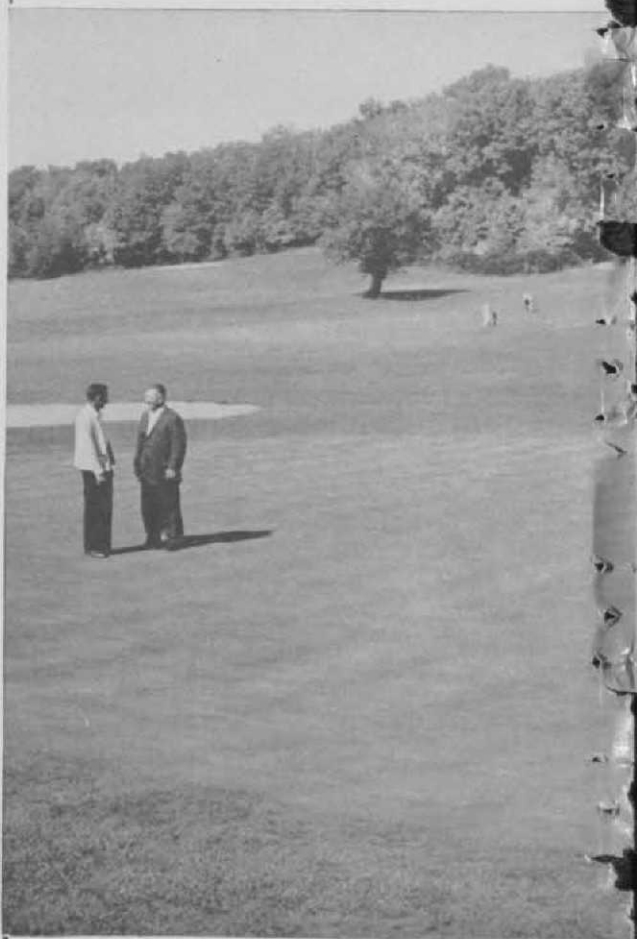
Despite this unusually dry season, the superintendents we've visited have done an excellent job of providing and maintaining fine turf for golf. We were pleased to note that several have been mentioned by name by sports commentators for having done an outstanding job in preparing their courses for national tournaments appearing on television.

In any event, the worst of the season is over, and it's time for renovating, seeding and rebuilding problem areas. First, apply the phosphorus and potash which is needed; then add lime wherever the ph is below 6.5. For the warm-season grasses, use "Uramite" ureaform fertilizer at the rate of 25 lbs. per 1000 sq. ft. about six weeks before over-seeding. On the cool-season grasses, we suggest its use at 10 lbs. per thousand. At these rates of "Uramite", the grasses will receive adequate nitrogen to strengthen them, and will still harden off before the dormant season.

As a final preparation for winter, we suggest the late-fall application of "Tersan" 75 or "Tersan" OM at 8 oz. per 1000 sq. ft. for prevention of snow mold. And plan on an additional application of "Tersan" OM at 4 oz. per thousand during the freezing and thawing period of early spring.

Bob Miller

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Donald Shannon (left) chatting with course owner Mr. Ray C. Papanti. The fine late-summer condition of his greens indicates why Shaker Farms depends on Du Pont Turf Products.



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Top playing conditions demand effective disease control and adequate fertilization; but *profit-making* on a privately-owned course demands maintenance efficiency. Don Shannon beats this dilemma and meets *both* requirements...with Du Pont Turf Products.

Don is superintendent at Shaker Farms Country Club in West Springfield, Mass. He and course owner Ray C. Papanti see turf management as a program in which regular use of a turf fungicide plays a big part. "We use Du Pont 'Tersan' OM weekly at a rate of 3 oz. per thousand sq. feet through the summer months. If the weather conditions really favor fungus attack, we step up the rate to 5 oz. We prevent snow mold with a rate of 6 oz. per thousand," says Don.

Another part of Mr. Shannon's program is the maintenance of sturdy, steady-growing turf through an adequate supply of nitrogen. "We use a complete fertilizer in mid-September and early spring. Then we take care of our basic nitrogen requirements for the entire playing season with just one application of Du Pont "Uramite" in mid-May, at a rate of 15 lbs. per 1000 sq. ft. The result is uniform growth and good color throughout the season. And this uniform growth reduces our disease problem to a minimum.

"Use of Du Pont Turf Products has given us very satisfactory results and excellent turf throughout the season every year."

Don Shannon's remarks typify the credit accorded Du Pont Turf Products by superintendents all over the country. For full information on how to use these time-tested products to maintain outstanding playing conditions all season on your course, consult your golf course supplier—your service agency.

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THE TURF BUDGET

Purpose of a Budget

By **JOHN ESPEY**

Supt., Wolfert's Roost CC, Albany, N. Y.

Budgeting helps to chart the course for the year and enables you to determine which projects can be accomplished and which must be set aside for the future when new funds are available . . . It also keeps costs within the club income and allocates funds fairly among various club activities so that no activity prospers unduly at the expense of others . . . All budgets start with three basic factors — salary, equipment and supplies . . . From these three stem a multitude of other items . . . Because salary represents over three-quarters of a budget, it is essential that each man be assigned the duties for which he is best qualified or can best be trained . . . Thus, this large segment of the budget is used most effectively.

At the beginning of each fiscal year a proposed budget should be prepared and given to the green chairman so that he will be able to discuss it at the year's first board meeting . . . Always make several copies of the budget — one for the chairman, one for the board and one for the controller . . . Preparing a budget is a waste of time and money unless each month's operations are compared with the budget forecast and all variations are carefully and satisfactorily investigated . . . You must always remember, a satisfied member becomes a satisfied boss. He, in turn, is the man who makes a good workable budget possible.

Method of Budgeting

By **LEON ST. PIERRE**

Supt., Longmeadow (Mass.) CC

A final budget plan should represent the result of the consolidated judgment of your entire organization . . . It should be directly related to standards of perfection that your members desire . . . The five essential requirements for the successful operation of a budget are: 1) Satisfactory organization; 2) Adequate accounting records; 3) Research; 4) Definite responsibility for budgeting procedures; 5) Support of the green chairman and board of governors . . . While budgeting will reveal weaknesses in organization, it is also true that the budget cannot be operated successfully until the maintenance department is properly organized . . . Accounting records must be sufficiently complete to explain past operations and provide a basis for comparison . . . The successful supt. must be guided by the spirit of research to do the old tasks better and to find new methods, products and services which will get the job done as efficiently and economically as possible.

The green chairman is the logical person to assume the responsibility for budgeting procedures . . . No effective budget can be formulated without the dedicated effort of the chairman and full support of the board of governors . . . Timely reports must be presented to the chairman, showing any important variance of actual operations from the budgeted program and explaining, as far as possible, the cause of and responsibility for any adverse variance . . . Budgets must be

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designed so that they are directly related to the expense accounting of the club . . . Budgets, although valuable, are merely a tool of management and too much must not be expected of them . . . Like any tool, their value, to a considerable degree, lies in the use made of them and in the ability of those using them.

A Survey of Costs

By **ROBERT ST. THOMAS**

Supt., Sunningdale CC, Scarsdale, N.Y.

politan area private clubs, all with roughly comparable operation methods.

In order to attain comprehensible results, only costs common to all clubs were studied, not total budgets, since bookkeeping systems varied from one club to another.

The categories listed in the survey were: Labor costs (salaries of those men directly involved in maintenance, not including the supt.); Supplies (tee equipment, flags, poles, cups, etc.); Repairs and spare parts; Gas and oil; Chemicals; Fertilizer and lime; Soil and topdressing; Seed; Sand for traps; Irrigation; and Electricity.

The average expenditure in these categories was: Labor cost, \$36,782; Supplies, \$1,740; Repairs and spare parts, \$2,672; Gas and oil, \$1,637; Chemicals, \$2,125; Fertilizer and lime, \$3,829; Soil and topdressing, \$831; Seed, \$923; Sand for traps, \$702. It was found that because of the many different types of watering systems used, it was impossible to average irrigation and electricity, but combined they would average approximately \$4,500. The average total was \$53,868.

Four other categories were mentioned separately in the survey because they are not usually included in operating budgets. These four and their average costs were: New equipment, \$5,402; Construction, \$7,636; Trees and other plantings, \$1,796; and Club grounds, \$3,657.

There are other aspects of budgeting besides the actual dollar and cents figures which are very important to any supt. As Joseph Burger, a guest speaker at the national conference in San Diego, said, we are all salesmen. If you want your budget approved in anything like its original form, you had better be a very good peddler.

One of the best ways to promote yourself and your budget is to use every opportunity to express your views to your green committee, finance committee, board of governors or to whatever group is responsible for appropriating funds at your club. If you are not currently being invited to the meetings of these bodies, you should ask your chairman for permission to attend so that you may present your case more clearly.

May Be Disappointed

If you depend on your chairman to present your views, you may be disappointed. He may not understand the situa-

These excerpts are from speeches made by Espey, St. Pierre and St. Thomas at a U. of Massachusetts turf conference that was held last spring.

A survey of maintenance costs for Westchester County and metropolitan New York golf courses was conducted recently by Charles (Chuck) Fatum, supt., Hampshire CC, Mamaroneck, N.Y. The survey studied the maintenance costs of 16 metro-

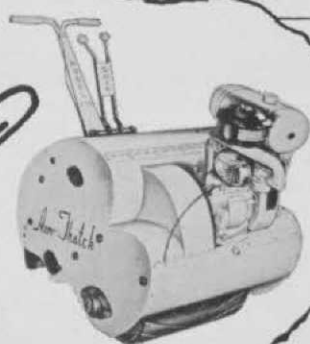
tion as well as you or he may not be entirely convinced that certain parts of your program are necessary. With your intimate knowledge of the situation, you will be able to answer any questions that arise.

Another budget-related aspect of course maintenance is record keeping. Ideas vary widely about the amount of record keeping necessary for efficient management. However, detailed records can be very helpful in backing up requests for additional appropriations as well as avoiding unfair budget reductions.

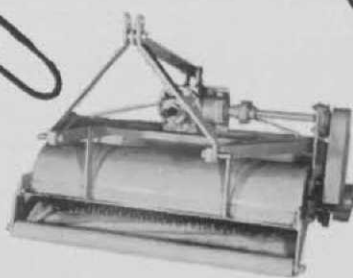
Defense Equipment

If your records show the exact cost of every operation in your maintenance program, you are well equipped to defend your budget from the cost-cutting attempts of an economy-minded committee or club officer. In many cases, your records will show that any reduction in expenditures will cause the condition of the course to suffer.

Supts. should attend all the club meetings they can and be prepared to back up their position with detailed records and cost analyses. Their budget position will be improved, as will their executive stature in the eyes of their membership.



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FRED GRAU (Continued from page 72)

young seedling turf being chilled with heavy night watering. Moderate watering during the warm days will help grass to grow, especially if turf can "go to bed" at night warm and reasonably dry. Turf probably will mature faster this way.

Another point of difference is the way in which young turf is mowed! Some let it grow tall before mowing to "get deeper roots". A better way seems to be to start mowing as soon as there is anything to mow — and keep it mowed! Regular mowing helps turf to mature faster. Too much tall growth defeats the purpose.

Topdressing new turf takes a skilful hand compared to treating old mature grass. Heavy topdressings on a newly planted green can do considerable damage. We assure supts. that this is not a sweeping criticism of their profession. It is an honest plea for a clearer understanding of the architect's viewpoint when he is responsible for a finished, playable course.

Enough Qualified Men?

Hundreds of new golf courses are being built and opened for play. Architects constantly are on the prowl for competent supts. to supervise construction and to remain as supts. Many are called but few are chosen. The expressions of dissatisfaction increase. It seems that the few turf schools in the country can not possibly train enough young men eventually to fill the positions that are opening. It has been said many times that a man freshly graduated from a turf school is not a qualified supt. unless he had experience before taking over a course. Most graduates need a few years of on-the-job training.

When a good supt. moves to a new course where the salary is higher and benefits greater, it still is common practice to advance the tractor driver or the mechanic to his position, whether or not he is qualified to assume the responsibilities of a supt. To this day we do not have enough men who are comfortably able to take guests to the clubhouse for lunch, to meet with the green committee, successfully defend their proposals and to command the respect of pro, manager, and club officials. Being a supt. carries the responsibility of far more than growing grass. He must train himself so well on every subject that he will have no hesitation in "selling" a good program to the green chairman.

Let each man in this field ask himself:

(Continued on page 127)



Kohler-powered Caddy Cars "play" every day on the steep slopes of Pine Hills Country Club

"Not a single car has ever been off the course because of engine trouble; we have not had one problem; they have been just perfect," Those are the words of Kenny Suesens, pro at Pine Hills in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, said to be one of the country's hilliest courses.

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Bermuda Survives Cold If Not Over-Cultivated

By E. RAY JENSEN

Southern Turf Nurseries, Tifton, Georgia

The spring of 1963 found many South-eastern course supts. intently searching their greens for some trace of Bermuda-grass growth. Many of these men, situated north of a line from Birmingham, Ala. to Atlanta, Ga. and north to Charlotte, N.C., found that when winter grass disappeared Bermuda no longer existed.

Little or no winter injury was observed on Bermuda south of this line. In and north of the Memphis area, almost every course suffered enough damage to require some degree of re-planting. This was the first winter that Tifton 328 had suffered any appreciable cold damage in this area and this naturally called for investigation to find out what had happened.

An examination of weather records of selected cities within the Bermuda damage zone was quite enlightening. It revealed that the weather not only was abnormally cold but unusually dry. There was an insignificant amount of insulating snow cover. The weather was so severe, in fact, that many areas lost their overseeded winter grasses.

60-year Record Cold

As an example of the severity of the weather, Atlanta showed an average January temperature of 37.2 degrees — 7.6 degrees below normal. The last 12 days in January there averaged more than 14 degrees below normal, with a low of minus 3 degrees. During that month, Atlanta reported no insulating snow cover. The cold was even more extreme north of this area. Admittedly, the weather was unusual in that it was the coldest Atlanta winter in 60 years. But everyone agrees the same thing could happen again.

With this in mind, green committees took a long look at other grass species for possible use on Southern greens. The first reaction of many was to consider converting from Tifton 328 to one of the bents which is more cold tolerant. But a closer study of this possibility convinced them that bents would not do since they can't tolerate the humid heat of this area during the summer.

The statement has been made that the zone of transition between cool and warm season grasses is a sort of "no-mans land" for grasses, with no single species entirely



Greens in this aerial photo of the Sooner course in Bartlesville, Okla., show in white because Architect Floyd Farley specified limestone chips on the sub-grade as part of the drainage plan. Unusual photo was made by D. S. Willcox before topsoil was brought in.

suitable. This statement must be modified, however, to the extent that warm season Bermuda, perfect from early spring through late fall, simply must be properly prepared to survive severe cold and remain healthy. Practical experience and impartial research have established that Tifton 328 Bermuda is slightly more cold-hardy than U-3 Bermuda under identical management. U-3 has long been used for fairways and tees throughout the lower North and Midwestern states and, under management for these uses, has continually survived sub-zero weather.

Some Came Through

As reports of winterkill came in this year from the more seriously damaged areas, it seemed for a while that all Bermuda greens had been lost. Occasional reports of other courses were then received and indicated that a fortunate few had experienced no loss at all. A close examination of procedures at these latter courses revealed that either the normal practices prior to overseeding had not been followed, or that greens had been taken out of play and covered with straw for protection from the cold. This latter practice, while being the safest to follow, is not always possible since temporary greens are required if the courses remain open for play. Many clubs have memberships that discourage use of temporary greens.

If greens can be covered with a mulch, this should be done in the northern limits



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of the Bermuda belt to insure winter survival. When this isn't possible, a departure from normal preparation for winter overseeding is in order. Usually, normal preparation consists of heavy cultivation of the greens to provide as close to a soft seedbed as can be obtained on established turf. This assures germination of overseeded winter grass, but it also tears the Bermuda turf, weakening it at a time of the year when it is unable to recover. Obviously, weakened turf can't withstand the ravages of extreme cold, dehydration, constant traffic and the competition of winter grass.

The few supts. who didn't lose unmulched Bermuda last winter reported several facts in common. Very little or no cultivation was carried on within a month of the onset of the dormancy period. Preparation for overseeding was accomplished not by bringing soil up to the surface, but by topdressing. Bermuda was allowed to grow higher in the late stages of the growing season. This encouraged a deeper root growth and provided some insulation against the cold. This general practice requires more topdressing material than normally, but more than pays for itself by providing a stronger plant that can resist sub-zero weather.

**Twenty-Four Men in Running
for PGA Home Pro Award**

Twenty-four PGA sections each have nominated one of their members for the 1963 Home-pro-of-the-year award. A committee of amateur golfers will select the national winner after sifting the list of sectional nominees. Presentation of the award will be made at the annual president's dinner, to be held in Palm Beach, Fla. on Dec. 3, during the PGA's 47th annual meeting.

Tom Lo Presti, Haggin Oaks GC, Sacramento, Calif., was the home pro award winner for 1962. The PGA adopted the custom of naming its leading professional for the year in 1955 when the late Bill Gordon, Tam O'Shanter CC, Niles, Ill., was selected. Since then the award has gone to the following: Harry Shepard, Elmira, N. Y.; Dugan Aycock, Lexington, N. C.; Harry Pezzullo, Northbrook, Ill.; Eddie Duino, San Jose, Calif.; Warren Orlick, Orchard Lake, Mich.; and Don Padgett, Muncie, Ind.

Buyers' Service • P143