

He ignores the rain in a totally waterproof Izod rain suit of 100% cotton, note jacket's adjustable side straps (jacket \$30, trousers \$30); Foot-Joy waterproof shoes (\$14.95), water-repellent hat by Ace, International glove. Her jaunty rain outfit of 100% coated nylon in yellow with fine red striping by Ernst Engel (\$40) U.S. Royal waterproof golf shoes (\$14.95), glove by All Star

PHOTOGRAPHED BY LEONARD KAMSLER AT
NORTH HILLS C.C. MANHASSET N.Y



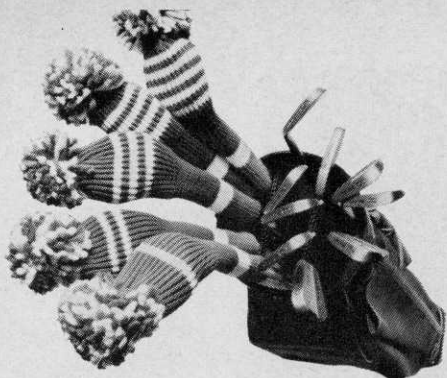
His chrome yellow rain suit of 100% coated nylon with concealed hood under collar by Tal Tane for Grant Robbins (\$35), waterproof shoes by Dunlop (\$11), water-repellent hat by Ace, "Bobby Nichols" glove by Crest. Her nylon golf jacket (\$12.95), matching wrap-around skirt with "easy-grip" waist closure (\$9.95) and blue waterproof "Chucks" golf shoes (\$8.50) are all by Converse-Hodgman, hat by Brighton of California, glove by Par-Mate.

Continued on next page



Pennies from heaven *Continued*

Brilliant twosome brightens a gloomy day. Her red Etonic windbreaker of 100% two-ply nylon is water and stain repellent (\$10.95); Bobbie Brooks back-zip, slot-seam culotte with Zepel finish (\$8.98); Dunlop glove; "Slicker" hat by Flip-It; waterproof shoes by Converse-Hodgman. (\$8.50) He looks on in a "Double-Tex" self-lined nylon rain jacket (\$15.95) and overtrousers (\$12.95), made in Scotland for DiFinì; waterproof shoes by Foot-Joy (\$14.95), Acushnet glove, hat by Knox.



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Do wetting agents work?

Some supers enjoy good results with these products, others do not. Here's a positive case.

By WILLIAM SMART

Superintendent, Powelton CC, Newburgh, N.Y.

In the early 1900's, when "greenkeepers" were brought to this country from Britain to build and maintain the "links," the art of American turf culture was born. The methods were a curious mixture of farming and gardening "secrets." Seeding with hay-mow sweepings was common and anything but natural fertilizer was looked on as somehow contrary to nature. It is little wonder with lack of material in print, and poor communication from course to course, that each Keeper O' the Greens developed his own methods and materials.

These hardy souls did not seek information from one another, and newcomers found them tight lipped when they tried to pry information from these old timers. The only way to learn the trade was to work under a greenkeeper until he considered you worthy of his trust—and, even then, it was likely that he would deliberately withhold information to keep his position secure.

Today, with national and local associations, the Greens Section, state experiment stations and many turf and golf publications, there are no longer any secrets—but there seems to be a mystery about one phase of turf culture. I am referring to the non-ionic wetting agents.

Those that use them on a regular basis are their biggest boosters—others seem to doubt that they have any value at all. Lack of information from experiment stations and University turf plots keeps others from a trial of their own.

In 1954, the Aquatrols Corporation

introduced the non-ionic, organic soil wetting agent Aqua-Gro on the market. A Use Patent was issued, this being a new use for these products. The ionic type of these materials had been used for years by fire companies to quickly knock down fires. These ionic types are present in many of our common household detergents, but are generally known to be toxic to turf.

My interest in wetting agents was brought about by a chronic greens problem. A visit by my chairman, in the early summer of 1956, had again brought to my attention the usual golfer's complaint, "hard greens—won't hold a shot."

As these visits usually went, he offered his solution—more watering and keep the surface wet. I convinced him, at least partially, that this would only lead to more serious trouble, and we would likely lose the greens we had. Asking what we *could* do, I said we could give the greens more nitrogen and promote a softer growth, aerify and top-dress and raise the cut to 5/16 to give more leaf

He ruled out the cut change because it would make the greens slower, and asked if I could carry out the other operations. I said I could, but went on to explain that more N would leave us with a softer growth that would be more disease prone and would aggravate the wilt problem.

I went on to explain that aerifying and top-dressing would leave the surface disturbed for some time as the greens were then going into the semi-dormant hot weather period. I added, somewhat caustically, that while all authorities agreed this was the way to make greens hold better, it was more theoretical than actual because it did not always work.

As good chairmen do, he left me with the problem, with the thought that I should do *something*

As an afterthought, he asked if I

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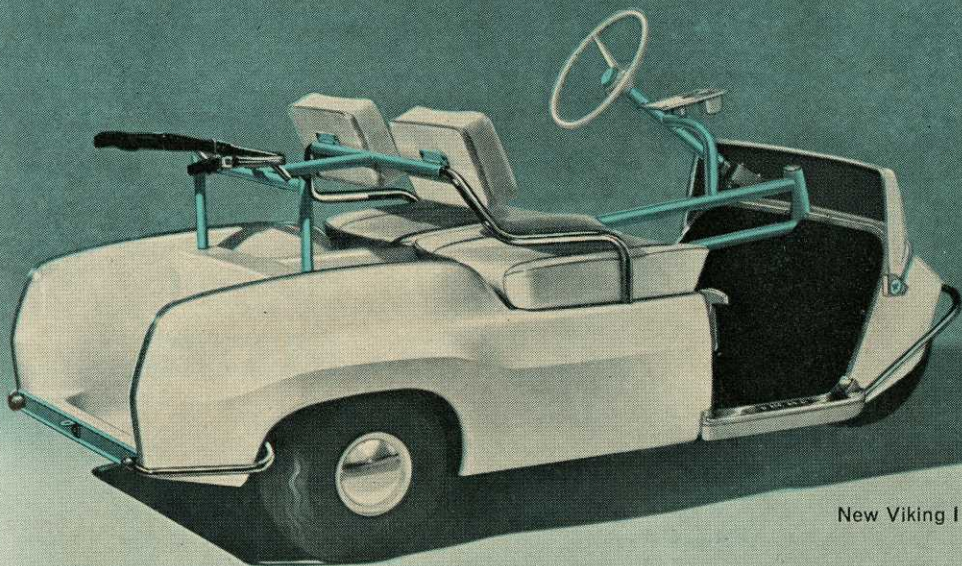
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WETTING AGENTS

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could run sprinklers out front of each green, so the golfers could play to this area and roll on the putting surface, rather than chance a direct shot to the green that would bounce off or over. Our greens were small and this aggravated the problem. This was most reasonable, and I agreed.

It was mere chance that within the next few days an ad for Aquo-Gro in GOLF-DOM caught my eye. Two phrases leaped out at me, "... helps overcome wilt—greens will hold a shot." It was almost as if they had been written for my problem, and my benefit.

I called my dealer at once. He carried a wetting agent, however, not the one advertised. I asked what he could tell me about it. Very little. Are any of the experiment stations putting out any information on it? Not to his knowledge. Will it do what they claim? He had no idea. With this "encouragement" I ordered five gallons.

A look at the material when it arrived did little to increase my confidence. It looked for all the world like liquid hand soap. In fact, that is all my crew ever called it—soap. Use directions were pretty vague, so I tried just a little on the sod garden and one benefit was apparent at once—it made the green look greener. Well, that's at least something, I thought, it won't be a total loss.

I resolved to go all out after the sod garden seemed none the worse after a few days. The following Monday, we aerified all the greens lightly and gave each a half a quart of wetting agent in 50 gallons of water, followed by normal watering the rest of the week. At once they looked "greener" and, by the end of the week, I noticed that the clippings had increased and the surface was noticeably softer. I felt encouraged but cautious, so I said nothing to the Chairman.

The following Monday, at noon, he drove into the workyard. He stepped

from his car all smiles and said, "Bill, that aerifying did it - - the greens are terrific." (Life has too few moments like this)! I grinned right back, and then I told him about the "wetter water." His reaction was typical, he didn't care *how* I did it - - just, keep it up."

Aerifying was not new to me. I had purchased a West Point greens machine in the spring of 1951 and had used it spring and fall and sometimes in between every season. However, it had never achieved results such as this. Even the work crew commented on how soft the greens felt—not a soft, soggy feel as when the turf is over-watered, but a springy, turgid feel.

For a week or two I was walking on air. Then, I noticed that my other chronic summer problem—wilt—was becoming quite acute. I had learned long ago to gear all my men and equipment to this killer, but this wilt seemed different.

It would come on very quickly and on the mildest of days. An application of wetting agent would help, but then in a few days it would be back again. Daily hand watering, sometimes twice, became routine.

I recall one week that included the 4th of July that my hand-watering man's check was more than mine, with his regular pay plus over-time! We held our greens, and they were good, but it was a struggle all the way.

By the end of the season I had a theory. My basic fertilizer was a well known all-organic. Could the wetting agent be breaking down the nitrogen very rapidly, causing the soft growth that was so wilt prone?

The organic was applied every two weeks at ten pounds per thousand, and at any given time I could take a plug from the greens, shake it over white paper and find small grains of fertilizer in all stages of decomposition. This could account for the growth that made the greens look so good but on the other hand they could not stand the high light

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Let lightning play the golf course alone

Posting this article on your bulletin board would be a smart move; it won't bore anybody and it may save lives.

By JIM OBERT

Here's how to get a charge out of life by playing a version of Russian roulette on the golf course.

Call up three guys you don't like and make a game during an electrical storm.

The first one struck by lightning loses.

On the public fee Madison course at Peoria, Illinois, recently, two foursomes turned out for their usual early-morning game when they shouldn't have.

Ugly, purple clouds stirred in a slate-gray sky. The roll of far-off thunder drummed heavily for a second or two,

then lost its identity in a slight breeze and a gentle rain.

It was 6:45 a.m. when the first foursome of Jack Rosenak, Bill Butler, Ray Wright and Ken Schertz reached the tee on the fourth hole. Rain drops pattered softly on the leaves of a giant cat-alpa tree, 50 feet tall.

Also at 6:45, the other foursome putted out on the second green. One of the players was Joe Stowell, newly-appointed basketball coach at Bradley University.

The weather disturbed Stowell. "Let's quit," he suggested.

Rosenak, owner of a supper club, has some electrifying memories.

"We were standing around looking at the sky wondering whether to quit or go on when all of a sudden the world seemed unreal. There was a loud, crackling noise and it felt like somebody had put a red-hot heating pad on the back of my neck," he says.

"I had been knocked flat on my stomach with no idea how I got there. When I picked up my cap I noticed the brass button on it had a brown discoloration which wasn't there before."

None of the foursome was injured.

The Peoria groups were fortunate that no lives were lost. It is a statistical fact that many deaths to spectators and players alike result each year from not taking the proper precautions.

The National Bureau of Standards advises that if staying out of doors is unavoidable during a thunderstorm, shelter should be sought in this order.

(1) A cave (2) Depression in the ground (3) Deep valley or canyon (4) At the foot of a steep or overhanging cliff (5) Dense woods.

Above all, stay away from small sheds or shelters if in an exposed location; isolated trees, wire fences, hilltops and wide open spaces.

Raising clubs or umbrellas above the head adds to the danger during an electrical storm.

Now will you stay off the course when it storms? Bet your life you'd better. ●



An example of what the destructive force of lightning can do to a long standing tree.

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