

## G. M. O. PREPARATIONS

By Ray Knapp  
Supt. Tuckaway C.C.

Preparing for the G.M.O. is not much different from keeping the course in good shape for membership play. All the same principles apply in keeping the course play consistent every day. The basic difference is that the cutting schedule is stepped up for the tournament and the height of cut on the greens and roughs is different from normal membership play.

The Tournament Players Division of the Professional Golfers Association has a checklist for preparing the golf course to keep conditions similar for all their events. For the first two years of the tournament we had a problem standardizing the width of fairways and height of cut on the green apron. We could not convince the creeping bent grass in these areas to grow to the 2 inch desired height. Consequently, even though the grass was allowed to grow for two weeks before the tournament, it would not meet their standards and would cause problems for membership play afterward. For the past two years the T.P.D. of the P.G.A. has had a former superintendent, an agronomist, Allan Mac Clenach, on its staff. He is responsible for checking



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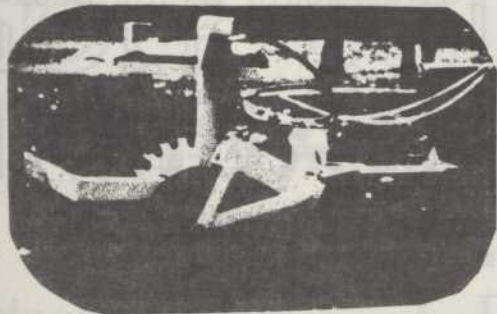
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the course condition on all their sponsored events. With his understanding of Tuckaway's turf characteristics, we've been able to modify their requirement to meet our condition.

On greens we plan our schedule to meet the tournament requirement for a fast surface. Two weeks before the tournament we topdress the greens with about 3 - 6 cu.ft. of sand per 1,000 sq.ft. Ten days before the tournament the cutting height is gradually lowered. About 5 days before the tournament we again topdress the greens with just enough material to cover up all the bent grass stems. With the stems buried the leaves create the truest putting surface. At this time we also apply a fungicide to assure no problems in this area. By qualifying day we have lowered the cut to 9/64 inch. For the tournament the greens are allowed to dry out. During the tournament the greens are double cut in the morning and single cut in the even-



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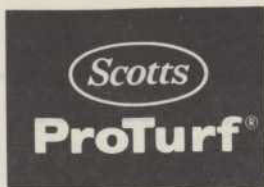
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ing.

For the tournament the tees and fairways are treated similarly to normal membership play. The height of cut on both areas is not changed. The 40 yard width of fairways is left the same. The difference being that these areas are mowed on a daily basis instead of every other day.

The bunkers are edged just before the tournament. A three inch lip is put on all green side traps. Stones are removed. Care is taken not to get too much sand in the face of the bunker that would result in unfair lies when the ball becomes buried.

The roughs cause us some problems. We are dependent on rain to give us growth. If we do get adequate growth the roughs are topped at 3 3/4 inches prior to the start. By the end of the tournament the roughs would be 6 inches tall.

The Grounds Department is responsible for roping the course for crowd control. It takes about 60 labor hours to put out 1800 stakes and over 60,000 feet of rope.

To help assure no delays during the tournament several things are done. Extra mowing equipment is on

hand to make certain that all scheduled work is done on time. Three pumps are available to remove water from traps or fairways. Ten squeegees are available to remove water from the greens. Extra crews are made available by other clubs.

This preparation has paid off for the G.M.O. On July 2, 1974, it started raining the evening before the second round. At 2 A.M. the night water started pumping sand traps. At 3:30 A.M. I called Tom Kraemer, the superintendent at Muskego Lake Country Club, and asked for 3 extra men. By 4:30 A.M. our crew of 13 and the 3 additional men were ready to start. As the first golfers started to tee off on #1 and #10 tees we were losing ground on removing water from the traps as the rain continued. At this time we assembled the crew into two groups with one group on each nine. They were able to finish raking and removing water from the traps a hole in front of the golfers. With the help of the G.M.O. marshals the water from the greens was squeegeed off in a similar manner.

Bob Kalupa, past president, said, "It is people who make the G.M.O. an outstanding tournament." For us, in preparing the golf course, it is an effort of a large group of people that makes it possible. Other superintendents give us advice, loan us equipment and men. Turf suppliers provide equipment and speed materials to us. The Tuckaway Board of Directors provides us with what is needed. The T.P.D. of the P.G.A. makes available their vast tournament knowledge. The G.M.O. organization and committees assist us in many ways. With this group effort the task of preparing the golf course for the tournament is made easy.

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