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TURF NEWS LETTER

(Official Organ of Mid-Atlantic Association of  
Golf Course Superintendents  
Prepared in Cooperation with the USGA Green Section)

THE WOODHOLME MEETING

November 11, 1952

On Armistice Day, the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents met at the Woodholme Country Club, Pikesville, Maryland. There were 39 members and guests present - the smallest meeting of the year. Seems that Superintendents - like all true Americans - shy away from their right to vote, and they did so at this meeting. The main order of business was the election of officers. Mr. Carroll Hitchcock, one of the charter members of the Association was host for the occasion. Several guests in attendance were introduced; they were Dr. Jim Watson, Agronomist, Toro Manufacturing Company, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Dr. Jack Harper, III, who is the U. S. Department of Agriculture's new turf man at Beltsville; Admiral Phillips and Colonel Todd of Army Navy Country Club; Mr. Dalton, Davison Chemical Company; Bob Miller and Sam Conger of duPont - Sam is the new duPont representative for this area; T. L. Gustin, Philadelphia Toro; Mr. Reuben Heins, Jr. of Armiger & Company; and Al Radko and Bob Elder of the USGA Green Section.

Educational Features

Dr. Jim Watson, was the guest speaker for the evening. Dr. Watson prefaced his excellent talk with a few remarks about the Mid-Atlantic Association. He stated that while he was at Texas A. & M., he looked forward to his copy of the Turf News Letter each month. He praised the organization for the sound recommendations made in our Constructive Suggestion Reports, and for the excellent job of organization within the group. He complimented the group on its accomplishments during the past two years, and hoped that we would continue to uphold those standards in future years.

Jim then reviewed the fundamental principles of growing good turf. He began with the selection of the proper grass as the very important first step in growing good turf. The proper strains of grasses for putting greens, for fairways, for tees, and for roughs, help considerably in management and maintenance practices of the future.

After the proper grass selection is made, Jim listed three important management practices which go "hand in glove" in growing good turf. They are aeration, fertilization, and watering. Each of these management practices are all closely and intimately related to the production of good turf. Jim then proceeded to expand on these practices by showing some kodaslides of work he has done at Penn State and Texas A. & M. He briefly outlined the compaction studies that he worked

*Thanks for being with us a real pleasure to Bob Shields.*

*Jim was to meet you.*

*Jim sending a copy of this newsletter to Dave Lilly.*

on at Penn State. There he worked on compaction under four different water levels they were no water (just rainfall), as needed (3" each time water was applied), field capacity (25" added), and saturated (water all the time). Some of the points Jim stressed were - the saturated plots were invaded to a considerable extent by crabgrass and other weeds. In plots that were watered "as needed", the turf in each case was much better than saturated, dry and field capacity plots.

On the dry plots Jim pointed out that the bentgrass population decreased considerably, while the fescue increased, and the bluegrass held its own. On the plots watered as needed there was a slight increase in bentgrass population, a decrease in fescue, and the bluegrass held its own. The original seeding was a mixture of these three grasses.

Dr. Watson then showed slides of some of the problems encountered in Texas. During prolonged periods of drought and high temperature, water is needed to keep the grass alive. Jim showed a slide of an improperly installed sprinkler system. The spray did not meet, and a ring of dried-out turf surrounded a patch of green grass.

He showed slides of compacted and non-compacted soils, a thatched condition on bentgrass; and the effect of aeration on water penetration - the water nestled deeply into aeration holes and moistened the soil on each side thoroughly by capillary action. Another slide showed the effects of aeration prior to seeding. In each hole, the seed germinated. Thorough aerification prior to overseeding almost insures a good catch.

Jim then talked of fertilizers and fertilizer management. He stated that it is important not to overstimulate the turf by overfeeding. When turf is too succulent it is in a dangerous condition. In order to initiate a good fertilizer program, he suggested a soil analysis be made, and nutrients added as needed. He also said the key to turf management is the management of nitrogen, and most good turf grasses require large amounts of nitrogen. Nitrogen should be applied uniformly and periodically throughout the growing season. We need nitrogen in both the organic and inorganic form in order to promote a steady growth of grass. Overstimulation makes the grass grow in bursts, causes excess growth and results in large amounts of clippings. A poor fertilization program is detrimental to the growth of good turf.

Proper height of cut and proper adjustment of mowing machinery also are important in turf management, Jim stated. He showed a few Kodasliques showing the effect of poor adjustment, and improper cutting heights. The turf looked scalped, ragged and weak.

Jim also showed slides of iron chlorosis on bermuda and tall fescue turf and on some shrubbery. The iron molecule is necessary to the chlorophyll (if you'll pardon the word) manufacturing process within the plant. If you have followed all other management practices soundly, and your turf still looks chlorotic or off-color, perhaps your turf is in need of iron, Jim pointed out.

Another slide showing a soil sterilizing pit was shown by Dr. Watson. The pit was made of concrete, was sunk in the ground, was airtight, and had a removable gable roof. It was set up specifically for soil sterilization by using the poisonous gas, methyl bromide. Soil sterilization by this method is valuable

from the standpoint of time - 24 hours after treatment the soil is ready for use. It appeared as though this concrete pit could also be easily heated with an electric wire system to bring the soil temperature to the required 50° F for most efficient use of methyl bromide during colder months. The pit appeared to be an excellent idea for consideration by superintendents in this area.

We wish to thank Dr. Watson for his excellent presentation and hope we may have the pleasure of having him back with us again in the future.

The members of this Association wish to go on record as being highly in favor of the idea of the Toro Manufacturing Company instituting a turf research program. This step shows foresightedness on the part of the leaders of the Toro organization and the Superintendents of this area are looking forward with great interest to some new and important developments in turf and turf maintenance machinery to come from the cooperation between Toro and Dr. Jim Watson.

### CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTION REPORT

As an added highlight of constructive suggestion reports, we hope that it will be possible to have Green Committee Officials of the visited club present at the sessions in which we discuss the constructive suggestions for that particular golf course. We urge each host superintendent to make a concerted effort to have the Green Chairman and any of the Green Committeemen of his club attend the regular Education and Policy Committee Meeting on Tuesday following the regular meeting. It is only in this way that we feel we can do our most effective job of constructive suggestions for each individual club. These meetings of the Education and Policy Committee are open to all members and we invite those who can to attend.

#### General

The Woodholme Country Club is a sporty lay-out with rolling terrain and many interesting golf holes. It is a pleasant course to play and provides many interesting golf shots. The course shows many good construction features and appeared to have been well-groomed and manicured all season. Mr. Carroll Hitchcock rates a hand for the good work he is doing there.

#### Greens

There are a few greens which are unfair to players - they are No. 9 and No. 15. Each of these greens are terraced, and the slopes fall parallel to the line of play. A perfect approach, to the center of the green is in danger of landing on the slope and bounding off the green. If these greens are ever re-designed we recommend that these terraces be turned so they face the line of approach or better yet, eliminated.

The putting surfaces, though full, true, and well-groomed, have built up a thatched layer which means trouble ahead. In order to reduce this thatch, we suggest that a good program of brushing, combing, and aerating, during the growing season (spring and fall mainly) be put into effect. By brushing with the power mower attachment regularly, and combing vigorously with a Del-Monte rake (mounted on an over-green, or a hand tractor) a considerable portion of the mat build-up will be removed. A good aeration program will gradually break down the

thatched condition of the putting surfaces and promote good root growth in addition to the other benefits from regular aeration. We recommend that all greens be thoroughly aerated at once and left open over the winter as a step in the right direction.

We also recommend that soil samples from all putting greens, fairways, and tees be sent to the University of Maryland or some other such institution for analysis, then liming recommendations should be followed to bring the soil to a pH of 6.5. Light, periodic treatments of hydrated lime will also help break down the thatch.

Spring and fall aeration should be carried out religiously - as often as Mr. Hitchcock deems necessary, without unduly antagonizing the playing members.

### Tees

At the time of meeting, the regular tees were out of play as they were reconditioned for next years growth. The tees were topdressed and seeded, and temporary tees were used on each hole. We feel that Carroll and the Woodholme Green Committee have used good judgement in taking this action at this time of the year when most players are out primarily for exercise - not a low score. Next year the regular tees should be in better condition because of this move than they normally would be. It is the support of the Green Committee and the membership in such matters that allow such far-sighted decisions to be made by thinking superintendents.

There are some tees, the short ones in particular on which we feel tough turf grasses such as U-3 bermudagrass or Meyer (Z-52) zoysia in combination with Merion (B-27) bluegrass would help considerably in keeping a grass cover without need for major re-conditioning projects each year.

There is an excellent patch of bermudagrass in the second fairway which could be tried on tee and trouble areas by spot sowing, plugging, or sprigging.

### Fairways

The problem which requires immediate attention on all the fairways is the abundance of earth worm casts. The casts make fairway shots extremely difficult to play as more often than not the ball is lodged in among several of them. An application of Chlordane, which is an inexpensive material and does the best job, at the rate of 20 pounds of a 50% wettable powder applied in 25 gallons of water to the acre should alleviate the problem.

The fairway turf also appeared to be on the hungry side. Applications of 500 pounds of a 10-6-4 fertilizer to each acre each spring and fall would prove very beneficial. If it is within the budget, the fall application would be raised to 1,000 pounds of a 10-6-4 to the acre - applied preferably in September and October - 500 pounds per acre at each application. This would mean a total of 1500 pounds of 10-6-4 per acre per year.

Soil analysis for each fairway should also be made and liming recommendations to raise the pH to 6.5 should be followed.

The tile drainage system that Carroll has set into trouble spots in fairways appears to be working well. There is one suggestion that may work in some instances. If interceptor lines are set at the top level of the area to be drained and laid at right angles to the slope then down the slope from both ends of the interceptor line it may be less costly than a complete herringbone system. Less tile feet would be used in most cases. This system was described in the New York State Turf Association "Tile Drainage" bulletin referred to in our "Good Reference" column of the September issue of the Turf News Letter.

The sand traps for the most part are well placed and are of a nature that they do not penalize the golfer unfairly. The traps are mostly flat with grass bunkers sloping away from them. While the grass slopes present a problem of hand maintenance they are not perhaps any worse than other courses, and yet the sand itself is easily maintained as it is not sloped and subject to wash, footprints, sliding, etc.

These recommendations are made in the spirit of suggestion, and are intended to be integrated into the long-range program of management and maintenance. To quote an old adage, "It is healthy to try to surpass one's self always; this occupation ought to last as long as life."

#### BUSINESS MEETING

President Bob Shields called the meeting to order and Charles Schalestock read the minutes of the previous meeting and gave the treasurer's report. Both were approved as read.

A letter from the National Association was read concerning cooperative plan set up between the National Association and the USGA Green Section and is explained as follows: The Associations interested in starting zoysia fairway projects similar to the one carried out by the Mid-Atlantic Association at Fairfax may request the Green Section to send them one ounce of processed Z-73 zoysia seed. Upon receiving the seed they should propagate the seedlings and choose one club in their area where they will plant the seedlings.

A second letter was read from Agar Brown explaining the duties of a new committee to channel funds for research for best results and most important to coordinate efforts with USGA in the development of better turf. The members of the board are Willis Glover, Agar Brown, and Leonard Strong.

A letter was received from C. E. Robinson, Greens Consultant for the Royal Canadian Golf Association, stating that he would like to continue receiving our monthly Newsletter. He described the Newsletter as being a very fine report giving sound advice.

Charles Wilson wrote a letter of thanks for the wonderful Atmos clock and for all the Association has done for him.

A letter was sent to Herb Graffis inviting him to the Baltimore meeting.

Jim Thomas reported that the last meeting of the Education Committee was a great success. Twenty-one members of the Association were present plus Mr. Wm. Shannon who is now vice-president of Columbia and Mr. Essex, representing the

Green Committee of Columbia Country Club, and their Superintendent, Mr. O. B. Fitts. With both parties representing management and maintenance present we are in a better position to make recommendations as we can learn just what the budget will afford and start from there. More cooperative meetings of this nature in connection with other clubs will be of benefit to all.

This meeting marked the beginning of a new regime. Jim Thomas was elected president; Bob Scott, Jr., Vice President, and Charles Schalestock will continue his fine work as Secretary-Treasurer. We wish these men much success in their new offices.

Before leaving office Bob Shields made a few suggestions which we will do well to carry out. Draw up new by-laws . . . Print the Newsletter on better paper and advance the Constructive Suggestion Report even more than was done this year. Most people who receive the Newsletter consider it a valuable reference and want to keep it on file permanently . . . Associate more closely with the National Association and the USGA . . . Set up a new zoysia fairway project at Columbia Country Club as a tribute to Columbia and O. B. Fitts, if the idea is acceptable to the Club. Both have done much for this Association over a period of many years and deserve credit . . . Appoint a membership committee to screen new applications.

We all want to thank and congratulate Bob for his part in helping to advance this Association to one of the outstanding and leading Association in the country. The Mid-Atlantic is beginning to grow up - next year we will be 25 years old and more leadership will be expected from us.

Admiral Phillips, Chairman Green Committee at Army-Navy Club, in a short talk said it was inconceivable to him how any Golf Course Superintendent could hope to advance himself or his profession without membership in the National Association and close cooperation with the Green Section and other turf research agencies. The Admiral is a staunch booster of the Superintendent and at one time devoted a 15 minute TV broadcast to this "unsung hero of golf". His attendance record at meetings is almost perfect and everyone listens when on rare occasions we can get him to speak. Naturally he is a great favorite with the entire membership for his good golf, his good advice, his good fellowship and for the part he has played in our Country's history by attaining the rank of Admiral. Besides we even call him by his first name - Hi! Jack.

Bill Glover reminded us that we also owed Admiral Phillips a round of hearty thanks for his progressive thinking, interest, and active participation in Mid-Atlantic affairs.

Jim Thomas reminded us that we owed Al Radko a vote of thanks for his contributions to our Association.

#### COMING EVENTS

January 6 and 7, 1953. Annual Baltimore Conference of the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents. Lord Baltimore Hotel, Baltimore, Maryland.

February 8 - 13, 1953. Meeting of the National Association of Golf Course Superintendents, Ambassador Hotel, Atlantic City, New Jersey.

Know Your Host

"Genial George" Cornell, owner-manager of the G. L. Cornell Company, Worthington-Jacobsen distributors in this area, plays host to the Mid-Atlantic Association on December 2 - our next meeting date. This is an occasion that we all look forward to - to requote Hugh McRae, "This is the meeting where everybody talks, and nobody listens".

The G. L. Cornell Company and its predessor the J. S. Connolly Company have for many years been hosts to this Association at this time of the year. It is believed that every member looks forward to this occasion not only because of the excellent food and hospitality but also becuae it marks the end of another milestone in our struggle for perfect turf. At George's party we think about the season just past and vow that we will do betterin the season to come - but in the meantime let's have some fun.

George, Brownie, Tom, Mack and the entire Cornell organization welcome you and are looking forward to seeing you on Tuesday, December 2, 6:00 P.M. at 4715 Miller Avenue in Bethesda.

This letter is late so fill in the enclosed card and mail it as soon as you finish reading this letter. George would like to have the card by November 26 - not later than the 28th- to make sure your name gets in the pot. The phone number is WISCONSIN 6600 if you had rather phone, but do so before Friday, November 28.

Next Meeting

At: G. L. Cornell Company, 4715 Miller Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland

Time: 6:00 P.M. - Don't bring your golf clubs!

Date: December 2, 1952

The fairway leaf sweeper developed by Bob Shields at Woodmont and written up in the last issue of the Newsletter is diagramed again in this issue because in the first attempt the lines and explanation of the drawing did not memo-graph well. Please refer to your last issue for further explanation on what this device will do.

