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TURF NEWSLETTER

(Official Organ of Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents)

L.R. Shields Editor Woodmont Country Club, Box 352, Rockville, Md.
James E. Thomas Editor Army Navy Country Club, Arlington, Va.

SEPTEMBER 1955
THE SPARROWS POINT MEETING

The September meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents was held at the Sparrows Point Country Club, Sparrows Point, Maryland. The attendance of sixty-five members and guests continued to hold our average attendance at a record high for the year of 1955.

The host superintendent was Paul Weiss, Jr., one of the youngest golf course superintendents in the area. Paul is the son of National Director, Paul Weiss, Sr., of Lehigh Valley Country Club, Allentown, Pennsylvania. We can truly say; Like father, like son. They ably carry the colors of the sturdy Pennsylvania Dutch.

The Sparrows Point Country Club Golf Course was designed by the Golf Architect, William Gordon. It is sponsored by the Bethlehem Steel Corporation and operated for the benefit of their employees. Those of us who played the course found it an exacting test of golf, measuring 6,669 yards. Many of the holes are cut through timber, and cross over the tidal inlets of Cheasapeake Bay. It is very beautiful and a scenic picture - a photograph of the eighth hole has appeared in the Golf Course Reporter.

BUSINESS MEETING

President Bob Shields called the meeting to order at 8 p.m. and asked our host superintendent, Paul Weiss, Jr. to introduce his club officials. They were: Mr. William A. Lentz, Chairman of the Greens Committee; Mr. Ray Kyber, Manager of the Sparrows Point Country Club, and Mr. Frank Invernezzi, club professional. They warmly welcomed us to the club and we in turn appreciate the hospitality extended our association.

Cliff Eisle saw to it that Prince George Country Club was well represented. He brought along Manager, Frank Sherman; Mr. Abbe and Mr. Peace, both Directors, and Chairman of the Green Committee and House Committee, respectively. Even Superintendent Andrew Sweeny decided it was time to again be with us. It was good to see Andy aboard.

The Philadelphia Superintendents Association was represented by: Mr. T.L. Gustin of the Philadelphia Toro Company and Superintendents Edward Roberts and Frank Tull of the Philadelphia group. We are always glad to see and have our neighbors from the City of Brotherly Love with us. We hope they will come back soon.

Other guests on hand were: Clifford Case, Cornell Chemical Company; Bill Obendorf, Vent-A-Soil; and Buck Wetzel.

Next, Jim Reid introduced John Gallagher- American Chemical Company -

(2)

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. John was our guest speaker of the evening and gave us a very interesting talk on "Weed Control".

He told us that it was necessary to grow and provide good turf under a variety of adverse conditions., such as - a low height of cut, excessive use, along with much wear and tear. That under normal growing conditions, grasses help to prevent and control weeds. One example is blue grass that has not been cut too short and is growing actively.

He pointed out that weeds cost us money as they are an unwanted plant on a golf course. Close cutting and heavy watering encourage their growth, especially when grasses are in their dormant season. This is true of the bluegrasses during the hot and dry summer months. Weeds also make use of fertilizers that are intended for the grass plants. They also force us to buy special mowing equipment for their control. The use of the rotary mower is an example.

We have three methods of control: hand, mechanical and chemical. We resort to hand weeding mostly for the cleaning and freeing our putting greens of unwanted growth. Science and research have also taught us that some mechanical and chemical control is possible on putting green turf. However, extreme caution and care is needed. One means of control is the use of the vertical mower on tees and greens.

Chemicals are the answer for effective control of weeds where large areas are involved, such as roughs and fairways. Some of these materials are: sodium arsenite, 2-4D, PMAS, CMU, etc. We must be aware that grasses of different variation have to be treated according to their weak and strong periods of growth.

The best period for preventive weed control is in the early spring when the plants are young, small and tender. When grasses are growing aggressively they can better resist injury from chemical applications. Yet, caution and care must be exercised; follow directions and try the treatments on small areas first. Summer applications must be made at reduced rates.

The fall months are also an ideal time for weed control, soil renovation and re-seeding where necessary. At that season of the year we can easily recognize areas of turf damage and make the necessary repairs.

Weed control is something that needs to be practiced around the clock, particularly spring, summer and autumn. Crabgrass can best be controlled in the spring when it is in the two-leaf stage. When it gets a headstart on us, repeat applications of herbicides are necessary for its control. The different compounds of Di-Sodium-Methyl-Arsenate seem to have much promise in this field. They damage existing turf very little when properly applied to grass. We enjoyed John Gallagher's talk and hope he can be with us again soon.

CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTION REPORT

James Seacrist: Why are greens so hard?

Paul Weiss, Jr.: This is due to too much sand being used in the top soil mix. The mixture on the first nine was mushroom soil, top soil, and sand. The mixing was done off the green and pushed into position with a bulldozer. The greens on the second nine are composed of peat-moss, top soil and sand put on in layers, then thoroughly mixed.

on the site. Experiments are being made with soil conditioners and also for a better top soil mixture.

James Seacrist: What is the different colored grass in the eighteenth green?

Paul Weiss, Jr.: It is Pennlu strain of bent.

John Leavell: Do you like the shape of number seven green?

Paul Weiss, Jr.: No, all drainage goes to the front center of the green

Paul Weiss, Jr.: How can these greens be softened?

Andy Sweeney: By frequent aeration, followed by a thorough spiking.

Red Hancock: Aerate in several directions and more often

Louis Bargman: At what height are you mowing greens?

Paul Weiss, Jr.: At 1/4" on the old greens and 5/16" on the new ones.

R. Hines, Jr.: How often do you mow your greens?

Paul Weiss, Jr.: Five times a week

R. Hines, Jr.: At the present time and their thin condition, you would secure a better covering by mowing only three times a week.

R. Hines, Sr.: Three things are wrong; construction, drainage, soil mixing and preparation. Collars around the greens are too small, greens should be brought in and made smaller in size.

James Seacrist: Sand from explosion shots played from the traps will cause trouble on the greens in time, especially on the edges. (Opinion is that traps are placed too close to the greens.)

R. Hines, Sr.: More line could be used to good advantage.

P. Weiss, Jr.: Tests do not indicate a need for line at this time.

J. Seacrist: What caused the conditions existing on the lower side of the traps?

P. Weiss, Jr.: CMU was used in the traps to kill weeds, it washed out of the traps and killed adjacent grass on the fairways.

The tees were found to be in very good shape and exceptionally large in size. If tee trouble should develop, perhaps U-3 bermuda grass could be incorporated in the turf. The roughs were well-groomed and their cover of grass was good. Especially noticeable was the stand of Chewings fescue through the trees on the back nine. The fairways on the front nine are coming along very well. They already have a good cover of turf, are clean and well-contoured. The back nine which was planted last fall is still thin in some areas, but fertilization and care will help them to fill in.

General Opinion: Sparrows Point Golf Course is in good condition considering its age. There are some thin spots on the putting greens, but continued aeration, top dressing and fertilization will fill in these areas before growth stops this fall. New greens are usually harder than old ones because they have not had the time to build up even a thin layer of stems, roots and top dressing to act as a cushion.

VICE PRESIDENT RECEIVES CITATION

Tom Dawson, our jolly Vice President, received considerable recognition and commendation from the USGA and his club officials for the part he played in grooming the James River Course for the National Amateur Tournament which ended September 17.

At ceremonies at the Country Club of Virginia following the tournament, Tom was presented a Citation of Merit award by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, a USGA tie clasp and a check by Admiral R.O. Glover, Greenschairman at the Richmond club.

(4)

Congratulations, Tom, we are all very proud of you and your accomplishments.

ILL AND IN DISTRESS

Member Charlie Schalestock is in Mt. Alto Hospital with a very rare ailment of which there are only 126 other cases in the United States. His condition is very serious and chances are that recovery will be very slow. He is not expected to be able to carry on his duties at Norbeck Country Club for six months or more. In the meantime, his club is carrying him on the payroll.

It has been suggested that this Association make a project of assisting Norbeck during Charlie's absence by making consultation visits and advising assistant superintendent Ray Hilton who has been in golf maintenance work less than a year. Ray and the club officials have expressed approval of this idea and if the Mid-Atlantic members so desire, a committee will be appointed at the October meeting to work up a program for Ray to follow this fall and next spring.

Charlie is a very sick man. Let's try to help him by relieving him of some of the worry of his golf course. Will you help?

BALTIMORE TURFGRASS CONFERENCE

The dates for the Annual Baltimore Turfgrass Conference are January 17 and 18 at the Lord Baltimore Hotel.

Possible subjects that have been suggested are:

Identification of Weeds
Organizing and Planning golf course work
Proper Timing of Fertilization

Won't you add to this list by suggesting a subject you would like to hear discussed? There is little time left, so act at once.

EMPLOYMENT OPENINGS

Word has been received from the National Association that there is an opening for a qualified superintendent at an 18-hole course in southeastern Pennsylvania. This club is in the processes of changing some of its grounds personnel and the management asks that inquiries be sent to:

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America
Attention S.A.B.
P.O. Box 106
St. Charles, Illinois.