

MID-ATLANTIC News Letter



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MAY 1960

NORBECK MEETING . The April 1960 meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter was held at Norbeck Country Club, Rockville, Maryland on April 5 with seventy members and guests present.

After a steak dinner, President Frank Dualap called the meeting to order and introduced the host superintendent, Bill Wright; club manager Ray Kyber; Charles Fishman, chairman of the Greens Committee; Harry Hais, Golf Committee chairman and Henry Giradi. Other notables introduced were : Charles Hallowell, Director Mid-Atlantic USGA Green Section; Louis Knight, Secretary-Treasurer of the Tidewater Turfgrass Association; Major Paul Harris, Golf Officer and Major George Renault, Inspector General's Office, Fort Belvoir Golf Club; R.J. Sepulveda, Greenschairman from Bethesda Country Club; Gilbert Schapiro, owner of Laurel Pines Golf Club and a Past President of Norbeck Country Club.

CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTION REPORT . Due to the all-day rain, inspection of the golf course was confined to the greens around the club house, but all agreed that the greens seen had received the best of early spring care.

Discussion of Bermuda Grass for fairway planting in this area brought out the fact that some members are in favor and some against.

These against mentioned : (1) Winter color. Meaning spring color when everything is green except bermuda. (2) Possibility of fairway grass creeping into bent grass greens. (3) Almost impossible to change back to other grasses after using bermuda.

Superintendents in favor said : (1) Winter color is over rated and not too important when good bermuda turf has been established. (2) There is green grass in July, August and September when everything else is brown. (3) It will withstand the cart traffic. (4) It will creep and cover divot scars faster than cool season grasses. (5) It will compete favorably against weeds - clover, crabgrass, pea-annua. (6) Insects and diseases are not problems on bermuda in this area. (7) Golfers like the half inch cut which other fairway grasses won't tolerate. (8) It requires no artificial irrigation after once established.

Jim Reid of Suburban Club in Baltimore is not in favor of bermuda grass fairways and has this to say on the subject: " At our Norbeck meeting in April there was considerable discussion for and against using Bermuda grass on fairways. Several club officials showed their interest, but I am sure they were quite confused about the subject after hearing the various opinions expressed. U-3 Bermuda is a good grass and definitely has a place on some golf courses. Some superintendents think very highly of it. There is no finer grass in my opinion for tees, but it cannot stand winter traffic. Therefore, I move off the tees during the dormant season onto tees covered with Blue Grass. I wait until the bermuda has started to green before putting the markers back in the spring. This is usually about the first of May. Where U-3 Bermuda is thick no weeds will grow and in winter you have nothing but a gray, dead looking fairway. At the present time our golf course is a beautiful, lush green; both fairways and rough. Where we have patches of U-3 Bermuda, they look horrible in contrast.

Surburban Club is not a year-round golf course. When the members come out in early spring they enjoy the beautiful green surroundings. On the other hand, I will admit that our fairways are not as green in August as they would be if they were planted with U-3 Bermuda. I also think location has a lot to do with changing to Bermuda fairways. In southern Maryland and Virginia where the soil is mostly composed of sand and gravel I would say U-3 Bermuda is the grass to plant. In the northern section where the soil is good I think we should stick to the Blue grasses and Fescues. No two clubs are alike, but the job of the superintendent along with the cooperation of the club officials is to give the members the very best turf possible for their specific club. " - Jim Reid.

Stan Zontek at Manor Club thinks Bermuda is a necessity whether we like it or not. He says: " Manor's fairways are and have been at a very low ebb for many years. With our large membership Bermuda would make an excellent turf to withstand the golf carts, the divot problem, plus such problems as water and height of cut. I believe it will be better turf in its dormant stage in winter than crab grass. I don't believe the golfers will complain about the color as much as they are complaining about the muddy fairways. Also, it would cost more to get rid of crabgrass than it would to introduce Bermuda. I fought Bermuda for six years in West Virginia greens and collars and finally had to rebuild six greens. I am not going to plant Bermuda in Manor's aprons. I personally don't like Bermuda on fairways. But I think clubs with carts and heavy play will have to change to Bermuda fairways and tees because the grass is tough and will stand the wear. " - Stan Zontek.

Bob Shields Likes U-3 at Woodmont. " We have a part of each regular tee planted to U-3 and it has done so well we decided to try it on a fairway. We used two acres of our poorest fairway in 1953 by planting sprigs on 18 inch centers into existing crabgrass and pea. It made little progress until 1957 when we began to manage for bermuda, then it really went. We fertilized every two weeks with Nitrate of Ammonia at 100 or 150 lbs. per acre and kept it cut at 1/2 inch. Last summer we had the first decent fairway turf we have ever had. Last fall we overseeded the area with rye and it had some color all winter. Right now it has plenty of color and we believe we have found the answer to the biggest objection to Bermuda grass - namely, winter color. We like Bermuda at Woodmont because the grass is there when we want it - July, August and September and we are planting more of it every year. We use U-3 because we have it on hand. We know that Bermuda will create other problems such as winter color, creeping into greens and traps, matt and thatch and excessive clippings laying on fairways, but we don't feel that these are unsurmountable. We'd rather hear a member complain about these than to hear him say ' there is no grass on the fairways.' " - Bob Shields.

BY- LAWS REVIEW . During the business meeting the By-Laws were reviewed with the idea of changing them to conform more to National By-Laws. In for most of the discussion was the clause requiring all members - regular and associate, to be members of the National Association. It was brought out that a majority of associate members are already members of the National and that those who are not seldom attend meetings. Those 'against' feel that we would be turning our backs on our associate friends by requiring them to pay for National membership. Those 'for' argue that we should have a superintendents' association made up of superintendents and those willing to support the superintendents of the nation by holding membership in the National. This subject will come up for more discussion at the Baltimore Country Club meeting.

EMPLOYMENT OPENINGS. We have just been notified of an employment opportunity at the Huntington Crescent Club, Huntington, L.I., New York. " The club has within its boundaries of 216 acres, an 18 hole golf course, both lawn and clay tennis courts, a large practice tee and driving range, a skeet and trap range and extensive lawn areas around its main club house and swimming pool. The club feels that it needs a man with from 12 to 15 years