

But since June, two-thirds of the tournaments supervised by the Metropolitan Golf Association, because of unfavorable course conditions, have allowed players to move the ball from its original position to a preferred lie.

Rich Event Postponed

One August deluge forced postponement of the \$250,000 Westchester Classic. When it was resumed, officials decided to allow all contestants to lift and clean and move the ball on all fairways on a course, which in other years was readily groomed for the play of the experts.

"It all started," said Radko, "with cool, rainy and cloudy spring weather. Then we had bright sunlight in July. It was too much sunlight. It wilted the grass. They became weak and spindly. It was as if someone, who had been in solitary confinement in a cold-dark cellar for three months, suddenly was exposed to the blazing sun.

"Then, we had heat and humidity that brought on diseases plus heavy rains that caused drainage problems and so much flooding that the grasses couldn't breathe. More hot weather and humidity followed."

This also posed a problem for course superintendents. With golfers anxious to play, should the heavy wet fairways and greens be cut? Or should they be given time to dry out? The golfers had to be pleased and the mowers went to work, which caused damage and some scalping.

Need for Research

What can be done now? Ted Horton, superintendent of the Winged Foot Golf Club, Mamoroneck, where the 1974 United States Open will be played, says research and development of new grasses will be an answer to offset seather damage to courses.

Last year, the U.S.G.A. and Rutgers University, developed Bonnieblut, a new bluegrass hybrid, "there are a hundred new varieties but it takes years to breed a plant and then offer it commercially," said Horton.

Estimates of golf-course maintenance in the metropolitan area range from \$80,000 to \$120,000 annually. One survey revealed the national average for upkeep per hole for a course is \$5,300 a year.

The weevil is being fought by insecticides developed at Cornell University, said Radko. Among the turf diseases that have been prevalent in this recent scourge of courses are pythium, dollar spot, brown patch and fusarium.

While artificial turf has been introduced and used on football and baseball fields, there is no present concept to carpet a golf course of a mile or more in length in this fashion. At \$20 per square foot that would be a rather costly job," said one official. "I don't think we'll ever have it in golf," commented Radko.

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