

THE PACIFIC GREENKEEPER

Volume 2

Number 11

In This Issue

THE EDITOR makes a few remarks on the tournament situation on the Pacific Coast.

FRED C. McNABB gives some advice on the growing of sweet peas for the club house garden.

LEE SHIPPEY, Los Angeles columnist, registers a few impressions in regard to Bermuda grass from the standpoint of the layman.

A letter is received in answer to last month's article on "Training Men."

NOVEMBER 1930

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The Pacific Greenkeeper is sent free of charge to the greenkeepers and greens chairmen of all golf courses in Arizona, California, Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. To all others a year's subscription is \$1.50. The editors welcome all communications in regard to turf maintenance on the Pacific Coast.

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Vol. II

NOVEMBER

No. 11

◆ ACCORDING TO THE EDITOR ◆

The statement that big golf tournaments in California are sealing their own doom may not be true, but at least it can not be denied with the emphasis that it would a year or so ago. This year the Southern California mid-winter tournaments are not what they were a year ago, and there is the possibility present that next year they will be even less. This does not include local inter-club and invitational matches, but does apply with particular force to major tournaments involving much in the way of prize money.

Culminating in the demand of the Southern California Professional Golfers' association for ten per cent of all prize money offered in the various tournaments, the Virginia Country club of Long Beach cancelled its annual open tournament and its glittering prizes amounting to \$3,500. Following this drastic move, at least two other clubs have declared themselves as uncertain as to whether they would go through with their matches as scheduled. In all fairness to everyone concerned, and waiving all matters of right or wrong connected with the situation, it must be said that there was no time worse than the present for the professionals to deliver their ultimatum or request. The economic depression of the country has

led all guardians of club finances to tie an extra knot in the clubs' purse strings. Inasmuch as several clubs are seeking an opportunity to cut down on expenses, it should not be surprising to see them seize the professional golfers' demand as an excellent chance to eliminate one of the greatest expenses of all, the provision of prize money.

For this reason, then, an error should be chalked up against the tactician who chose the present time to ask for a cut of the prize funds. To the casual observer it would also seem that the request had little enough chance of being granted even at the most opportune moment, because in California clubs there is an undercurrent of feeling that golf primarily is a game for amateurs and that professionals are allowed their current privileges only because of the good graces of the paying members. Much of this feeling may be attributed to the fact that a large percentage of club membership is made up of what the vulgar unjustly term "old fogeys," but who are proud to be known as retired business men. They have made their money in the East and have come West to enjoy unmitigated sunshine and golf, and anything that tends to detract from their enjoyment of

Continued on Page Four

According To the Editor

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either, even for only a day, is sure to meet with a scowl of disfavor. These players disapprove of rain and tournaments with fin impartiality, even though they may be told that both are decidedly beneficial. The old guard, and usually it is composed of pillars of the club, pays for irrigation and it pays to play golf; therefore, maledictions upon everything else.

After all one cannot blame this type of player for his attitude; admitting the possibility that a money tournament may bring famous golfers to his course, what does he care for publicity? Merely a method of making his favorite course too crowded to play over it with his usual freedom from restraint. What does he care for the constructive criticism of visiting players? Often no criticism is forthcoming, and rarely is it constructive. Therefore, why all the ballyhoo?

Then there is another angle of the situation to be considered. A golf club near Los Angeles had the custom of staging a tournament during the mid-winter season. The prizes offered were not large, first being about three hundred dollars, nevertheless, it presented an opportunity for some enterprising player to win a convenient sum of money. Besides this, the tournament lasted only one day. One or two

of the big guns of the golfing world did not enter because the remuneration offered was not sufficient to interest them. But all the rest of the horde of visiting players came in full force and with them came their camp followers and hangers-on. After the smoke of battle had cleared away last season, several of the members reported a loss of what amounted to two or three hundred dollars worth of personal property left in parked cars and locker rooms. There was no objection to the professional golfers themselves, but on account of the thievery indulged in by the flock who trail after them wherever they go, this particular tournament has been cancelled. Incidentally, the professionals themselves say that these camp followers, many style themselves as personal caddies, constitute a great problem of all famous golfers, and one that requires drastic measures to eliminate.

This has been written at the impending risk of being called a tirade against professional golfers. It is nothing of the sort. They have their use on a golf course as does a greenkeeper, and one of the worst things that any misguided greenkeeper could do would be to ignore the advice and suggestions of these expert golf players. Most of them have seen more golf courses than have greensmen, and, after all, a good golf player is the one who can best tell whether or not a course is good to play upon.

Sweet Peas

Need Special Care

by

Fred C. Mc Nabb

August 1st marks the beginning of the planting season for sweet peas in the milder regions of the Pacific Coast. Plantings made at this time with proper culture should bloom within 100 days and blooms should continue throughout the winter months. Additional plantings may be made at any time from August to March.

The Early Flowering Spencer sweet peas have been developed particularly for outdoor winter blooms, where it does not get cold enough to freeze them. These are the large flowering long-stemmed sweet peas, and are a great improvement in comparison with those older types of years ago.

Your sweet peas will be not better than the soil preparations you make for them. It is a common practice among successful sweet pea growers to dig a trench 18 to 24 inches deep and mix thoroughly with the soil barnyard fertilizer, sheep manure, or in the absence of these a liberal quantity of steamed bonemeal, and a few pounds of agricultural sulphur. The soil should contain considerable humus such as leaf mold or any other organic matter.

In freshly turned soil, open a furrow three or four inches deep; sow the seeds

in the bottom of this furrow at the rate of about one ounce to about thirty or forty feet. Cover the seed to a depth of one inch; firm the soil to the seed, leaving a loose mulch of soil on top. Do not sprinkle or irrigate, for with proper soil preparation in advance of planting, there should be sufficient moisture to germinate the seeds without the application of additional water. Sprinkling crusts the surface, excludes the air, and sometimes causes poor germination.

Provide a trellis and train the young plants up as soon as they have tendrils. While the plants are young they should be thinned, to give them room to develop. The flowers should be picked every day after blooming season commences. If left to mature seeds, the flowering season will be shortened, for once the plant has succeeded in maturing its seeds, it has completed its life cycle.

It is well to keep sweet peas thoroughly watered for the first few weeks of their growth, but when the blooming season begins, too much water may cause the buds to fall from the stems, in which case sprinkling or irrigation should cease, and cultivation should be practiced, leaving a loose mulch of soil on the surface. Do not cultivate too deeply or too closely to the plants themselves as there is danger of disturbing the root system.

Continued on Page Seven

An Essay On Bermuda Grass

by
Lee Shippey

The following is reprinted from the columns of the Los Angeles Times through the courtesy of Mr. Shippey.

WALT WHITMAN wrote "Leaves of grass," Bob Ingersoll wrote a tribute to grass, Don Marquis wrote "The Strong Grasses," and so it shouldn't be beneath the lofty dignity of this column of chaste literary effort to enlighten and perhaps inspire the world with an essay on grass.

Besides which, it is fitting and proper that a Southern Californian should write the essay on one kind of grass, for who but a California home gardener could do it justice. We refer to the common or garden variety, devil grass.

Why Bermuda Onions are Mild

Officially, devil grass is known as Bermuda grass. Bermuda is known for only two products, Bermuda grass and Bermuda onions. Bermuda onions are famous for their mildness. Oh, of course, you frequently buy "Bermuda onions" at the grocery which aren't mild, but that is because they were grown in Texas, not in Bermuda. Real Bermuda onions have no strength at all. The reason is that Bermuda grass grows in the same island and takes all the strength out of anything on earth except a gardener's language. It will

take the strength out of sturdy young trees, flowers, shrubs, resolutions and gardener's backs. It daily brings more people to their knees than do all the revivalists in California, but they do not arise refreshed and strengthened. Yet it is just the opposite of the well-known root of all evil. Its roots are as hard to get rid of as that one is to keep.

Bermuda grass makes Bermuda onions mild, but has a quite different effect on Southern California gardeners. It fills them with impotent frenzy. It baffles and it mystifies. You build a lawn of sifted soil you are assured has no taint of Bermuda grass. You plant blue grass and clover or Washington bent grass. You build walls about it to keep out any vagrant seed. You water it with care and weed it with ardor. It rewards you with a sudden upspringing of green down more delicate than a high school girl's boy friend's first mustache. You rejoice and slap your fattened calf—

And then suddenly you discover that the trail of the serpent is over it all. Weaving over and under it are threads as fine as spider web. Devil grass.

It Bloweth Where It Listeth

Down on your knees you fall to eradicate it at once. It is early in the morning when you take that resolution. When you arise the shades of night are falling fast. You have grubbed

out enough devil grass to ruin all the yards in town. But you know that ten thousand roots have broken off in the ground and will work on undiscouraged.

No man can say whence it cometh. One garden enthusiast in Eagle Rock is convinced that the seed is in the water with which we sprinkle. But that doesn't satisfy us. We believe that if one watered with distilled water it would be just the same.

Don't Blame Bermuda

We prefer to call it devil grass, instead of Bermuda grass, for not only is that its fitting name but it seems pretty hard to lay all that on one poor little island like Bermuda. The encyclopedia says Bermuda grass is a creeping, perennial grass found in practically all tropical and subtropical countries. But you know how conservative encyclopedias are. Our own theory is that it was in a vain effort to keep out Bermuda grass that the Chinese wall was built. We also believe that it was from its roots the aboriginal peoples first learned the art of weaving matting. Bermuda grass came to California from any other land it must be honored as the hardiest of all our pioneers. But we don't believe as much devil grass as we have here could have grown up in less than 500 years.

Friend of Man

To the purist in lawn-making, Bermuda grass is a sore trial. When he gets angry at any other lawn tender he doesn't have to swear at him. The strongest malediction he can think of is "Go to grass," meaning Bermuda grass. But once one gets resigned to his fate, Bermuda grass is a friend of

man. He can let his lawn grow full of it and be happy. When he goes away for a vacation he doesn't have to engage a wet nurse to sit up with his lawn for Bermuda grass will resist drought and neglect. If he waters and rakes it frequently it will remain green and thick, and no soil can wash out of it. The children can run and jump and skid on it without damaging it a particle. Fire can sweep over it, and the water which puts out the fire will make the roots give forth new green beauty.

So after we've tried a few years to lick it we give in and jine it. We're all like the Kentucky colonel now living in Pasadena who vowed, when he first settled here, that he would have a lawn of pure Kentucky blue grass. The other day we asked him about his lawn. "Oh, it's a regular California lawn now," he said. "It's gone Republican."

Sweet Peas

Continued from Page Five

Sweet peas are one of the most popular garden flowers. Where the winters are mild they may be sown during the fall and winter months and in the higher altitudes or colder climates, in the early spring.

Best results are obtained by inoculating sweet pea seeds with a bacterial culture before planting. The selection of seed may well be determined by following the advice of the better class seed houses, which usually offer a selection of the choicest colors and varieties.

In The Mail Bag

To the editor of
The Pacific Greenkeeper:

In regard to Mr. Robert S. Greenfield's article, "Training the Greensman," in the October issue of The Pacific Greenkeeper, many of the items contained therein are very commendable. I do not know Mr. Greenfield personally, but from his statements I imagine that he must be the ideal type of superintendent and a very good trainer of men; but when he undertakes to train the members of his crew in their personal habits, I think he is overstepping his vocation as superintendent of golf courses.

The personal habits of a man can only reflect upon that individual and cannot possibly reflect upon the greenkeeper; or if it does, why stop there? Why do they not reflect upon the members of the club which employs them?

Nobody likes cleanliness more than the writer, yet a nice clean pair of overalls can be greased and dirty in ten minutes time if the man pays more attention to his work than to his apparel. A clean and shaved face is to be expected, but mechanics and greensmen have something to do besides taking time off to consider their personal appearance. They have work to do and cannot stop to change uniforms when they have come in contact with grease, nor manicure their finger nails after handling fertilizer.

Perhaps I am doing Mr. Greenfield an injustice; he may visualize the time when machinery can run without oil and grease, or when greensmen are provided with clean uniforms and hot and cold water. But to handle anything odorous or dirty, one must be contaminated with that with which one comes in contact, and to expect men to remain neat and clean while following the vocation of greenkeeping is expecting too much. Tools, when used, must show some of the effects of contact with the things they were used upon, but it is not necessary to abuse them. The young man arriving on the job with a nice new kit of tools cannot be judged

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by them. But the arrival with tools that show wear, not abuse, frequently indicates experience, and that is what counts. The greenkeeper does show the results of his occupation, and after a hard day on the job, he goes home too tired to care very much about his personal habits. His mind has been on his job, so please do not hold the superintendent to blame for a little dirt.

CHARLES MARLOW

Mechanic of the
San Gabriel Country Club

Disease Phamplet

Plant Disease and Pest Control, published first as Circular 265 of the University of California College of Agriculture, again is in print, according to announcement by Dean C. B. Hutchison. The present publication replaces former editions and also Circulars 227 and 204. The new publication may be obtained free from the College of Agriculture at Berkeley, Davis, or Riverside, or from any farm advisor.

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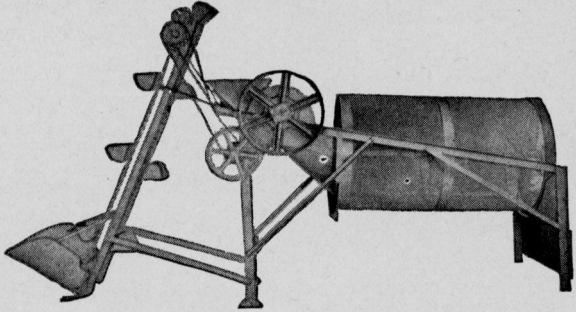
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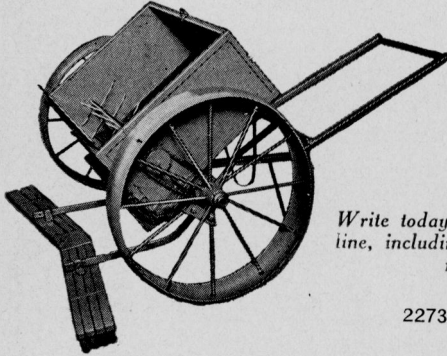
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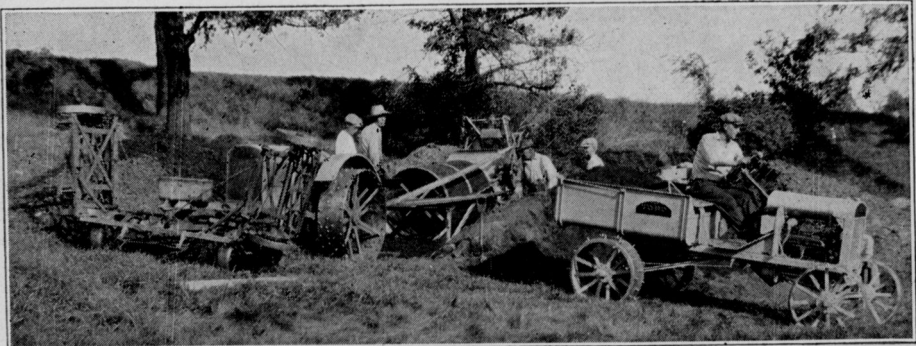
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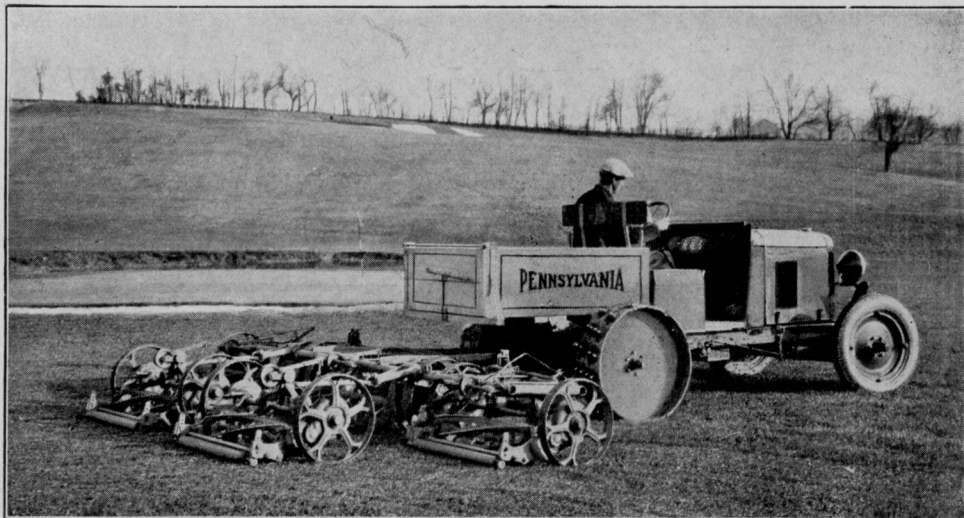
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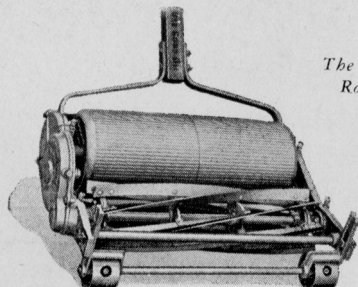
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