

Keep the Weeds Out of New Turf

By W. J. ROCKEFELLER
Greenkeeper, Inverness Club, Toledo, Ohio



W. J. Rockefeller

A VARIED career including twenty-three years on a farm, a musical education, apprentice to an upholsterer, and later drifting into hospital work at Binghamton, New York, and Toledo, Ohio, finally ended in my taking up greenkeeping at Inverness in 1903. Perhaps the experience in hospitals for the insane gave me some understanding as to how to handle golf bugs. At any rate I do not think my musical talent gave me much background in starting the construction work on the Inverness course; it must have been my farming experience and my love of the game. Being a left handed player myself, my idea of the perfect course is one which can be played in Par by a southpaw. Inverness, however, from the viewpoint of the golfer, is what is considered a difficult but fair golf course.

For more years than I can at this time recall, I have played the game of golf with a great deal of enjoyment, and I have tried to lay out and construct golf courses that are a fair test of skill. Among these are Heather Downs at Toledo; Napoleon Golf Club, Napoleon, Ohio;

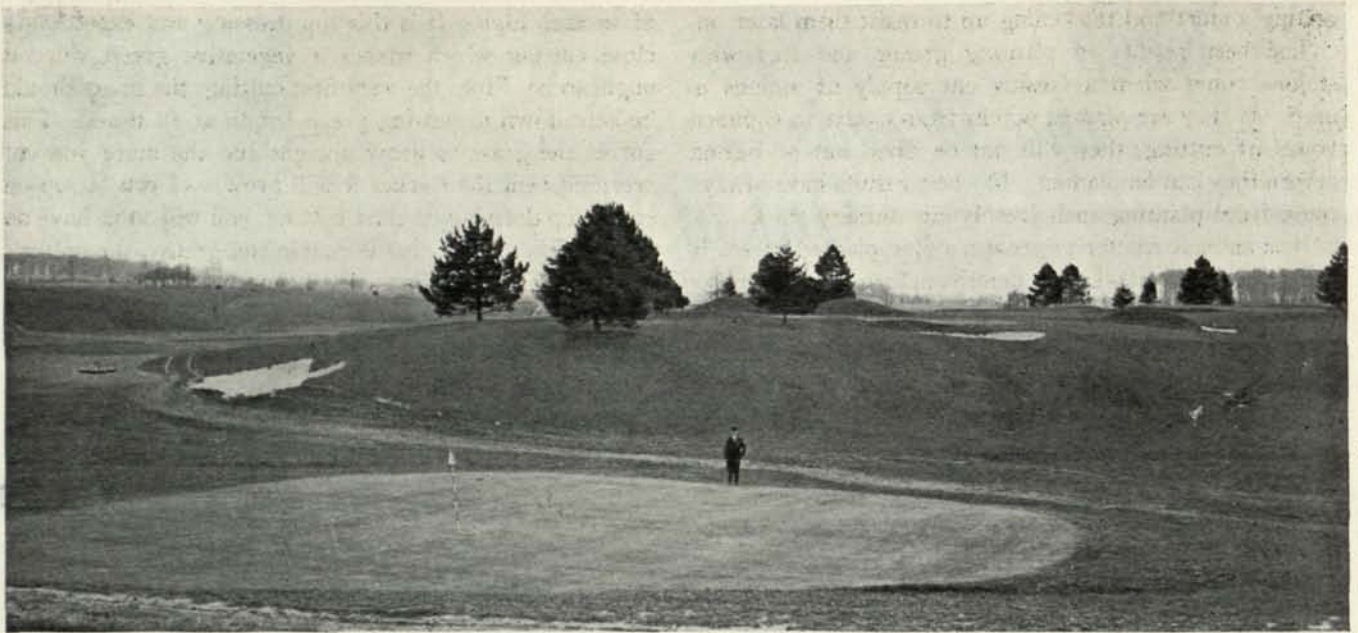
Lakemont Golf Club, Reno, Ohio; Catawba Cliffs Club, Port Clinton, Ohio; Defiance Golf Club, Defiance, Ohio; Mohawk Golf Club, Tiffin, Ohio.

Train Future Greenkeepers

During the years of my career as a greenkeeper, I have followed the policy of training the boys under me so that they are capable of handling a course of their own in due course of time. One of my boys is now greenkeeper at Pebble Beach, California, Mr. Joe Mayo. Mr. Al Schardt, who worked with me for some years now handles the Waneke Golf Club course at Buffalo, New York. Just last year another, Mr. Charles Meyers, took charge of the new Heather Downs course here in Toledo. This policy I believe is an excellent one for any green-



The Twelfth Green at Inverness Club, Toledo, Ohio



The Rolling Beauty of Inverness Club Course at Toledo, Ohio. Taken with Number Fifteen in Foreground. Mr. S. P. Jermain, Life President Toledo Golf Association, Standing By

keeper to follow. Every man looks forward to future success, and the right kind of a greenkeeper makes it possible through careful instruction of his men, to perfect them in greenkeeping that in the end they may take over courses of their own.

There is a lot of discussion about vegetatively planted bent greens, whether or not they are successful, and if not, why. It happens that I became interested in bent in the days when little was known about it, and I have grown it ever since. I keep a turf garden in shape all the time, and a large plat in condition for patching greens and tees.

Weeds Will Grow in Bent if Not Checked

When I read something to the effect that creeping bent greens grow so thick that they crowd the weeds out, I wonder if we are not getting a lot of misinformation on this particular subject. Since 1921 I have grown vegetative bent, and I make no claim that weeds will not grow in stolon planted turf. It is true that weeds do not get an easy start in old bent turf, but what about newly planted greens?

Until turf planted by the stolon method becomes well established, weeds will creep in at the start, and if not promptly taken out will cause a lot of trouble and plenty of work. Therefore, keep them out while the turf is



Number Ten at Inverness, with Number One at Right. Both Greens are Well Guarded by the Brook and Require a Well Played Pitch

getting a start and thickening up to resist them later on.

The best results in planting greens and tees with stolons come when a freshly cut supply of stolons is used. If they are planted within from twelve to eighteen hours of cutting, they will not be dried out or heated before they can be planted. My best results have always come from planting such freshly cut nursery stock.

It is an easy matter to grow a stolon planted green, if you are content to wait six months before it is in playing condition. You can neglect a new green considerably and still get results in six months, but—

In Play Eight Weeks From Planting

A first class putting green can be grown in not to exceed eight weeks, if planted with fresh stolons, top dressed not too heavily at first, but frequently thereafter, kept well watered, and weeds removed as soon as they start. This also entails proper rolling, and the mowing started just as soon as the grass plants are three quarters

of an inch high. It is this top dressing and exceedingly close cutting which makes a vegetative green what it ought to be. From the very first cutting, the grass should be kept down to putting green length at all times. This forces the grass to grow upright and the more you cut creeping bent the thicker it will grow. If you let up on either top dressing or close cutting, you will soon have on your hands a green that is coarse and grainy, the golfer's pet aversion, and the mark of a poorly informed greenkeeper.

If every vegetatively planted putting green is painstakingly weeded while the turf is new, and occasional weeds thereafter promptly removed; if the turf is frequently top dressed to keep the runners covered, and if kept cut closely during every day of the growing period, no golfer will find fault with such a playing surface. Neither will the club officials have any quarrel with the greenkeeper as to the cost of maintaining bent greens.

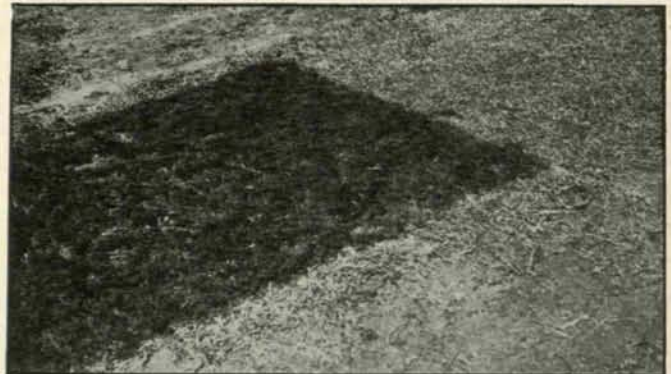
New Grass For Southern Greens

Poa Bulbosa, Grown From Bulbs

MUCH progress in the culture of suitable grasses for golf turf has been made in the last ten years. From seed to stolons, and now to bulbs. Lyman Carrier, formerly connected with the U. S. G. A. Green Section at Washington, was largely responsible for introducing to Northern courses the vegetative method of planting creeping bent. During the past few years he has been investigating a new grass which will undoubtedly help to solve the problems of winter turf in the South. This grass is propagated from a very small bulb, almost as small as a grain of wheat, and it is known as *Poa Bulbosa*.

Poa Bulbosa was originally identified on the Capitol grounds at Richmond, Virginia, and is not yet listed in American botanies. It is a native of Europe, and so far as known is the only true grass which grows from bulbs.

During the summer months it is dormant, but given plenty of water in the fall, the bulbs revive and start growth. It is recommended to plant from three to five pounds of bulbs per thousand square feet of area, and when planted in Bermuda turf, it is not necessary to make any other preparation than that of cutting the Bermuda down close, and raking the surface lightly. After scattering the bulbs, the surface should be kept watered thoroughly for two or three weeks. This grass should not be planted except in the fall or winter, and combined with Bermuda should furnish an all-year-around putting surface. It is dormant at the time Bermuda is at its best, and when Bermuda greens turn brown in the late fall, *Poa Bulbosa* comes to the rescue with fresh green growth. Each bulb produces a single



Dark patch shows Poa Bulbosa planted in Bermuda Turf

grass plant, from which a dozen or more tillers or new plants grow at the base. Each of these young plants will produce a bulb to tide it over the coming summer, to start new growth when called upon the following winter.

Greenkeepers who are maintaining Bermuda grass in Southern states should experiment under their own conditions with this new grass, and report to the office of the National Association of Greenkeepers of America, 407 Caxton Building, Cleveland, Ohio. Anywhere south of the Mason & Dixon line there is yet time to get results from a planting. It is suggested that sowing five hundred or a thousand square feet of Bermuda sod with *Poa Bulbosa* bulbs will afford an opportunity to determine the value of this new discovery for Southern putting greens.

Information received by courtesy Stump & Walter Company, New York.