

Nebraska Conditions Challenge Skill

By J. O. CAMPBELL, Greenkeeper
Eastridge Country Club
Lincoln, Nebraska

I CAME to the Eastridge Country Club, Lincoln, Nebraska, April 1 from Oakwood Club at Dodson, Missouri, a suburb of Kansas City.

Eastridge is an 18-hole course, eight greens of Columbia bent and ten of Washington bent.

We have a re-construction program which we intend to carry out within the next three years. It includes trapping fairways, re-modeling old greens and building two new ones. After this work is completed we will have a real championship course.

The plans for the re-modeling were furnished by Orrin E. Smith, golf architect of New Britain, Connecticut, and I am doing the construction work. I have already trapped two fairways—Numbers seven and ten. I have also built Number ten green, planted it with Washington bent stolons September twelfth. We expect to bring this green into play by July 1st, 1928. We use no drainage under the greens as our soil is a rich sandy loam, therefore eliminating drainage difficulties.

We have our own water system of two deep wells and automatic pressure tank. We have fairly good pressure over the entire course. We are making plans to water the fairways, which is very necessary in this part of the country as we have very little rainfall during the summer months. We water every night during the hot weather in order to keep our greens in good playing condition. Our course is built on high, rolling ground and with the hot winds the greens require lots of water.

Methods Vary With Local Conditions

I wrote a short article for the July number of *Golfdom* on—"Midsummer Methods in Nebraska." In the September number of *Golfdom*—a greenkeeper criticized my method of watering from 7 A. M. to 6 A. M. He says, "If I watered that many hours I wouldn't expect any greens at all." I say and I know from experience that if we don't give that many hours of continuous watering with the thermometer registering 100 degrees or more, and a thirty to forty mile gale blowing, by noon our greens are dry and hard, so that a pitched ball onto the green will not stick, and our grass begins to take on that dreaded drab color. Then all the members are wondering why their pitched shot won't stay put.

I learned greenkeeping in the east, and this is my second club in the middle west. I have found that the

methods used in the east cannot be used satisfactorily in this part of the country.

I have been asked by several greenkeepers the best time to plant greens. I am convinced that fall planting is the best time if planted early enough to get a good stand of grass before winter sets in. My main objection to spring planting is the weed problem.

Sulphate of Ammonia in Weed Control

During May and the early part of June we had a great amount of clover. We are gradually getting rid of it by the use of sulphate of ammonia. I have applied it every ten days since July first. This is a slower process than hand weeding, but it is a more economical way and saves scarring the greens which naturally follows hand weeding. I had no bent to fill in with, but have a nice nursery of Washington bent growing now.

There is very little brown-patch in this particular section of Nebraska. We have had a few slight attacks of the dollar patch, which was easily checked by the use of calomel, one-half pound to the green.

The Nebraska State Open Tournament was played over Eastridge, August 17th and 18th. After all the hard usage the greens received during the tournament they were in perfect playing condition, and I received lots of fine compliments from visiting golfers.

Keeping Mowers Adjusted

My method during the summer is to water greens every night and mow them every day. Adjust the mowers to the proper height and leave them during the mowing season, see that your reel is properly adjusted each morning before mowing. My experience has been that, by raising and lowering the mowers it causes the turf to become fluffy and uneven.

Fertilizing Methods

About once a month compost with a mixture of 50 per cent sand, 15 per cent horse manure and 35 per cent of good black loam. Be sure to use plenty of sand as it lowers to its level. It acts as an aerator and lets oxy-



gen down to the roots of the grass. I used commercial fertilizers as needed. Sulphate of ammonia, ammonium phosphate and Urea. Urea if properly applied is very effective for turf culture, but it is dangerous if carelessly applied, as it burns roots as well as stolons. There is no comeback as there is with the other chemicals. I apply all of my chemicals in liquid form with a barrel sprinkler and water immediately.

Make Your Nursery Your Laboratory

I certainly do not believe in experimenting on the greens. Use your sod nursery as a laboratory. During the tournament I had a talk with an entrant from a neighboring state—he told me that an expert from a chemical house had been allowed to experiment with a number of chemicals on a course in his town and had practically ruined four or five new bent greens which were in excellent condition before he started. I wonder how many of the men the chemical houses send out have had practical greenkeeping experience. We all know that grasses in different localities must be handled differently. For instance in the east they say, "do not water at night" during the brown-patch season," but every time I fail to water at night even if we have a light rain, I find some brown-patch on my greens in the morning.

Eastridge is a comparatively new club. Before I came here there was no greenkeeper. The chairman of

the Green committee was in charge of the course, but being a very busy man he could not devote as much time as was necessary, and the results were the course had not been properly maintained. The members tell me it shows a 100 per cent improvement this season.

Where Not To Cut Expenses

Reducing the club budget is usually started by cutting the force on the golf course. This in my opinion is a mistake as 90 per cent of the club members are golf players. Take away the members who come to the club for the purpose of playing golf and there aren't many left to maintain the club. Yet they seem to think the course maintenance is the least important of all.

I have found the Green committee a very fine group of men to work for, and feel that we have really accomplished considerable for the amount of money we have spent.

Let's Meet in Detroit in February

I have enjoyed the articles in the GREENKEEPER. Have learned a great deal since our first magazine was published.

I especially enjoyed the "Chat with our President" in the September number. I hope he writes many more. I would like to meet most of the members in Detroit in February.

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