

Among Canadian Greenkeepers

A review of the activities of golf course work in Canada

By J. H. EVANS,
Golf Editor—The Toronto Globe

SIX years ago, greenkeepers of Toronto and Hamilton were brought together in the Western Golf and Country Club by its secretary, C. H. L. Knuth, to discuss problems of mutual interest and questions arising from the culture of grass and the treatment of soil. Mr. Knuth and the group of greenkeepers who attended the meeting were dependent on the bulletins of the United States Golf association, and on advice to be secured from the United States Department of Agriculture and Canadian colleges for assistance in solving the problems with which they were confronted.

It was really the influence of the United States Golf association in stimulating a national consciousness, that was responsible for the organization of this Ontario Greenkeepers' association—the only active organization of its kind in Canada. To the same influence may be traced a change within a decade of greenkeeping and golf course development, from a "father and son" proposition to a calling requiring a high degree of practical knowledge combined with much theory obtained from the Federal and Provincial governments of Canada and the colleges of the Dominion.

Sanson Was First President

THE outcome of the meeting at the Weston Golf and Country Club was the organization of an association with William J. Sanson, of the Toronto Golf club, as its first president and Herbert Hawkins, of the Lakeview Golf and Country club, as its secretary. The organization was followed by a larger interest in technical problems of course maintenance

and with it the establishment of a Green section by the Royal Canadian Golf association. The Green section functioned with a salaried secretary for two seasons, and since then through the medium of bulletins appearing in a monthly magazine. However, the Greenkeepers' association carries on with its monthly meetings, winter and summer. It enters 1929 with Sanson and Hawkins as its directing spirits, a greater prestige and with the confidence of club committees in general.



C. H. L. KNUTH
who played a large part in forming the Ontario Greenkeepers' association six years ago. Mr. Knuth received the freedom of the City of London in recognition of war services

Activities of the association for the present season which opened three weeks earlier than usual in Canada, include monthly gatherings on different courses of Toronto, Hamilton and other centers. Members of the staff of the Ontario Agricultural College and of the Federal Department of Agriculture will deliver addresses. The association organized an exhibition of golf course equipment last year at the Rosedale Golf club at a considerable expense, but is hesitating before it offers the same feature for club officials and committees because it believes that the cost might well be borne by those who will profit—the manufacturers of course equipment, seed merchants and supply houses.

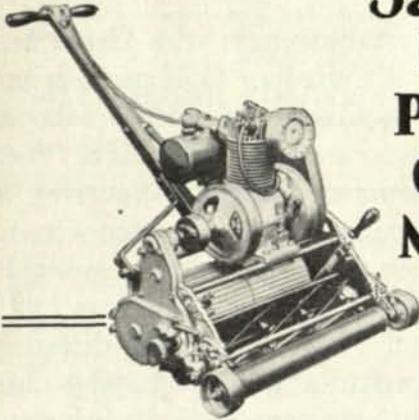
The exhibition at the Rosedale Golf club reflects the growth and the influence of the greenkeepers' association. It was started as the result of continual requests from members of green committees to Secretary Hawkins for advice regarding the best equipment for courses. In many instances, the requests for advice came from small clubs of the Province

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Golf—A Post War Sport

GOLF in Toronto is a post war sport. Prior to the war there were three clubs with strong memberships and four smaller organizations which had secured the best tracts of land for their courses. After the close of hostilities, Canada's disbanding army brought back keen interest in golf from the British Isles. Since 1918 more than a dozen clubs were formed in Toronto. A number of these clubs were forced to go north of the city and to build their courses on the clay soil which in other portions of the suburbs provided the material for the finest brick in the Dominion. No city on the continent has the same amount and the same available supply of brick.

This rapid development of golf after the war provided the greenkeeper with the problem of growing grass on a clay soil—a heart breaking task in midsummer drought. The greenkeeper's knowledge was largely British and practical to a limited extent because conditions in England and Scotland made a close study of the culture of grass unnecessary. The clay course was probably a factor in hastening the formation of a greenkeepers' association. It must be said that the greenkeeper met the problems before him in an admirable manner, but only by blending the practical with the scientific advice first obtained from the United States and then in Canada.

Piper Introduces Creeping Bent

IT IS of interest to note that creeping bent grass for use on the golf course was brought into Canada seven years ago by the late Dr. Piper, of Washington, D. C., who provided Mr. Sanson with a sod for a nursery at the Toronto Golf club. The club has sufficient now to meet any condition which might arise. The Weston club secured another sod from the same source with the same result, while other clubs have commenced the culture of creeping bent with local assistance.

President Sanson, Secretary Hawkins and their associates have taken up their duties in

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a happy frame of mind. The early spring brought courses into play in March, an unusual condition in Canada, while torrential rains and midsummer temperatures which followed carried out all frost, although it is true that the storms which swept the lower part of the Province did some damage to the courses. Howard Lloyd, greenkeeper at the Rosedale club, is confronted with the job of rebuilding portions of one fairway. Piling which protected several fairways was swept away by the swollen stream. The damage to other courses was comparatively slight and would only become serious in the event of snow and frost, not an uncommon occurrence in April.

Records at the Toronto Golf club show that the putting greens were clipped some years ago on April 9. This year the prevailing conditions have been responsible for a remarkable growth and greens are being trimmed. Mild weather which followed the storms dissipated fears that a return to winter would seriously delay growth and do any considerable damage to fairways and putting surfaces.

"Unless we have some severely cold weather within the next three weeks," said Hawkins, "we are off to an exceptional start. The storms naturally favored the sand courses, yet the rainfall may prove of great benefit to the numerous clay courses. We are weeks ahead of the game and quite contented with the prospects for the season."

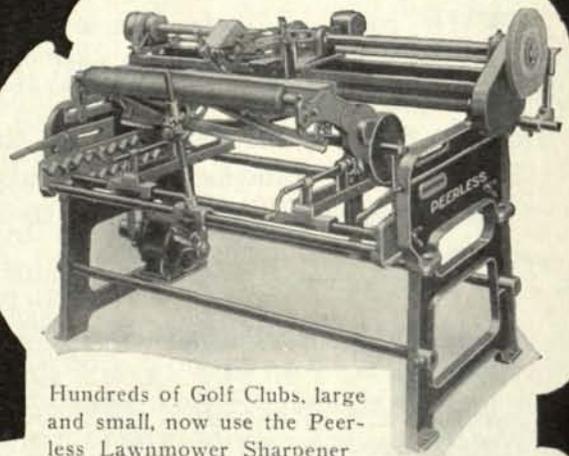
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