

Faulty Construction Is Cause of Problems in Athletic Turf Duich Tells Minn. Turf Management Short Course

By JOSEPHINE B. NELSON

"Many of the most serious problems encountered in maintenance of satisfactory turf on athletic fields and golf courses are the direct result of faulty construction," according to a university agronomist.

Speaking at the University of Minnesota's Turf Management Short Course on the St. Paul Campus, March 16, J. M. Duich, associate professor of agronomy at Pennsylvania State University, declared that among the built-in mistakes that create future maintenance problems are failure to provide for adequate surface and subsurface drainage, poor root-zone mixtures subject to severe compaction, inadequate soil preparation and shoddy seeding methods. Expensive major reconstruction or renovation is often necessary to correct these errors.

The building of a modern golf course or athletic field is a specialized operation, Duich emphasized. Preparation of a complete and concise set of specifications is the first step in protecting a substantial initial investment against future unnecessary outlays of additional funds and of insuring against permanent mediocrity of playing conditions.

Dense Sod Essential

In discussing athletic fields and play areas, the Pennsylvania State University agronomist pointed out that a dense, wear-resistant sod is essential on athletic fields and play areas to provide playing safety, good footing, and pleasing appearance.

Production and maintenance of such a turf depend on the kinds of grasses used, proper design and construction, good soil drainage and preparation, adequate fertility and a maintenance program that recognizes the special nature of the care involved.

To insure athletic field turf of satisfactory quality, a good main-



Dr. J. M. Duich (right) listens to comments on an athletic fields bulletin he prepared. Holding the bulletin is D. B. White, coordinator of the short course program, and associate professor of horticultural science at the University of Minnesota. Duich is associate professor of agronomy at Pennsylvania State University.



"Here's a valuable session . . ." Paul Stegmeir (seated) tells Robert Hokanson (right) manager of Camp Courage crippled children's camp, Maple Lake, Minn., as they look over the short course program. Stegmeir is with the University of Minnesota Agricultural Short Course department.

tenance program is just as necessary as sound establishment methods. Duich listed these essentials of a good maintenance program:

- That it produce tough grass with maximum wear resistance.
- That it be designed to maintain high density to resist weed

invasion and encroachment of undesirable grasses.

- That it encourage deep rooting to provide good anchorage and firm footing.

- That mowing height be adjusted to both grass requirements and playing demands.

- That fertilizing and watering be done at such times and in such manner as to provide steady growth and maximum quality.

- That consideration be given to the endurance limits of the turf in scheduling use of the field.

- That provision be made for repair of injuries due to wear and other causes.

Many Subjects Presented

Other speakers at the short course included University of Minnesota staff members G. R. Blake, professor of soil science, who spoke on "What is a Good Soil"; D. B. White, associate professor of horticultural science, on "Cultural Methods of Weed Control"; and T. B. Bailey, graduate assistant in horticultural science, on "What Kind of Turf Equipment Do You Need?"

A panel moderated by L.C. Snyder, head of the Department of Horticultural Science, reported on research at the University of Minnesota in horticulture, agronomy and plant genetics, plant pathology, soil science, agricultural engineering and entomology.

Program coordinator for the short course was D. B. White, who commented that it was "another highly successful Turf Management Short Course." The short course was attended by some 200 people professionally interested in the care and management of turf for golf courses, sodding, parks, institutional grounds and recreational areas.