



The golf industry's newest trade group, the Golf Course Builders of America, formally incorporated in November. Directors approved regular and associate classifications of memberships. Regular members will include general golf contractors and others who work closely with them, such as irrigation specialists, fumigators, and turf contractors. Associate memberships are available to the suppliers in golf course construction. Associate members will be entitled to three voting members on the nine-member board; and each will have a one-third vote at general membership meetings. Officers who gathered at the National Press Club for the

special meeting in November are from the left: James J. Kirchdorfer, Kirchdorfer Irrigation, Louisville, Ky.; Vice-President Robert Vincent, Jr., Robert Vincent Co., Benton, Pa.; Richard W. D. Jewett, Jr., Hyper-Humus Co., Newton, N.J.; Executive Director Harry J. Lambeth, Washington, D.C.; President David Canavan, Moore Golf, Culpeper, Va.; Secretary-Treasurer J. James Shipe, Turf Industries, Bel Air, Md.; Robert E. Chakales, Chakales & Associates, Richmond, Va.; Floyd F. Hendrix, Hendrix and Dail, Greenville, N.C.; and Parker Shirling, Princeton Turf Farms, Centreville, Md.

heavy and stiff bermuda stems and help prevent thatch buildup from mower flotation. The angle of the bedknife to the turf is critical, as a sharper angle would decrease the bedknife contact area. Fig. 3 illustrates.

Actual Trials

Recorded trials extended over a two-week period beginning in mid-July with mowing on a weekly schedule. The height from soil to grass blade tip was measured at each mowing and a cushion or thatch measurement was made at the close of the trials. An increase in the height measurement indicated inability of the mower to maintain the low level desired which, in turn, would allow thatch to build up. The thatch or cushion accumulation was measured by stacking one-inch steel cubes on a spindle and measuring the depression in the turf as each pair of additional cubes was added to the stack. Heavily cushioned turf will resist penetration of the bedknife to a high degree, thus, this measurement was critical in evaluating actual mower performance in reducing or preventing thatch buildup.

Data from the field trials showed that the least cushion buildup occurred in the strip mowed with the mower having the lowest "mower design factor." Both the height and the cushion depression measure-

ments bore out the mathematically computed notions of mower design and construction. Visual observations of color, scalping and overall appearance showed severe scalping on this strip the first few weeks of the trials, but, upon recovery, the visual ratings were consistently high. It might be well to point out that the trials were not an attempt to pit one machine against another, but rather to discover some of the essential elements in a front-throw mower adapted to mowing hybrid bermudas under a home lawn situation.

Conclusions

1. For mowing the hybrid bermudas, it is essential that a high speed reel or more than the traditional five blades be used in the front-throw reel mower to prevent ribbing. Basically, the clip rate should be in the area of $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{3}{8}$ ".

2. The bermudas are tough and dense. Models with a 3 hp motor performed better than those with a 2 hp motor.

3. Bedknife design appeared to be critical in several areas;

a. A relatively acute angle to the turf is required.

b. A relatively small area is required.

c. The bedknife should be relatively thin, as measured from bottom contacting surface to the actual cutting edge.

d. As the area of the bedknife increases, the downward weight on the bedknife must also increase.

4. The mower should be dependable, well-constructed and easy to start.

5. It would be hoped that relatively minor modifications in mower design and construction would not put the final product beyond the financial reach of the average homeowner.

Cal-Turf Announces New Sod Blend

A new sod blend has been developed by Cal-Turf, Inc., specifically for use in Northern California and similar climate areas of the West.

Called Peninsula Blend, the sod is a combination of Manhattan turf-type perennial ryegrass, red fescue, and bluegrass. According to Paul Ledig, sales manager for Cal-Turf, the new blend is not costly, and carries the same price structure as Cal-Turf's standard bluegrass.

Features of the Peninsula Blend include greater toughness and drought resistance, better adaptation to foggy coastal areas, and luxurious color and texture. The sod is available at Cal-Turf's Northern farm in San Juan Bautista or through the Cal-Turf lawn center in San Jose.