



With a long tradition for quality, Preakness Hills Country Club is concerned with drainage. Elmers uses drainage tile and gypsum to keep drainage problems to a minimum.



Elmers illustrates the excellent root growth on this putting green. Gypsum has eliminated the heavy clay compaction in the soil.

The Winning Combination At Preakness Hills

THERE is a lot of tradition at 45-year-old Preakness Hills Country Club, Wayne, N.J.—from the turn-of-the-century club house to a course with a reputation for quality.

But that doesn't mean that golf course superintendent Arthur Elmers can rest on past laurels in providing

top playing condition at the par 71, 6400 yard links. The course keeps Elmers and his nine-man crew busy all year.

One of his main concerns is drainage. The course is located in a glacial lake area. A big problem. But he has worked out a winning combination of tile drainage and soil treatment during his 14 year tenure at Preakness Hills.

"About 13 years ago," he recalls, "in discussing our drainage problems and heavy clay soil with the state soil conservation service, they suggested application of gypsum and tile system in the low wet areas of our fairways. Gypsum breaks up the clay compaction, thus improving aeration and drainage. We've used it every fall since then and we can report excellent results.

"Every course superintendent knows the difference good drainage makes," Elmers continued. "The putting quality is better. We get a green that holds a shot. The course also holds up better during a summer dry spell.

"We've found gypsum to be an excellent soil conditioner. In addition to breaking up the clay, it's a source of calcium and sulphur. It's inexpensive and it also stretches our budget by making our fertilizers more effective," he said.

Elmers' job isn't just improvement of existing greens. He's completely replaced several greens . . . often from land that was considered swamp. Each improvement has meant better conditions for the club's 225 members.

He's found that gypsum sometimes plays an important part in the ever present fight against disease. "I had a Helminth problem on a green, due to poor drainage," he said, "but it was corrected in three years with nearly a ton of gypsum to the acre in the area over those three years. Now we use a maintenance does of 30-40 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. each year."

The Preakness Hills crew uses a drop spreader and Grand Prize Lawn & Garden Gypsum in 50 lbs. bags. Play is not halted for any longer than it takes to spread the mineral.

Preakness Hills boasts some attractive water hazards, too. Elmers reports an added bonus for their gypsum. He says it keeps his ponds clear. □



This drainage ditch below a new 15th hole gives evidence of its past as a swamp. Course combines excellent drainage system with effective soil treatment.