



UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION GREEN SECTION

Mid-Continent Turfletter

MID-WESTERN DISTRICT
ROOM 241, LASALLE HOTEL
CHICAGO 2, ILLINOIS
TELEPHONE: STATE 2-7485

SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT
TEXAS A & M COLLEGE
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS
TELEPHONE: VICTOR 6-5210

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DR. MARVIN H. FERGUSON
MID-CONTINENT DIRECTOR
NATIONAL RESEARCH COORDINATOR

JAMES L. HOLMES
MID-WESTERN AGRONOMIST

W. WAYNE ALLEN
SOUTHWESTERN AGRONOMIST

A WATER PROGRAM FOR THE SUMMER

"Water to suit the needs of the grass rather than to suit the players."

The above is a frequent admonition offered to golf course superintendents. Golfers want a green that will hold a golf shot. This is a natural desire. Many golfers want the green to hold a shot even though poorly played. The better golfer may take a different view. He wants a surface that will reward a well played shot by holding but a surface which will reject the poorly played shot.

Those who want soft greens often think that abundant water is the solution to the problem. They urge the superintendent to water more heavily and more frequently so that greens will hold. Unfortunately, the superintendent who yields to this urging by his club members is likely to find himself tending very poor greens.

The use of water to soften greens is somewhat of a delusion. Water will make greens constructed of a compact soil a little softer temporarily. Incidentally, it also causes a little deeper ball pitting from shots played to the green with a high trajectory. When a soil is inclined toward compaction, additional frequent watering will hasten the compactive process. Trampling of wet soil destroys its natural structure which provides the desired resiliency. As the soil particles pack more closely together, the surface loses its resiliency and becomes firmer. Eventually, such a soil in the surface of a green gets to the point where it is always hard except when it is saturated with water. Thus, one who waters for the purpose of "softening" a green is actually contributing to a "hardening" process.

The detrimental effects of saturated soil on the growth of grass are well known. A soil that is too wet excludes air from the soil, the roots become inactive, and in time all except the very shallow roots may die. A weak plant with shallow roots is more susceptible to all the ills that may befall a putting green grass. It wilts quicker, it must be fertilized more frequently at lighter rates, fungus diseases are more likely to cause loss of turf, mechanical scars (such as ball pits) are slower to heal. And greens with a thin turf and a compact soil will not hold a golf shot.

Correct watering is a difficult task. It is a difficult lesson for the superintendent to learn for himself and to convey to his workmen. Adequate soil moisture is necessary for the well-being of plants but too much is just as detrimental (or maybe more so) than is too little. Most well-qualified superintendents have learned this lesson. It is indeed unfortunate when a superintendent who has gained such knowledge after long and diligent study is forced to alter his good judgment to satisfy the wishes of those whom he serves.

Perhaps a discussion such as this should be aimed at golfers rather than at superintendents. However, it is our desire to urge the superintendent again to resist the pressure from those who, without knowing the consequences, ask him to water greens frequently and heavily.

CLUB MANAGERS BOOST TURFGRASS RESEARCH

The Arizona chapter of the Club Managers Association of America has organized a project for the benefit of turfgrass in their state. The club managers, through their efforts in the collection of research funds, hope to hasten the day when Arizona will have a year round green grass for fairways and tees.

Mr. George E. Harrington, president of the Arizona chapter says, "Two years ago our chapter conceived the idea of providing a fund for research at the University of Arizona for a year round grass. Through the efforts of our club managers and the representative clubs, a fund was presented to the Arizona Turf Conference in the amount of \$2500.00.

"On October 16, 1959, Mr. Lee Burkhart of the University of Arizona Turf Conference carried the ball and provided the enthusiasm for an outstanding program of turf research at the Arizona Experimental Station extension of the University of Arizona.

"By summer's end of 1960 the University had some 80 strains of grass growing in various soils and under all types of weather conditions.

"Our chapter recently presented Mr. Burkhart, of the A.T.C., with another check in the amount of \$2000 to carry on the good work in 1961. Everyone connected with the growing of turf in our area is very enthusiastic over the program that the club managers started.

"There were six clubs participating in the original grant-in-aid fund, but we were able, in 1961, to get more clubs into the act. All the managers and greens superintendents have high hopes for better turf for Arizona."

July 19.....Texas Turfgrass Association Field Day
College Station, Texas

CROLEY JOINS GREEN SECTION

Mr. Charles E. Croley has joined the Green Section staff as agronomist. He will be stationed at College Station.

Mr. Croley's education and experience provide an excellent background for the work which he will do for the Green Section. He did undergraduate work in agronomy at Texas A. & M. and at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. He received the B.S. at V.P.I. in 1960. While at V.P.I. he worked with Dr. Roy Blaser and R. E. Schmidt in the turf research program. During the last year Mr. Croley has been engaged in graduate study at Texas A. & M.

ALLEN HELPS IN OTHER REGIONS

W. Wayne Allen, who has worked as agronomist in the Southwest District during the past year, has been assigned additional duties in 1961. He has visited numerous clubs in the Southeast in support of the Green Section Visiting Service. Later in the summer he will spend several weeks visiting clubs in the Western Region.

GREEN SECTION VISITING SERVICE

A golf course with no problems of turf management is extremely rare if such an item even exists.

If your golf course is not the rare type and if your superintendent, manager, and greens committee are conscientious, your club will naturally be on the lookout for scientifically sound, unbiased assistance in the upkeep of its golf course. The U.S.G.A. Green Section offers just this type of assistance in its Visiting Service.

Subscribers to the Visiting Service receive yearly on-the-course consultation by a Green Section Agronomist, assistance by correspondence and telephone, two subscriptions to the U.S.G.A. regional turfletter printed 6 times a year, and one subscription to the U.S.G.A. Journal and Turf Management published 7 times a year.

The annual fees are:

Less than 18 holes	\$ 100
18 to 27 holes	125
36 holes	150
Per regulation course in addition to 36 holes	40

Annual fees include all traveling expenses of the visiting agronomist for one regularly scheduled visit and one other visit if requested.

Application for the Visiting Service may be obtained by writing to the addresses listed on page one of this turfletter.

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Dr. J. R. Watson, Jr.
Chief Agronomist
Toro Mfg. Corporation
Minneapolis 6, Minn.