

Greenkeepers Club of New England

NEWSLETTER

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"The best service a book can render you is, not to impart truth, but to make you think it out for yourself."

—Elbert Hubbard.

The purpose of this NEWSLETTER is to give you information, but more—to give you the ideas and experiences of others, and to help you think, and reason, and find help. There will of necessity be conflicting opinions, for every hole on every course presents a different problem, but it is thru differing experiences that we reason out the problems and find the truth.

The Club has shown its approval of the NEWSLETTER by voting to continue publication for the rest of this year. We look to you, its readers, for further suggestions, articles, experiences. Send us your problems that we may work them out together. Let us hear from YOU!

The Directors have worked out a short article on a subject of prime importance, this year especially because of the extreme dry weather, and are including it in this issue. The subject is fairway renovation, and it is an important one to all of us! Now is the time to renovate not only your fairways, but also any other parts of your course which need it, and hence get your course into the best possible shape to enter the Winter. Now is the time to look ahead and plan for the rest of this year, and for next. Let the mistakes and experiences of today make tomorrow successful!

FAIRWAY RENOVATION

The best time of the year for fairway renovation is here, and it behooves us all to get busy. Renovation now will produce good fairways again before Winter sets in—from what are now burnt and brown.

Where roots of grass seem to have been killed, and no new shoots seem to be starting, re-seeding will probably be necessary. This is the best time of year to seed in this climate. Where section of fairway is to be re-seeded, it must first be scarified with iron rakes, meeker harrows, or some such implements, topdressed with screened loam or compost, and then seeded. For seeding knolls, the seed should be mixed with compost or loam, and this scattered over the knolls.

Where the grass roots have not been killed out, and some new shoots seem to be coming up, probably fertilizer will give better results than seed. Rainy days can be utilized to put on the fertilizer, and in most cases the burnt areas can be fertilized by hand. Where large areas need fertilizing, the regular fertilizer spreader can be used. Ammonium sulphate can be put on with success in solution with a barrel watering cart, and burnt areas treated in this manner quickly respond to treatment.

Where fairways are rough, and time permits, they can be topdressed to advantage with screened loam or compost, and this brushed in well. Such topdressing will greatly improve the lies on the fairway.

Sections of fairways where drives land, approaches to greens, and on par five holes where the second shots normally land should be treated first, if time and money do not permit treatment of all the fairway area. Also plan the year's work so as to treat the worst portions each year.

The seed and the fertilizers for you to use for renovation are the ones with which you are having success on your course. Get busy, renovate, and get your course in shape for the Winter!

FIRST EXPERIENCES IN CONSTRUCTION

The new nine holes at Concord are being constructed to plans by Donald Ross. The new holes, starting with the second and thru to the eighth, are on land from which the timber and wood was cut this past Winter. The tenth, eleventh, and twelfth are on land which was logged some fourteen years back, and so had a heavy growth of hardwoods. This was cut this past Winter.

The work of dynamiting stumps was begun on about the fifteenth of March this year, and as that went on a tractor and chain was used on some of the larger stumps. This tractor was also used to haul a large stone-boat to gather stumps in heaps, to be burnt later. As each fairway was fairly clear of stumps, another tractor was used to plow to fairway lengthwise, or from tee to green. Two or three men followed the plow and pulled or grub-hoed roots, getting them loose and up on the surface, where they would be gathered up by the stone boat. This was followed by harrowing in several directions with a cutaway wheel harrow.

Very little of this land had a sod, so that the smaller new growth of oak and birch was only shunted about by the plow and harrow, to show itself green and flourishing in a few days, and so was quite easy for the men with the grub-hoes to find.

Where the depth of loam would allow another plowing, it was done in the opposite direction from the first, and well harrowed again. Even then there was an unbelievable amount of roots to be pulled by hand as we went over the fairways with iron rakes. This accumulation was left in small heaps, and later picked up by a truck.

To smooth out the hollows and high spots, a drag of two railroad ties, ironed three feet apart, and hauled by tractor was used.

Fortunately we have encountered no ledges or boulders, only a few surface stones on hillsides and knolls. The topsoil is good loam over most of the area, with very few stones in it.

We are using a standard brand of 7-6-5 fertilizer for fairways, and fertilizing especially where loam is the poorest. We are applying with a fertilizer spreader, and brushing it in with an asparagus weeder. For greens, we are using 100-130 pounds of 7-10-12 and 50 pounds of sulphate per green,

rubbed in with wooden lawn rakes. Tees which are to be seeded are being fertilized with the fairway fertilizer.

Banks of bunkers have been sodded to prevent erosion. Lack of time at this season has prevented completion of bunkers and many minor details which will be taken up later.

We are seeding now as much as possible, and hope to have everything but the seventh fairway seeded this Fall. For fairways we are using a mixture of Kentucky Blue, Chewings fescue, and Red Top, with some bent. We are sodding as many tees as possible with a sod of bent and fescue, and seeding the remainder with seed of this mixture. Sod from a former practice fairway is being used for these tees as far as it goes. For greens, we are seeding with 40% South German bent 98-88, 40% Chewings fescue, and 20% Red Top. The fairways have been seeded with a Thompson wheelbarrow seeder, and the greens seeded by hand. For the fairways we are using 125-130 pounds of seed per acre and using oats for binder on hillsides to prevent washing. The greens are of good size, and we are averaging eighty pounds of seed per green.

The real problems in this construction were few in number. Drainage was not much of a problem, as the subsoil was well-drained, the land is high, draining naturally toward a brook, which drains the lower area. The greatest problem was to get loam, specially for the fourth green, to get it at nearest place, and to save it wherever possible. This fourth green was the most inaccessible, and the site of the green was gravel and stones. Loam enough for three greens was saved from site of two new tennis courts also being constructed this Summer. Looking ahead, and saving loam wherever possible has prevented the loam problem from being a serious one.

The fairways areas have been cleared thru the woods one hundred and fifty to a hundred and eighty feet wide, and where there are to be elbows in the fairways, clearing has been made two hundred and fifteen feet wide. Of course, there is a vast amount of rough along the sides, to be cleaned later as time permits.

One piece of work done was to remove a knoll from in front of the seventh tee, and use the more than four hundred cubic yards of gravel taken

from it to fill a section of the seventh fairway, previously swamp, a one to three feet fill over a sixty-five yards section.

In conclusion, we think as we look back that we might have accomplished more by working at a higher speed, but we have gone along more slowly, and tried to get things done well, so that they will not require redoing.

EDWIN HANSEN.

MORE TROUBLE!

According to an old adage, "Boys will be boys." But when being boys results in malicious damage amounting to nearly two hundred dollars a year, some sort of curb must be applied.

Being on a course that is situated in the middle of a city gives one all sorts of trespassers. Automobiles driven across tees and greens—teemarkers disappearing so fast that it gives the impression some one is stocking a course at my expense—flags, poles, and even cups to back up the suspicion. Last but not least, balls disappearing when driven over a hill on a blind hole. To me this is the worst evil of the lot as it leaves the members in a disgruntled mood which does not add to their opinion of the course.

What to do is the question. Shall we turn the offender over to the police, if we can catch him? This will establish a court record which in later years may seriously affect the boy's position. As yet I have not reached any positive solution, but I have managed to cut the trouble somewhat after trying numerous methods. Short fences at strategic points help with the automobiles. Stray boys hunting balls have been warned of trespassing, their names and addresses taken, and, most important, any golf balls which they may have are confiscated. There is no percentage in huntings balls for a couple of hours only to have them taken away.

It is on the more or less organized gangs that I blame the malicious damage. In my case, they are comprised of neighborhood boys, many of whom have been caddies and often ones that have been discharged for miscon-

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duct. In Newton all that is necessary is to give their names to the probation officer who notifies the parents to bring their boy to an evening session at his office. This inconveniences the parent and in itself has an effect on their action toward keeping the boy away from the course. This method of complaint is unofficial and no record goes in for the boy.

Where this has not worked a complaint of trespass in one case resulted in a ten dollar suspended sentence of six months, the boy being notified to keep away from the vicinity of the course. This at least gives a brief respite and helps out quite a bit.

If there does not happen to be a probation officer in your town, I do not doubt that a talk with the police chief will give the same result.

MARSTON BURNETT.

The August meeting was held at the Nashua Country Club. Bill McBride has a fine course there, but he surely needs rain as do the rest of us here in New England.

The Directors met with Jim McCormack at the Unicorn Country Club on August 12. Jim has the best greens we have seen this year.

The next meeting will be held at the Rhode Island Country Club, West Barrington, Rhode Island, on September 3. Here's a fine chance for you to enjoy a fine golf course! Let's be there!

On Monday, September 9, at the Braeburn Country Club, the New England Service Bureau with the New England Greenkeepers Club cooperating, will hold A Golf Course Equipment and Machinery Show. Here is an opportunity to look over the new ideas in golf course equipment and plan what to buy next year. In connection with this show, there will probably be held at the Charles River Country Club Experiment Plots on Sunday, September 8, a meeting and discussion for all those interested in the plots.

Jim Sullivan is building a new compost shed at Waltham.

The Metropolitan Park Department are building a new nine hole course at Riverside. We understand that Harold Mosher is telling them how!

Lime corrects soil acidity, sets free plant food in the soil otherwise unavailable, improves soil drainage and texture, sweetens decaying material and promotes humus formation, keeps the phosphorus in the soil available, and increases the resistance to disease of the crops. When used on turf it promotes the growth of weeds in the turf. It will also correct that too acid condition caused by excessive use of sulphate of ammonia, and may help you to control brown-patch.

Weeds may be controlled on the golf course by preventing weeds from seeding in land near the course, mowing before they seed, by use of chemical plant poisons for certain varieties, by maintaining soil fertility to keep good turf, and by hand weeding. Where greens contain any bad weed, such as pearlwort, spreading may be prevented partially by not throwing clippings on regular compost piles, but keeping special piles for such clippings when weed is seeding. Pearlwort must be cut out, and new sod used. Chickweed may be lessened by constant fertilization with ammonium sulphate. It may also be controlled by sprinkling a little arsenate of lead mixed with compost over it and watering it in. Arsenate of lead is now being advised for crab grass control also.

Robert Mitchell has been controlling pearlwort by "painting" the pearlwort with a solution of sulphate of ammonia, three pounds in a gallon of water, and then cutting out these burnt areas as time permits.

BLACKBIRDS HELPFUL

I have been very fortunate this year as I do not have to spike any of my putting greens. I have noticed every morning this past month, at break of day, a large number of Red-winged blackbirds hard at work on the greens, especially the greens that had been sprinkled the night before.

I firmly believe that these birds do lots of good to the greens by eating the grubs, cut worms and earth worms, which are very harmful.

THOMAS J. GALVIN.
