

Greenkeepers Club of New England NEWSLETTER

December, 1929.

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"It is not doing the things we like to do, but liking the things we have to do, that makes life blessed."

—Goethe

We wish for YOU a Very Happy and Merry Christmas! We hope that much of the happiness will be due to the fact that the year nearly over has been successful, and that YOU can look forward into the years to come with pleasure and hope for continued success.

Now is the time to so plan your Winter work that you may know all that needs doing during this season, and can so plan your work that the weather will not hinder. Adapt your work to the weather. Then you will be able to start a new golfing season with all preparatory work done.

Think! We have heard of one complete fertilizer which has sand and bicarbonate of soda used for filler—others have cocoa shells and castor bean pumice. What has yours?

Screened compost is mixed under cover with poultry manure, allowed to heat, turned several times; possibly heat kills weed seed in compost. Is the resultant loss of ammonia compensated by killing of weed seed? Several of our members are trying this method. What do you think?

When you clean out that waterhole of yours, do you save the muck, leaves, etc. which you drag out, and compost it? Mixed with lime, manure, and sand, in different quantities according to the nature of your material, it will produce compost for your course. Have you tried "Adco" for breaking down straw, leaves, etc. into manure?

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GUY C. WEST Editor
MARSTON BURNETT .. Business Mgr.

GROUP INSURANCE IMPOSSIBLE!

After considerable work for group insurance, and after the Greenkeepers Club of New England had voted to adopt it, and after everything was set to put it into working operation, the whole matter was found impossible to put across because of the regulation of the State Legislature forbidding insurance companies to issue group insurance to organizations, clubs, or unions where there is no common employer. Investigating further to see if the fact that our club is made up of members in the New England States and not only in Massachusetts, we found that we were unable to get group insurance in any case.

The ruling came as a surprise to your committee and the insurance men themselves did not know of it until the day before our December meeting. There seems to be no question that a month or so ago this insurance could have been put thru, before the ruling went into effect, and perhaps if the members as a whole had got behind the committee sooner, we might now be enjoying group insurance.

At the December meeting of the club, methods were discussed to try and bring about some form of benefit to fill the gap left by the failure of the group insurance plan. It was suggested that a death benefit be arranged—increasing the dues, setting aside a portion of this as a death benefit fund, and at each death the members be assessed to keep the fund intact, and the whole sum be issued to the family of the deceased member. There was some opposition to this plan, and it was suggested to increase the dues, and a certain sum be set aside along with the trustees' fund, now on hand, and this to be known as a Benevolent Fund. In case of the death of a member, a certain sum would be issued to his dependents when needed. Other suggestions were also offered, but it was voted to refer the matter to the

Board of Directors and for them to bring in a plan to be voted on at the the annual meeting in January.

CARLTON E. TREAT.

WINTER WORK ON A GOLF COURSE

After the season's play is over, and the rounds of golf begin to get less each day, the greenkeeper's mind is pretty well fixed in regard to what jobs he would like to have done before the next season's play begins.

The most important thing is how much money he has left to carry on his Winter's work; or possibly the grounds committee may feel that when the golfing season is over, the work on the golf course is over. If the latter be the case, there is not much use in preparing for work on the course or around the shop in the Winter months.

Considerable work may be accomplished during the off season. For example, major jobs of filling in where necessary may be done by covering the points to be cut away with old hay or other material fit for covering purposes to keep out the frost. Similar covering material may be used around trees to be removed, providing the stumps are to be removed.

Compost piles out of doors to be used the following Spring may be covered and hauled out when convenient. Brush and scrub growth may be cleared providing the snow is not too deep. Sand may be hauled to sand traps where needed, ready for spreading in the Spring.

Equipment may be gone over, all mowers taken apart, thoroughly cleaned, worn parts replaced, sharpened; tractor, gas engines, electric motors, etc., overhauled and painted. Who wants to start work in the Spring with these things undone?

Wagons, wheelbarrows, tee benches, etc., should be gone over, and repaired where necessary. All equipment and supplies should be checked and complete stock taken, and compared with the previous year's list, to see what has been lost or mislaid. (You'd be surprised!)

In regard to screening compost in the Winter months, I have said nothing; while I know that some greenkeepers are lucky to have a house to screen compost in during the Winter months, I think the majority do it in the Fall.

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Where club house is open the year round, snow has to be cleared from walks, roads kept open, and parking space cleared.

Winter sports may be promoted by the grounds committee to give the members some recreation during the winter months.

In general there is plenty that can be done around the course in the Winter, if the budget is matched accordingly.

WILLIAM J. McBRIDE.

SHOW YOUR COLORS!

Flags and flag poles are necessary equipment on all golf courses, and to my way of thinking, should be kept in tip-top condition. It surely is a disgrace to look over a fine layout with good greens, fairways, and tees and see some of the things that are out for flags and poles.

You can't make me believe than any golfer likes to shoot to any green over which holds sway an old dirty rag stuck on the end of a bent, wobbly, worn-out pole. Personally, I'd rather curtail expenses somewhere else to have, at least, one set of flags on hand to replace the worn ones when needed.

The flags and poles should not only be necessary equipment on the course but also an exhibit, so why not keep them bright and clean, fixed so they will stand erect and dare anyone not only to shoot at them, but inspect them as well.

When you make up your budget for the coming year, make allowance for this item and always have a good, clean, clear-cut target for the golfers to shoot at—then if they miss, and they sometimes do—at least it will not be because they cannot see the pin.

C. E. TREAT.

A VISIT TO A SEED TESTING LABORATORY

I am a bag of bent seed, not as pure as I should be. My owner tried to sell me to Mr. A. Wise Greenkeeper for pure bent, but Mr. Greenkeeper insisted on sending a sample of me to a reliable seed testing laboratory for analysis before he bought me. I am going to tell you about my trip there.

On my arrival I was not welcomed with open arms; on the contrary I heard the analyst say, "Aha, much chaff!" I was then mixed mechanically, and a sample of me weighed very exactly, (I found out afterwards that all weights are to the thousandth point after the decimal) and this sample was then separated mechanically by vertical air blast machine and by screens; and by hand into four parts, pure seed, inert matter, commercial seed, and weed seed.

The analyst then identified and counted the commercial and weed seeds, and altho no noxious weed seeds were found, I blushed with shame that I was so impure!

Then the four parts were weighed back, and percentage figured on these weights. The pure seed was examined closely, and I heard with dismay, "Nearly fifty percent Red Top!"

Germination tests were made from this pure seed. The germinators are certainly wonderful, with electric control for heat and ice control for low temperatures. The germination tests of me were done in duplicate. Each test was made in a sterile petrie dish on a sterile blotter, treated with one half of one percent solution of potassium nitrate. These tests kept me in the germinator for twenty-one days, but my cousin Red Top, who also visited the laboratory, was only kept in ten days. On the other hand, my old friend Kentucky Blue was kept in nearly five weeks!

Upon my return home, with the results known to Mr. A. Wise Greenkeeper, and he knew that I wasn't too pure, and that I didn't germinate any too well, he said that the test had certainly saved him money, and that I wasn't good enough for him. I am not worrying tho, for surely some other buyer, not so wise, will soon come along, and buy me at a fancy price!

PITTSBURGH DEMONSTRATION PLOTS

Some observations concerning the plots in the Pittsburgh district, taken from the Bulletin recently sent out by the Golf Service Bureau of Pittsburgh, may be of interest as to how they compare with the similar plots at the Charles River Country Club.

There are two sets of plots in this

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district, one at the Oakmont Country Club, and the other at the Allegheny Country Club.

After a season of heavy Spring Rains, followed by extreme Summer drought, the present impressions are: "Cocoos bent has been excellent at both stations. Kentucky Blue Grass is poor; it will not stand short cutting. Velvet bent seed and stolons are making slow but steady progress. Washington, Virginia and Columbia bent stolons and Cocoos bent seed had an attack of small Brown Patch later in the season than any other plots. "Allegheny" Creeping bent stolons first resembled Metropolitan bent stolons, but later became coarser."

Present impressions among fairway mixtures are that Kentucky Blue was rather poor after the drought, and the best mixture seemed to be 80% Chewings fescue and 20% South German mixed bent.

Among the cutting experiments it was proved that Chewings fescue will not stand the close cutting necessary for most putting greens, and that stolon bent becomes loose and fluffy if not cut short.

Plots poisoned with arsenate of lead before seeding, were slightly slower in germinating than the unpoisoned plots. No grubs or worms were noticed in either Turf Garden.

In general, results shown were quite similar to those at Charles River Country Club.

ACTIVATED SLUDGE

Several members have written us for opinions concerning the use of activated sludge. We are unable at this time to give very many opinions, but hope others who have used this fertilizer will write us concerning their experiences with it.

Frank Wilson has the following to say, "Activated sludge is a very good Fall fertilizer applied in September. If applied in the Spring, it is so slow acting that the time of the most rapid growth of grass has gone by before the activated sludge is available. Used in combination with Nitro-Phoska, (15-30-15), its action is much more rapid, the Nitro-Phoska giving additional fertilizer, and also causing the activated sludge to break down and become immediately available."

Our experience has been similar. It doesn't show up when used in the Spring, but we have had very good results, with it used in late Summer and early Fall, especially on fairways which were burnt badly. We used it in combination with sulphate of ammonia this Fall and later alone on the burnt areas, and the result has been very good. Our fairways went into this Winter as long, as dark green, and as thick as they did last year, in spite of the difference in rainfall between the two years. Under our conditions here, used alone it is from four to six weeks after application that it becomes available. It has given us satisfaction as a slow-acting organic fertilizer.

G. C. W.

Even if group insurance is not possible for the club, insurance can still be taken out by individuals, and all who have not sufficient coverage should bear this in mind.

The Kernwood Country Club closed for the season on November 24, a week earlier than usual.

John Latvis is spending part of the Winter in Europe; he expects to return in early February.

Try to be present at the annual meeting in January! Election of officers for 1930, reports of officers and committees for 1929, BANQUET, etc. Come an enjoy the fellowship of your friends!

At the December meeting the Nominating Committee submitted the following slate of officers and committees for 1930: Pres., Carlton E. Treat; 1st V. Pres., Thomas Fahey; 2nd V. Pres., James McCormack; Rec. Sec., Robert Mitchell; Fin. Sec., Howard Farrant; Treas., James Sullivan; Trustee, Ted Swanson; Trustee, (unfinished term) Frank Wilson. Entertainment Committee, Burnett, Maxwell, O'Leary, Galvin, Wilson; Golf Committee, Sowerby, Hayden, Oldfield, McBride, Shanahan; Membership Committee, Parker, Greene, Crowley, Pierce, Edwin Hansen.

The Board of Directors met with Tom Fahey at Winchester on the evening of December 16.

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Greenkeepers of Massachusetts and New England should realize that if they ever think of taking the Winter Course for Greenkeepers at the Massachusetts Agricultural College during the Winter term, they should get their applications in early. This coming course, from January 2, to March 20, was filled last October, and four applications have already been received for the course in 1931. Over forty applications were of necessity turned down this year, as the membership is limited to fifteen.

As this course has been arranged in co-operation with the Greenkeepers Club, all of our members should take special interest in the work being done in it. Work covered during this term includes Motors, Botany, Water Systems, Drainage, Equipment, Managerial Problems, Grasses and Grass Seeds, Cost Keeping and Analysis, Soils and Fertilizers.

The annual exhibit for greenkeepers is planned for March 15, and 16. Plan to take a trip to Amherst on these dates! Professor Dickinson and his class will be glad to see you.

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And

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New Year

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