

Greenkeepers Club of New England NEWSLETTER

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"When love and skill work together expect a masterpiece."

—John Ruskin

GROUP INSURANCE

The returns of the recent mail ballot of the Greenkeepers Club of New England in regard to group insurance show that over 60% of the members voted in favor of it and that nearly 40% neglected to answer at all. Thus, the ballots returned were unanimous in declaring for group insurance and for raising the club dues to cover the premium. Therefore, by your vote the dues would be raised to about \$18 per year and for this increase you would be covered by insurance for \$1000 in case of death or total disability.

The rate is higher than we thought at first, but there is a possibility that the group be divided into different classes. Thus, the young will pay a lower rate and the older man a higher rate. Even then the older men will get insurance at a much lower cost than they could get otherwise, and the fact that there will be no physical examination necessary should make it very attractive.

Which way do you want this adopted? It is up to **you**. This matter will be discussed at the next meeting of the club and representatives of the insurance company will be present to explain. Be sure to be present and get all the dope on this question.

CARLTON E. TREAT.

INDOOR MEETINGS

Why the small attendance at our indoor meetings? It seems as though we should have as many, if not more, present than at our outdoor meetings. Most greenkeepers are not as busy during the winter months as at other times of the year, and should find time to attend a meeting once a month.

It may be that if we held our meetings outside Boston we would have a larger attendance. Of course, it is rather difficult driving in Boston, and some of us would rather not do it. This is just a suggestion, so let's have a large attendance at our next meeting and get the club's opinion—also to decide the insurance question.

P. F. HAYDEN.

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

THE COMMERCIAL BENT GRASSES

We are indebted to Prof. F. H. Hillman of the U. S. D. A. Seed Laboratory at Washington for permission to use in the NEWSLETTER the following circular on the bent grasses:

"THE COMMERCIAL BENT GRASSES,— Represented by different kinds, (botanically different species and varieties of species of the genus *Agrostis*).

"In the following statement, all the kinds used, or the seed of which is sold for use, on American golf courses are numbered consecutively somewhat with regard to their relationships. The names following the numbers are those in common use which refer to a definite kind. The botanical names heretofore in use follow in parenthesis. The creeping or non-creeping character of the plants (so far as of practical importance in the lawn or golf course) is indicated for each kind. Finally certain names in common use, but which are indefinite, misleading or actually deceptive are considered.

"(1). Redtop, (*Agrostis palustris*, more commonly called *Agrostis alba*). Primarily a farm grass; the coarsest of the kinds under discussion; too coarse for the putting green. Somewhat creeping. The seed readily mistaken for that of other kinds and often used as an adulterant of, or a substitute for, the more expensive kinds. Commercial seed is produced chiefly in the United States; some has come from Europe.

"(2). Seaside bent, "Cocoos" bent, (*Agrostis maritima*), the seed sometimes sold as "*Agrostis maritima*". A seacoast grass, sometimes growing spontaneously inland. A distinctly creeping grass, spreading by trailing and rooting (stoloniferous) stems. The seed exceptionally similar to that of redtop; produced chiefly on the Oregon and Washington Pacific Coast and its bays, and in limited quantity on Prince Edward Island, Canada. Growing non-commercially along the New England Atlantic Coast.

"(3). Carpet bent, "Washington" and other strains, (*Agrostis stolonifera*). Originally produced vegetatively from plants found in seedings of South German mixed bent. A strictly stoloniferous grass spreading by prostrate, rooting stems. But little seed has been produced commercially. Seed is believed not now commercially on sale.

"(4). Rhode Island bent, Browntop of Canada, Waipu browntop and Colonial bent of New Zealand, (*Agrostis capillaris*, more commonly called *Agrostis vulgaris*, and called *Agrostis tenuis* in Canada), an ingredient of the true South German mixed bent. A generally non-creeping grass growing spontaneously in New England and adjacent Canada, and reported under cultivation in the Pacific Northwest. Seed formerly produced in Rhode Island, now produced in considerable quantity on Prince Edward Island, Canada. Much seed comes from New Zealand and from Germany, that from Germany usually mixed with velvet bent seed.

"(5). Astoria bent, "Golf-a-lawn", (*Agrostis capillaris* (?) variety). A distinct kind of grass growing spontaneously near Astoria, Oregon. This is a pronounced underground-creeping plant said sometimes to have stoloniferous stems above ground. Seed production is in the third or fourth year. A large crop of seed is expected this year to be marketed as Astoria bent.

"(6). Oregon bent, (*Agrostis capillaris* (?) variety). This is another distinct kind of grass growing spontaneously in Oregon. It is a pronounced underground-creeping plant, the creeping stems producing a thick growth of upright leaf stems. A stand of this grass which has been producing seed since 1926 is on high and dry land having a heavy clay subsoil. A crop of seed will be harvested this year.

"(7). Velvet bent, (*Agrostis canina*). A well-marked kind admired for the velvetlike character of its fine stems and leaves; a slow creeper from rooting overground stems. It comes from Germany, never pure, but mixed with *A. capillaris* (No. 4) varying from little to 30%, 40% or more of the mixture. Seed is produced in limited quantity on Prince Edward Island, Canada, and also in Alberta, Canada.

"(8). "Florin." Seed of an uncertain character is coming from Europe as "creeping bent" or under some other attractive name. It is produced under cultivation to supply the seed trade.

Producers claim three forms of florin: (1) "high-growing," (2) "intermediate," and (3) "low-growing." Representative samples of seed of these forms show (1) to be redtop; (3) the same as Rhode Island bent, brown-top, etc.; (No. 4 above), and the "intermediate" form (2), apparently a hybrid form producing plants as yet unknown here.

"Creeping bent" is a widely used expression that has lost its value as referring to any particular kind of bent. Used for this purpose by the trade, it is meaningless and should be discontinued. It has been used commercially with reference to seaside bent, carpet bent, Rhode Island bent, florin and South German bent. The purchaser of seed under this name could have little assurance as to what he would get.

"*Agrostis stolonifera*" has been an exceptionally popular title for bent seed sent to this country from Germany."

THE DEMONSTRATION TURF GARDEN AT THE CHARLES RIVER COUNTRY CLUB

It would perhaps be interesting at this time of year to go over the experiments tried at the plots, and sum up some of the results. The changes in the plots from month to month make it difficult to give any definite observations. It is extremely desirable from time to time to visit the plots and make notes for yourself.

In the trial plots for greens' grasses, a great many of the plots have good putting surfaces. Which is best seems to be a matter of preference, color and texture being the primary considerations. It is of interest to note the color changes brought about by frost. In the stolon group, Metropolitan holds its color; Washington turns a uniform brown; Virginia turns a rusty brown; Columbia mottles blue, brown, and yellow; and Velvet yellows up with patches of green. In the seeded group, Fescue holds its dark green color; Coccos holds its color well; South German mixed Bent turns brown; Rhode Island Bent yellows; and *Poa annua* turns bright yellow.

In the fertilizer group for green grass, (South German mixed Bent), at a glance, ammonium sulphate, ammoni-

um phosphate, synthetic urea, nitrate of soda, and the mixed fertilizers 6-12-4 and 12-6-4 stand out by themselves because of their green color. On close examination for texture and putting surface these plots have a ranker growth than some of the other fertilizer plots. The poultry manure and sewage sludge plots, while not as green, are very good. These two plots were very slow in starting, but during the months of July and August, when the fertilizer applications were cut in half, were the best two plots. The ammonium phosphate plot and the nitrate of soda plot are very good. If you will take your diagram of the plots and note: 4a good plus, 4b good plus, 4c poor, 4d good, 4e fair, 5a poor, 5b excellent, 5c fair, 5d excellent, 5e fair, 6a good, 6b good plus, 6c poor, 6d fair, 6e poor.

In row nine, trial plots of fairway grasses, Chewings fescue 80% and South German mixed Bent 20% is the best fairway mixture; with Chewings fescue 40%, Red Top 20%, and Bluegrass 40% second; Bluegrass 80% and Red Top 20% third; Bluegrass 60%, Red Top 20%, South German Bent 20% fourth; and Rhode Island Bent fifth. These plots were not watered. Fairway watered plots show of course much better results due to the dry season, but the Chewings fescue, South German Bent plot is not much better than the like unwatered plot.

In the fertilizer series on fairways, Kentucky Blue, Red Top mixture, two applications of fertilizers were made without water or rain, and severely damaged the turf, which has not recovered at this time. Note from plan of plots: 10a good, 10b poor, 10c poor, 10d fair, 10e fair, 11a poor, 11b fair, 11c fair plus, 11d fair, 11e poor.

The arsenate of lead plots show a control of chickweed, but no control for worms.

In regard to disease, the Chewings fescue was nearly wiped out in June by leaf spot. Large brown-patch occurred on Washington, Metropolitan, Rhode Island, and South German Bent. Small brown-patch occurred on the velvet bents, both stolon and seeded.

The plots in general have a very good turf, and the results of the 1930 season should be much more valuable as the turf this year was filling in and did not show the character of the various grasses.

FRANK H. WILSON, JR.

“SERVICE”

Club No. 1. Tractors and Cutters destroyed by fire in shed at night. The next day we had a new cutter on the course and hired a tractor for the club until their new one arrived.

Club No. 2. Sent their mowers away to be sharpened and did not receive them in time to cut their greens, for the spring opening. We sent out two machines we keep on hand for them to use and saved the day. **No charge for this service.**

Club No. 3. Greenkeeper took sick and was laid up six weeks. We placed one of our men on the job and things went along smoothly. **No charge for this service,** the man was paid by the club.

Club No. 4. Water supply cut off. We sent out a street sprinkling cart from town to help them out. **No charge for this.**

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FALL CONSTRUCTION

Construction should be kept in mind at this time of the season. It is an ideal time to lay foundations for tees or greens, as you can get rid of a lot of unsightly junk in fill, and cover it to give it time to settle during the Winter months. Especially on tees it is a good idea if it can be spared, when tees are all graded, to spread a few inches of stable manure over them, and let it work in during the Winter. Spade in what is left in the Spring, as it helps to keep them growing when the hot sun shines on them. I tried this method on some of my tees last year, and found these tees the easiest to care for this Summer.

As most of the regular greens are played on all Winter, in some places where drainage is bad, the play does not do them any good, and the result is that there is a lot of work to be done on them in the Spring.

Some places where the players leave their tracks after thaw has started have to be resodded. Sometimes the rollers take care of these tracks, but not always. We had some of this trouble last Spring, and we only used compost on the resodded portions. We started the rest of the greens with twenty to thirty pounds of sulphate of ammonia mixed with Vigero per green, and the results were good. We composted later, as we had more time then. Some of the greens had no compost until well into the month of May, and I am of the opinion that these greens kept growing better during the Summer months.

Yours for less trouble in 1930!

MICHAEL JOSEPH O'GRADY.

The November meeting was held at the Pine Brook Valley Country Club, Weston, Mass., on November 4. An eighteen hole medal handicap tournament was played, with prizes being won by Swanson, Moran, West, Sullivan, Sowerby, and Burnett. In spite of the inclement weather, all present enjoyed the day at this beautiful course.

The December meeting will be held at Horticultural Hall, Boston.

The stork brought another girl visitor to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Farrant on September 29. Congratulations, Howard!

We understand that Mike O'Grady is planning a visit to Ireland this Winter. Lucky chap!

How much does the word "comfort" mean to you as applied to the golf course? Is it not true that a player has the right to demand a certain degree of comfort, as well as a well-kept course? Should we not think over ways to make our courses more comfortable for our players?

How can comfort be secured? In many ways; easy inclines instead of steep slopes; paths of ease and comfort instead of sandy, rocky, slippery trails; shelters here and there; seats on or beside tees, especially where there is liable to be congestion; these are a few. Keeping the rough in such a manner that balls can easily be found aids in comfort. Draining of low areas where water stands in the wet times not only improves the course, but also helps in the greater comfort for the players. It is easy to see how comfort can be made greater, there are so many ways to improve.

This is the ideal time to do much of this work to make the course more comfortable. Paths can be made easier, possibly sodded; if on a hillside, steps can be built in to help. Seats and shelters can be built, and other ways to improve studied, so that next year will find joyful comfort in command on your course. The little things count, and comfort can be made greater by each little step.

Have you planned your work for the Winter?

What are you doing in the line of Winter sports? What does your club offer its members in the Winter?

Don't forget to write up your experiences for the NEWSLETTER!

YOU should be present at the December meeting, as this meeting will be a vital one in the history of your club. The insurance question, already voted by mail ballot, will be discussed, explained, and final action taken. The Nominating Committee will bring in a slate of officers for 1930, to be voted on at the annual meeting in January. An amendment to the by-laws is to be presented to the meeting to make the Editor and Business Manager of the NEWSLETTER members of the Board of Directors.

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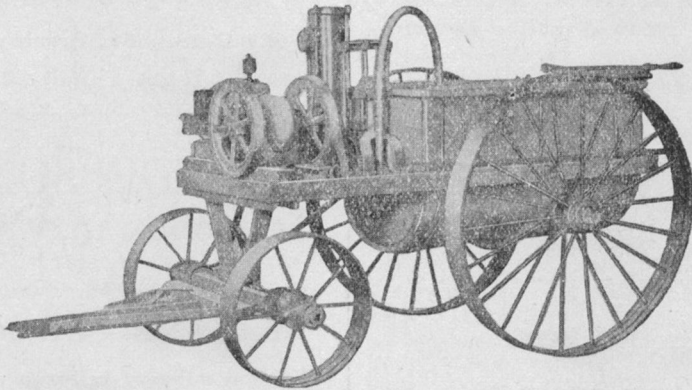
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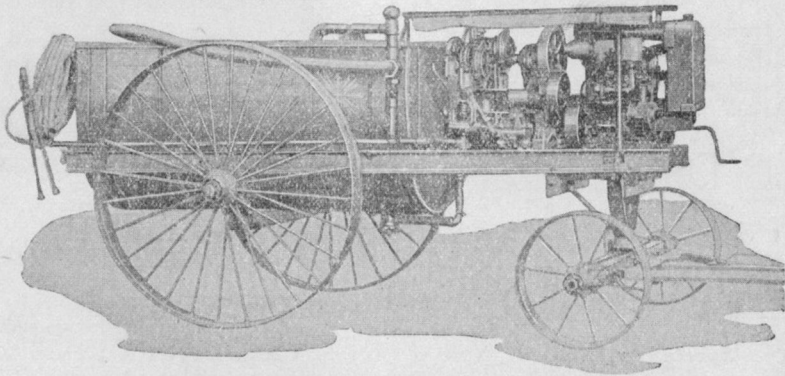
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