

NEWSLETTER

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SEPTEMBER

This NEWSLETTER is published monthly by the Greenkeepers Club of New England, and sent free to its members and their Greens' Chairmen. Subscription price ten cents a copy, or a dollar a year.

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September, 1931 Vol. 3, No. 9

COOPERATIVE BUYING

For several years now, group, or cooperative, buying of the supplies and equipment for the maintenance of golf courses has been agitated and attempted. The fact that no permanent headway has been made over a period of five or six years should indicate that the advantages from this type of purchasing are not too easily available to such a peculiarly specialized business as golf course maintenance.

The persistency of the idea, however, indicates that it is still very much alive in the minds of many golf club executives. Unfortunately these men are not familiar with the details of group buying and so are unable to determine if such a policy is practically possible.

Co-operative buying in its simplest form is the collecting of the similar needs of individuals into one unit. Placing the order for this unit at the source most favorable and paying for the unit by a single payer. After these operations are performed the material becomes available to the individuals in the amounts indicated when the pool was being formed. The individuals pay for their takings to the pool agent who has, as I have indicated already paid the producer for the gross amount.

In the fertilizer and grain business the pool agent receives the car loads on a draft-bill-of-lading and the individuals pay him, cash at the car door for their takings. There can be many variations but basically the above is true cooperative buying.

Now let us apply this to golf club buying. I will grant that it is possible to get enough individuals clubs to agree upon one commodity to create a volume sufficiently attractive to a producer to cause him to make a worthwhile price concession but who is going to act as the pool agent. What individual or club will guarantee the payment and automatically take upon itself all the detail of collecting from the individual clubs who make up the pool? The distribution cannot so easily be taken care of as the "cash-at-the-car-door" policy of the feed and fertilizer business. Warehousing also will enter into the problem.

It still may seem practically possible to set up an organization to handle this work, true, but determine the total volume of business, estimate the maximum savings and check this against the cost of operating an organization competent to insure its satisfactory functioning. Truly co-operative buying becomes something more than a fine idea that ought to be adopted.

Charles Parker, Belmont Spring C. C.

SOME IDEAS ON BROWN PATCH by W. E. Langton

(Republished from August, 1931— Pacific Greenkeeper)

Never in the history of Southern California golf have greenkeepers had to contend with more trouble than during this year of 1931. What with de-pleted treasuries, heat and humidity, army worms and cut worms, and finally both varieties of brown patch in enormous quantities, it would seem that the greenkeepers' cup of woe could contain not another drop. And unfortunately the people who play golf will never realize at what a cost the courses have been kept playable nor the herculean tasks that have been accomplished by individual greenkeepers and by greenkeepers as a group. But even with con-stant care it is safe to predict that had the heat and the humidity lasted another two weeks, scarcely a fine green out of the host would have been left in Southern California. Even at this late date the greens are not safe because spasmodic outbreaks of brown patch constantly are occuring, but not to the alarming extent of a few weeks ago.

At the present time, which might be termed a breathing spell, it would be well for greenkeepers to take stock of brown patch and see how far they have traveled towards a system of control of the pest. To say the most, they have

not moved very much. By the employment of certain methods of culture and aided by expensive mercury-chlorine compounds the growth of the pernicious ailment can be checked, but that is about all that can be claimed. It has been fairly conclusively demonstrated that while the mercurial compounds kill the germs or whatever it is that is directly responsible for brown patch, it also destroys those bacteria useful to plant life. Greenkeepers find themselves in the same predicament as the citrus growers who fumigate for red spider and at the same time kill scale destroying lady bugs. It must be apparent to anyone who is an observer that a continued use of calomel or corrosive sublimate cannot help but destroy all the life in the soil, for the compounds of mercury and chlorine constitute some of the deadliest poisons known to man.

But this possibly is not the worst result of the treatments. Because the soil is so broken down the green-keeper must begin all over again in building it up, and herein lies the very grave danger of applying just a little too much fertilizer with consequent dire results, especially if the weather is very warm. Many a greenkeeper wonders to this day why his greens burnt when only a tiny portion of fertilizer was applied. The same amount of fertilizers used in other years would have been wasted as being not enough to keep the grass strong and vigorous, but this year the presence of the highly corrosive chemical fertilizers which have been applied to the soil in such abundance have tended to dry up the soil water or sap, and to feed high concentrates immediately after their application was fatal to fine grass. Fine grasses with their succulent growth never in their lives have much stored plant food and if a fertilizer engendered plant burn strikes when the plants are in a disease-weakened condition they are gone forever.

It is problematical what heavy irrigation has had to do with the development of brown patch, but my experience has shown that the greens which were irrigated most had the most brown patch. Nor did drainage have any effect because the banks of the most heavily infected greens were effected worst by the ailment. There is a tendency during hot weather to throw volumes of water on the greens, perhaps more than the grass needs for healthy growth. Every available space in the soil is filled by water leaving no room for the oxygen which is necessary for the continuation of plant life. Acquatic plants are an exception to this rule, of course, for they, through countless ages of specialization have learned how to take care of themselves in this regard.

While speaking of irrigation, the time for watering must be considered. We know that brown patch develops during the night and on cloudy humid days. When the sun is shining and a dry breeze is blowing it hardly ever occurs. We know then that for its maximum culture it requires heat, darkness, moisture, and an absence of wind, and yet we insist in keeping the greens saturated with water all night long. This may be a controversial matter with greenkeepers and one open to heated discussion, but as far as I am concerned night watering of greens is out.

Another thing that perhaps we have overlooked during the hot, humid, brown patch period is the practice of cutting greens closely. The quality of service is as great among greenkeepers as any other class because if they do not please they lose their jobs. But the golfers' demand for closely cropped greens is something else again, or should be. Unfortunately the golfers do not know this, so they get their greens like billiard tables whether it is good for them or not. Unfortunately for everybody concerned the grasses kick over the traces at this scheme of things, being unable to take in sufficient carbon dioxide to manufacture their extremely essential sugars. After they have used up all their stored starches which are made available as sugar, they burn up with a sort of a fever which either causes or is the effect of poor respiration in the plant. To complicate matters further, the roots declare a holiday, not having anyone upstairs for whom to work.

Another thing that greenkeepers have discovered is that the clubs which have been using high concentrates during the brown patch have been more infected than those clubs which have not been able to afford fertilizers. If there is anything to this one begins to wonder if brown patch is something like gout, gout being an ailment of high living people, half starved people not being afflicted. But in looking into the matter it is obvious that richly fed greens must be softer, more succulent, and greater than those sap containers grasses which have been fertilized lightly The latter not at all. or would more fibrous with less bė space

in the cells and with less material for microbes to feed upon. A green of this latter type of grass would be less likely to burn if fertilizers were applied during a warm spell than a green of richly fed grass.

Perhaps after all greenkeepers have been trying too hard to achieve the well nigh impossible: perfect green 365 days in the year. There may be nothing to it but the fact that clubs which could not afford to buy fertilizer were least affected by brown patch is bound to carry a lot of weight in this regard. It has already been proved that the continual use of ammonium sulphate is dynamite as far as grass is concerned and if carried too far will be absolutely fatal. Further it has been shown that even the smallest application of this chemical during hot weather will burn the grass to some degree, and that it will start a violent attack of brown patch if the conditions are right, and they usually are.

To sum the whole question of brown patch treatment, which is synonymous with maintaining fine greens, it is a vital factor for those greenkeepers with a reputation to keep and whose love for their work is paramount. The writer has consulted with many experienced grass men and from them has gleaned a considerable fund of information, which, coupled with his own experience, suggests that the following treatment will help but not cure greens afflicted with brown patch:

If either large or small brown patch is prevalent, give a dose of any of the advertised mercurial compounds 10 check the ailment, and then correct the condition by an application of crushed lime rock or any other available calcium material. Keep the greens cool by watering frequently but lightly; do not allow ground to get soggy. Refrain from giving greens all highly nitrogenous foods or any other material likely to burn. An application of a loamy soil free from weeds and mixed with a good grade of peat will protect the roots from the hot sun and furnish sufficient food to sustain life and keep the grass healthy. Raise the cutting height of the mowers to five-sixteenths of an inch even though the greens become nappy or slow to putt upon. Remember that it is easier to perfect a strong growing green than a sick one and that a full grown leaf will take in twice the amount of nourishing food that half a leaf will. Spike or disc the greens occasionally to

permit the entrance of oxygen into the soil.

These commonplaces are the best ideas that at least the writer has for the treatment of brown patch. Until some heaven sent panacea is produced, the best that greenkeepers can do is to keep healthy what grass they have by not seeking the will-o'-the-wisp of perfection.

AN IDEA

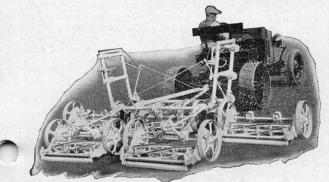
We had been hearing some of the experts say that we shouldn't worry any more about brown-patch, that they can control it all right, and such remarks, when this season came along, and everybody feels that they really know very little. Mercury compounds that controlled before were not of much use in some cases, grass scalded when watered daily. new diseases, or what appeared new, came to visit several. It appears to us that although the work being done by the experts is good and will help, that more must be done by the greenkeepers themselves before we will ever get anywhere in the control of these troubles. In talking with greenkeepers here and there, I find many conflicting opinions. I feel that many are of value, and the truth and value of them should be sifted out and all pieced together.

I would suggest that we of the New England Greenkeepers Club form a committee to be known as the Brown-Patch Committee, (for want of a better name), and that this committee gather from all of our members all data and thoughts and opinions, and try to work it all out and get some data which might help. In this connection, each member should keep records of every attack of any disease, its severity, greens affected, types of grass attacked, control measures used, humidity and temperature at time of attack, etc. All this data could be analized with some benefit, and a few years might give us data that would end the trouble. Such data gathered would help the experts who are trying to help us. The gathering of it would possibly help each of us doing it.

If other district associations cared to work along such lines, we might progress faster and better. The success of such a plan would lie in the carefulness with which the data was gathered, its completeness, and the way in which it was all used. What do you think of the idea?

G. C. W.

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PRO-NU-GREEN

After reading of others' experiences with brown-patch this Summer, I am relating mine. I bought and used two hundred pounds of Barbak 211 before I found that Nu-Green was much better for my troubles. I surely had a lot of ring patch (large) start, but went after it at the start and prevented scars. I claim of the three, Barbak 211, Semesan, and Nu-Green, that Nu-Green is the most effective as a control or cure.

I had some scald but heavy watering and light fertilizing is a great cure.

The only use I have for poling is to dry grass for cutting. I have tried poling half of one green, and leaving the other half to dry without using the pole, and find the half poled was affected a hundred per cent more with ring patch. This was done just for an experiment.

I have a part of my lawn of Rhode Island bent set off for experimental work. I am working on weed control, patch, fertilizers, ants, watering, etc., and get a lot of fun out of it.

I would not think of trying to control brown-patch without a two hundred pound pressure sprayer, but have found by mixing Nu-Green with screened loam and broadcasting and watering it in gives fine control. One objection I have to Barbak is that it leaves a grayish color to grass while Nu-Green seems to give grass a darker shade of green which I am very anxious to have. My greens are all one solid green color due to proper handling of fertilizing and topdressing.

If anything on the market is good and I can be shown is cheaper for patch than Nu-Green, I am open to look it over, but do not want to take any chances with a dreaded disease like patch.

> Roland F. Robinson. Comstock Park.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

The September meeting was held at the Charles River Country Club, Newton Centre, Mass., on Monday, September 14. The morning was devoted to an interesting examination and discussion of the experimental plots.

Results of 18 hole medal handicap tournament held in afternoon are as follows:

1st net-M. McDonald-100-24-76.

2nd net-Jim Holden-97-18-79.

3rd net-C. O'Keefe-94-15-79.

Most 3's—James Sullivan. Largest gross—E. Polhamus. Special prizes for green chairmen

won by:

Mr. Paul-1st net-89-15-74.

Mr. Turrell-2nd net-92-14-78.

The club championship will be held at the Rhode Island Country Club, Barrington, R. I. on Monday, October 5. Dinner at 12; 18 hole medal play tournament at 1 P. M.

Clifton E. Sowerby.

When the newly-crowned P. G. A. Champion Tom Creavy said that he putted well because he never before had putted on such fine greens, and a well known sports writer wrote that the greens at Wannamoisett were perfect, Martin Greene received two well-deserved tributes to the splendid condition of his greens, and indeed his course as a whole, during the week of September 14th. In this year of brown-patch, scald, and other kindred troubles, when we hear of courses here and there playing on temporary greens, and others reseeding their greens, it was indeed remarkable to find Wannamoisett in such wonderful shape. We know the struggle Martin has had this year, and we hereby extend our congratulations that he has done such a fine job.

In an exclusive interview with your Editor, Martin says he had luck with him, and especially so in that he had his greens sprayed just before the heavy attack of large brown-patch came early July. Spraying with in Calogreen every fifteen days since has prevented all small brown-patch, and nearly all of the large.

Our congratulations are also due the Wannamoisett Country Club officials for the able way in which this P. G. A. tournament was run. We feel that it was a credit to all New England Golf.

At the August meeting, held at the Cohasse Country Club, a No. 2 Stewart iron was taken by mistake from the bag of James McCormack of the Unicorn Country Club, and probably was put in someone else's bag. As this club belongs to a matched set, Mr. McCormack is very anxious to get it back, and would appreciate hearing from anyone who finds it.

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The annual Fall Field Day on grass culture will be held at the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, New Brunswick, N. J. on Monday, October 5. The meeting will open on the experimental plots at 3 P. M., and will be followed by an evening meeting at the Hotel Woodrow Wilson, with several speakers and discussions.

Those who grow bent grass for seed production have their troubles, as well as we who grow the bent for turf, as is noted in a recent letter from A. N. Peckham of Kingston, R. I.:

"I think I have had what you could honestly call "a Hell of a time" growing Bent for seed production this suming Bent for seea production that that mer. Don't you think for a minute that the fellow that is growing Bent grass for fine turf production is the only one that the the the base of the line. The that has trouble along the line. The fellow that grows Bent grass for seed production has just as many troubles, if not more than the man who takes the seed and grows it for fine turf. You have brown patch of one or two kinds, and various other fungus diseases, and of course you have bugs, worms, and soil conditions that you have to surmount. Now in growing Bent for seed production we have to correct our soil conditions in order to grow it clear. That is if we have extremely basic conditions clover, etc. are bound to come into the picture, and the seed will become mixed with the Rhode Island Bent. To correct such conditions we have to apply acid reacting chemicals. We have our blights, and our blasts that affect the grass in the fields. We have just the same brown patch as you have. It often kills out areas and we cannot check it practically on large areas that are devoted to seed production the same as you can on small areas devoted to turf production. We also have different kinds of grubs that often come in damp seasons and eat the root system of whole fields at a time, and then we have the cussed army worms. I have been afflicted with them twice in eleven years. Army worms are usually more prevalent in wet seasons, and when army worms decide to go through a field of Bent they completely ruin the areas. If they should happen to go over a putting green they would only eat off all the green grass. It would start right in growing again within a few days. But if they go through a field of Bent for seed production they ruin the year's crop. This year we have had a new

pest. We don't know what it is. It turns the hay completely brown before the seed is ripe. It isn't any of the usual regulation fungus diseases that we know about. It appeared in several fields of my Velvet Bent. We have also had very adverse climatic conditions during the summer to harvest the seed. The seed this year will not carry a high percentage of germination and it will look brown because of the excessive amount of rain."

From a recent letter from a prominent executive:

"I notice the controversy now going on as to whether the man that does all the work on the golf course and is responsible for not only the maintenance of greens, but the maintenance of everything else, whether it be buildings, trees, bridges, creeks or lakes, should be called something else besides the greenkeeper.

The boys will have their merry little argument, and the thing will end up by the men who are really superintendents still calling themselves superintendents, and the men who are more interested in being solely greenkeepers calling themselves greenkeepers.

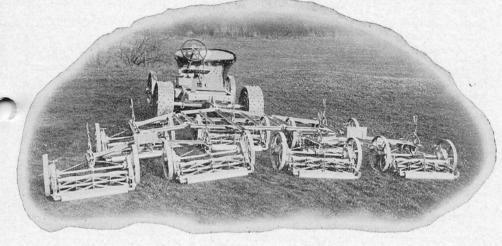
I notice that some of those in this week's discussion used the argument, "What's in a name? A rose will still smell as sweet" or words to that effect. This might have been all right in Shakespeare's time, but a pertinent article in this week's Time suggests that if the late Starr Faithful had been named Sadie Schmitz she would never have gotten beyond the fourth or fifth page. As it was, she had the front page for the past several weeks.

Undoubtedly it's the man behind the title, but the shrewdest concerns in this business realize that the title helps to make a good man a better man, and that is the whole point which rests behind the present suggestion to change the name."

At Braeburn, rocks are being blasted in rough and fairways. John Shanahan also reports that they are busy fighting crab grass. Greens on which \$200 was spent last year for weeding this year will cost but \$50.

At Charles River, during the recent dry spell, a thousand feet of hose were used to water the new eighteenth fairway. The 5th fairway was also watered.

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Some recent additions to our files include:

"The Advantages of Fairway Watering" by Wendel P. Miller and Associaates.

"Fertilizer Tests of Several Soil Types" by T. L. Lyon; Bulletin 520, Cornell Univ. Agri. Exp. Station.

"Lawn Fertilization" by M. F. Morgan; Circular 77, Conn. Agri. Exp. Station.

"The Effect of Various Sources of Organic Matter on the Properties of Soils as Determined by Physical Measurements and Plant Growth" by H. B. Sprague and I. F. Marrero; reprint from "Soil Science".

"Dictionary of Fertilizer Materials" by H. C. Moore; compliments of Synthetic Nitrogen Products Corp.

"The Putting Green", O. M. Scott & Sons Co.

The second nine holes are under construction at Riverside Golf Club, the State course, under supervision of Harold Mosher. This new nine is across the river from the old layout, and seven holes will be along the river. Preparations are being made to seed this Fall.

The Winnapaug Golf Club of Westerly, R. I. has opened its gates to the golfers of that town for September and October, with a reduced greens fee of a dollar a day. Fall work calls for widening of some of the fairways, and topsoiling areas on 14th and 15th fairways.

"The fool buys price—the canny buyer—worth."

"Today comes once—and then the book is closed."

"Inexperience is easier to train than bad experience."

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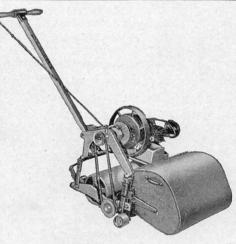
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