NEWS LETTER

Our Report of

the 1932

Convention and Golf Show

FEBRUARY

1932

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GOLF SHOW AND CONVENTION

The sixth annual Golf Show and Convention of the National Association of Greenkeepers was held at the Hotel Pennsylvania, New York City, from January 19th to 22nd. At the Golf Show, over thirty exhibitors showed the newest in golf course equipment and supplies. Of special interest was the large Toro exhibit of two Master Tractors, one with seven unit hook-up and one with five pull type hook-up, hand and power mowers, Knockabout, etc.; the Pennsylvania exhibit with its new 36" fairway unit; the Worthington seven gang hook-up, Scout Overgreen, etc.; a fine grass seed and accessories exhibit by Stumpp & Walter; a new Staude Mak-a-Tractor; Ideal exhibit of fairway units and Power mowers, including new greens mower; and many other interesting exhibits of seed, sprinklers, fertilizers, and other supplies.

Dr. Howard B. Sprague acted as chairman of the afternoon conferences. Following an address of welcome by President Morley, Kenneth Welton of the Greens Section was introduced as the first speaker of the Wednesday afternoon conference. Mr. Welton spoke on "Soil Structure of Putting Greens." In the construction of a putting green the soil beneath should be considered. The sub-soil should be so graded that there are no pockets or mounds on the subgrade. The old custom of layer built greens has been found unsatisfactory. As greens are constructed for pitch shots, the top soil must be of such nature that it will not require constant watering to keep it soft enough to hold shots. Where constant watering is necessary, it is difficult to keep turf on the green, no pore space for air. Soil is very fascinating study. The soil structure is the arrangement of the particles. Soil plasticity and cohesion are of great importance. Organic matter is very important, has affinity for moisture, holds small particles. A soil expert would rather examine soil itself rather than a physical analysis of the soil.

A simple test for determining value of soils: Take the soils to be tested, put through sieves, screen samples into like buckets, put in water until free water comes out, get samples in same consistency, same handling for all samples; procure uniform molds, pour each into mold, trowel off, set samples off until drying on top, take out of containers, let set, observe and see if some are still wet; soils with no cohesion and plasticity will crumble, too much will stick together too well; roughly speaking, the type whose mold will break with the hands easily is good. Clay and silt loams mixed with a third sand and a third humus material will be pretty near all right.

"Some Thoughts on Greenkeeping" was the subject of an interesting discussion by M. E. Farnham of the Philadelphia Country Club. Greenkeeping will never be an exact science. There will always be definite work for the Greenkeeper. The rapid development of golf is responsible for most of our troubles; golfers are demanding more. We are working contrary to Nature. There is probably no "best."

There is hardship for the greenkeeper in the frequent change of green committee chairmen. The greenkeeper must sell himself and his abilities as well as enlarge them. The percentage of greens chairmen who dictate greenkeeping practices is still too large. The greenkeeper's position and abilities should not need overalls. The greenkeeper is responsible for investment of thousands of dollars. The greenkeeper's advice should be sought. If over-ruled, the greenkeeper's recommendations should be presented in writing.

Fundamentally, the manager principle is sound. Such development should not displace any employee in the picture; it is dangerous unless manager is qualified; he should be qualified and well paid.

There is need for collective action on a set of ethical standards for greenkeepers.

The opportunities to meet and discuss problems have multiplied. Working conditions need to be bettered. It is pur-

poseless to rave against conditions and not attempt to better them.

It is essential for each greenkeeper to sell himself as well as to maintain good turf.

J. O. Campbell of the Wethersfield Country Club next spoke on "Greenkeeping Yesterday and Today." Now a tract of land is looked over very carefully before purchase for golf course use. Architect is necessary. The golf superintendent should be on the job when under construction. The greens are the most important. Heighth of cut should be three-eighths inch, with heighth not changed during season. Greens should not be mowed in same direction two days running. Poor contouring and poor drainage cause the most damage. Web-worms, earthworms, Japanese beetles also cause trouble. There should be a compost pile. Lime now is only used for correcting toxity.

Equipment has changed drastically in the last ten years. It is not economy to use worn out or obsolete equipment.

Greenkeeper should spend some time beautifying grounds. Trees are not cut down now as much as formerly.

Greenkeepers must keep in front of times, responsibility is greater than ever before.

The costs of maintenance can not be standardized.

"The Care of Trees" was presented by Homer L. Jacobs of the Davey Tree Expert Co. Size of roots affects top of tree. Soil conditions are important to tree, the air can not be controlled, whereas the soil, moisture, aeration in soil, temperature, can be controlled to some extent. Absence of air in soil limits downward growth of roots. A high water table is not good, makes shallow rooted trees. Drainage will often make growth faster and deeper.

The fertilizer requirements of trees are same as for other plants. Most important element seems to be Nitrogen; present knowledge seems to indicate that phosphorus and potash are not needed more than soil can supply. Possibly a mixture of two of many forms of fertilizers may be best method of application. In some alkaline soils some trees need iron; it is not advisable to use too much alkaline fertilizers. If manure is used it should be well rotted. Peat moss seems to be suitable for use in transplanting.

The so-called crowbar method was used first for convenience. Now method used is with power driven augers, making holes all over area covered by tree, or even greater. Chemical fertilizer or chemical plus humus material used. Holes are filled to within a few inches of top, and covered with soil. This method used year after year will improve the root system. If phosphorus or potash is to be used it must be put down in the soil where it can be used.

Extremes of temperature can be controlled to certain extent. Sod is good protection for roots. Mulch of leaves is sometimes necessary; should be taken off in Spring. With shallow rooted trees, the use of ground covers such as pachysandra is to be recommended.

John MacGregor of the Chicago Golf Club presented his ideas of "Golf Maintainence Budget." Greenkeepers should have budget, forecast expenses and keep track of expenses as they are made. Greenkeeper is not accountant, but cost keeper. The average greenkeeper has not kept costs long. Keep course perfect, but do not exceed costs. The condition of the course can not be cut, should have maximum of patronage and economy of handling. Greenkeeper must have system of cost keeping.

Don't watch men, but watch work to see that they have done it well. Have man do certain work in certain time.

Always best to ask for $1000 reserve fund, to be used in case of extreme need.

Keep diary of operations and cost of each.

The Thursday afternoon session opened with a talk by O. B. Fitts of the Columbia Country Club, on the subject, "Present Day Requirements of a Greenkeeper." There are many more responsibilities now. Formerly greenkeeper was merely overseer. Leading men of yesteryear are among the leaders of today. The active greenkeeper is a perpetual student. Continued responsibilities for greenkeeper are to be expected; we must anticipate these new responsibilities. We know better now how to get information.

The designing and construction of courses now often done by greenkeeper. Greenkeeper should know how to analyze golf as played by expert and by dub; should know and use the environment. He must understand soils, drainage, grasses, fertilizers, etc.

The greenkeeper should take advantage of the constantly increasing knowledge. He must be a good purchaser of

equipment, for he now does the buying. The salesman must now convince the greenkeeper, who investigates the quality and price. The greenkeeper has made a most thorough study of the needs of the golf course, and has more ability, and has convinced the chairmen of this ability. The greenkeeper must be a good buyer, a good business man.

These conventions give opportunity to study buying. The greenkeeper should be a good salesman, must sell himself and his ideas.

The greenkeeper must be a competent manager of labor. He must be able to meet defeat, must have the courage to come back, the desire to conquer, the love for quality.

The present high standard of greenkeeping would not have been achieved without the cooperation of the expert. There should be continued cooperation with them, and with golf architects, chairmen, etc.

Dr. Jacob G. Lipman, Director of the N. J. State Experiment Station, next spoke on "Bacteria in Relation to Turf." The functions that bacteria carry out in soils are theoretically not essential for growing of plants, but practically they are essential. There is an abnormal environment in putting greens, certain devices may be used to offset this. Environment and food supply are important in development of bacteria. The distribution of organic matter is of greatest importance, governing amount of water in soil and temperature. The deeper the root the more vigorous the plant and the more resistant to disease. The element carbon is very important.

For best growth of plant there should be an optimum relation between soil water and soil air. There is a constant transformation from raw material to food, and from food to raw material. Nitrogen is a very important food; it is found locked up in various sources, must be broken down to ammonia or essential plant food.

For best growth plant must be provided with moisture, and not too much. Drainage is then sometimes necessary. Organic matter, even peat, may be used to increase the moisture holding capacity and to stimulate bacteria activity. Compost supplies soil bacteria, a sort of soil inoculation. Bacteria are stimulated by application of chemical fertilizer; this may be too much or too little; this will also bring in other factors.

C. E. Tregillis next discussed "The Greenkeeper's Schedule." Maintenance of Golf course is first requisite. Greenkeeper has golf course, grounds, roads and walks, buildings, etc. He has the hiring of labor and its management. No two men will assume authority over others in the same way. It is the result that counts and the cost of achievement.

Hiring of labor may be by month or by hour. Seasonable laborer is another problem. It pays to keep a skeleton crew together. It is mistake for greenkeeper to become immersed in set of chores; time-keeping and cup changing (or accompanying man who changes them) greenkeeper's work.

An individual record of workers, card index system, gives data in case of accident.

The greenkeeper is just as interested in keeping within budget as anyone else. Purchases in quantity sometimes are economy. Greenkeeper should have knowledge of when and where to buy. Do not keep too large an inventory of spare repair parts, better to have extra units or an extra truck.

The greenkeeper should keep careful records, as many as time allows. Should also submit monthly report. We are all students, changing all the time, improving through meetings of this sort.

"Nitrogen Changes in the Soil" was presented by Dr. M. H. Cubbon of the Massachusetts State College. Plants prefer nitrate nitrogen, best form available. We put organic matter on soil and expect bacteria to do the work. There are many organisms which do this work—those which produce nitrogen are extremely fussy. Several factors influence these bacteria. Too much water may be serious.

The amount of nitrate nitrogen is the fertility of the soil. The proportion of Carbon to nitrogen is important. Any organic material with less than 4% nitrogen is not good for topdressing. Topdressing with peats without addition of some more nitrogen may be disappointing.

Nitrate bacteria sometimes refuse to work when acidity is too great, the more acidity the slower the recovery of nitrogen after the addition of nitrogen. Generally speaking, the speed with which nitrates accumulate in soil is proportional to amount of water soluble nitrogen in organic matter in soil.

Bacteria work well except in temperatures below 60 degrees, then require

neutral soil. Packing has the same effect as too much water; the bacteria suffocate.

Bacteria tend to eat one another—possibly best to inoculate with new bacteria.

Before someone else's ideas are used, greenkeeper should study all the factors involved.

L. J. Feser of the Woodhill Country Club closed the afternoon's program with an oration upon "Our Job". Our problem seems to be to make 75 cents do job that $1 used to do. To think clearly and act wisely is essential for everyone. An army of men, women, and children are dependent upon the golf courses—directly or indirectly every purchase helps someone somewhere. There are lots of things on golf courses that machines cannot do, and lots that machines can do better. "Labor-saving" machinery is misnomer. If hands displaced by machinery are used to improve course, it will help in several ways. The best economy is to make every dollar in budget produce 100 cents of worth, duty, satisfaction. Practical insight and knowledge of job should be used in asking for proper budget.

Two reels of moving pictures made under supervision of Mid-West Greenkeepers Association and showing maintainence work on various courses around Chicago were shown. These were both interesting and instructive.

The annual banquet was held on Thursday evening. Ganson Depew, Chairman of the U. S. G. A. Green Section was presented a certificate of Honorary Membership in the National Association of Greenkeepers. Various other speakers told of the fine cooperation which now exists between golf associations and the greenkeepers.

Dr. John Monteith, Jr. of the Green Section opened the Friday afternoon conference with a talk on "Turf diseases". Slides were shown of grass and its diseases. Diseases of plants are of two types—by some organism or by some unfavorable condition surrounding plant. Fungi are dependent upon other plants for their food; some of them cause diseases when they invade plants that are alive. In condition after blade is invaded, nothing can be done to save that blade of grass.

Treatments without good judgment are often dangerous. Different amounts of compounds are needed to furnish same amount of mercury. Fertilizing practice may influence brown-patch attacks; ammonium sulphate may encourage small brown-patch. The only effect of concentration of mercury in soil has been beneficial, helps in control.

Washington strain is very susceptible to small brown-patch; Colonial bent very resistant to small.

There will be constant increase in large brown-patch with increase in temperature to optimum around 83 degrees. Temperature alone does not determine whether we will have brown-patch. Opening of air currents sometimes helps in control. Treatment to remove surplus moisture from green is advisable.

Phythium, snow-mold, leaf spot, etc. were also discussed briefly.

"Economy on the Golf Course" was discussed by John Quaill of the Highland Country Club. Every course and methods on it are different from all others. Points to consider in economy—construction, topography, large tees, greens not too large, drainage, fertilizing, large traps, etc. Good equipment is best insurance against high upkeep—reliable equipment kept in good repair. Standardize on type of equipment best fitted to course. Power mowers for greens sometimes are time saving, for tees are very useful. Prices are on downward trend. Fancy names and fancy claims go well with fancy prices. Buying from club members not always economy. Know sources of supply. Greenkeeper should plan work ahead, give proper supervision of work. Beware false economy.

Dr. Howard B. Sprague of the New Jersey Experiment Station gave an interesting talk on "Soil Conditions in Root Development". Roots are often neglected because not seen. Roots are vital, organs of anchorage, food storage, absorb water and nitrogen and nutrient. Roots take up large amounts of water and nutrients. Roots must occupy soil mass to get their food—only those layers that are occupied by roots are being used.

Pratically all of the water and nutrients enter the root hairs of various roots.

There are various conditions in soil which determine the occupying of the soil buy the roots. Not too much water gives better ratio of roots and tops; drainage thus helps. If we can prevent

too much water in times when roots are being formed, the root system will be deeper. Grass roots are not permanent, are very temporary; the great bulk of roots are formed in the growing season. Low temperature will prevent activities of root development. The speed of warming up in Spring is dependent upon amount of moisture and compactness. The more abundant the supply of available nutrients, the more extensive the root system; yet it is possible to get too much available nitrogen. Too acid soils have harmful effect on roots. Lowering height of cut must reduce the root system; dwarfed top and undwarfed root would be ideal.

Experiments with height of cut showed putting green length giving large decrease over lawn length. Balance at lawn length was much better.

We have not by any means solved the question of root development, merely started the work. We would like to increase the root structure; we must have root hairs, hence must give more attention to their development.

Professor John Bracken gave an illustrated talk on the landscape side of golf course development. Prof. Bracken pointed out that playing the game should come first, but made a plea to save some beautiful spots for their beauty.

The art of "Re-building and Re-sodding Putting Greens" was explained by Jos. Williamson of Columbus, Ohio. The greenkeeper should know past history of putting green that is to be rebuilt and why it has failed. Faulty construction or lack of proper drainage might have caused the trouble. Rebuilding should be given much thought. The life of a putting green may be over-estimated. The trouble may be in the soil itself; the soil may need renewing. The compost pile is still best for greens; soil is more important than commercial fertilizers and manures. Soil consisting of a third each, porous soil, sharp sand, and humus is good for greens. If sub-soil is heavy, mix in sand or cinders, and grade. Drainage is very necessary. Treading the soil is still the best way to firm it.

Mr. Williamson described his method of resodding, lack of space prevents us from including this here.

A paper on "Fertilizers" by Robert J. Hayes was read by the chairman.

The importance of knowing the condition of the soil where turf must be maintained cannot be too strongly considered, and periodical soil tests should be made to determine what degree of acidity the soil has.

It is my opinion that no difficulty should be experienced in maintaining turf if good judgement is used. We must convince ourselves that plant life, such as grasses, is subject to environment. Plants stay where they are put and cannot move when conditions for their growth and development are unfavorable. We greenkeepers must provide proper growing conditions in order to fulfill our part in the game of golf.

It is my opinion that many of our turf troubles are directly due to excessive accumulation of acids causing toxic condition of the soil, retarding growth of turf, locking up necessary minerals for root growth, etcetera, thus depriving the grass of necessary food elements. It can reasonably be expected that such conditions will affect the turf during the summer time. Our soils in this vicinity need considerable watching and testing to overcome this trouble.

Acid soil not only deprives the turf of its food but retards the growth of the many bacteria necessary to change the amoniates in the soil to nitrates. Many of us put up with Poa Annua, whether we like it or not. Where very acid conditions are evident, we run into difficulty trying to keep it in a healthy, growing condition. This, we have been told, is because of the need of a soil near the neutral point and favoring alkalinity. Being a native grass, where we must tolerate it, we must maintain it. I recommend giving it attention prior to the hot spells of summer. Poa Annua responds to limestone treatment. I think it will have a healthier growth and be greener if the lime is applied in May or early June.

So much for testing soils. The next problem is feeding. Excessive amounts of food will do more damage than no food at all. Complete balanced foods applied in the early spring in combination with compost will benefit the turf even more. Various formulas are recommended, but a selection should be made to fit one's need and requirements. I am convinced in maintaining my own course that limestone has its value. Nitrogen may promote leaf growth. Phosphorous increases the root system. Potash furnishes the starches and brings the plant to maturity. I am convinced

however that lime is more important under acid or toxic conditions because fertilizers cannot beneficially function if applied to toxic soils and in some cases do more damage than good.

The annual Stag Party, held Friday night closed the 1932 Show and Conference.

CONVENTION NOTES

Over thirty members of the Greenkeepers Club of New England were present, and several more from New England, non-members of the club.

The 1933 Convention will be held in Chicago; the 1934 Show probably in Toronto.

John Morley was re-elected President of the National Association for 1932. Other officers elected were: John MacGregor, 1st Vice Pres; Fred Burkhardt, Sec. and Treas; Directors, John Anderson, William Sansom, M. E. Farnham, Ed. B. Dearie, Carl A. Bretzlaff, L. J. Feser, John Quaill; Trustees—Joseph Williamson, John Pressler , George Alves.

A few ideas of importance from the conference talks worthy of your attention would include—possibility of soil inoculation with bacteria, ethical standards for greenkeepers, budgets and cost keeping, how to make more root hairs, etc.

The Rhode Island Greenkeepers Association met at the Narragansett Hotel, Providence, on January 11th, Professor Lawrence Dickinson of the Massachusetts State College gave the results of the Pre-seeding Fertilization experiment conducted at the College with cooperation of the Greenkeepers Club of New England.

Dean Adams of Rhode Island State College explained that no short course for greenkeepers would be offered this Winter, as the College had not had sufficient time to prepare material for such a course. In all probability a school of a week's duration will be offered in 1933. Dr. T. E. Odland and Mr. H. F. A. North of the Rhode Island Experiment Station also spoke of various experiments which are being planned.

Have you visited the Sportsman's and Golf Show, at Mechanics Building, Boston, from Feb. 6 to 13?

A section of an editorial by Col. Benjamin A. Franklin, former President, Associated Industries of Massachusetts, on the front cover of the January 9th issue of "Industry" can be well applied to golf course management:

"In the most successful business today there are two controls.

"The first is the detailed budget. The budget sets forth, in clear detail with explanatory schedules, department by department, all expenses and income planned, with proposed bases of accomplishment.

"The second is the detailed comparison of actual expenses and income, month by month, and period by period, paralleling the budget, with actual accomplishment obtained."

We believe that every club should operate upon a budget, somewhat elastic for golf course maintenance, because of the many factors which can change expenses, but a budget anyway, to which it is hoped the club can be run. And the greenkeeper should be consulted upon the manner in which the budget is to be expended. How fine it would be for a club to say to its greenkeeper, "Here is our budget for this coming year, give us the best you can in the way of golf course maintenance for this sum, render us reports monthly as to how the expenses are going, and what you are accomplishing, do not be afraid to call upon us if you need help, tell us when something unforseen arises and you need more money, attend and take an active part in all of our greens committee meetings, and we expect your best efforts". Some clubs are working along these lines, how does your club go about it?

"Every service you render serves you in the end".

"Class no man as a failure until you see him quit."

"Learn to manage men and you'll have hit the shortest trail to big-time leadership".

"Machines follow rules. Men interpret them".

"The angels are still singing.

It's our wave length that's at fault."

R. E. BRADLEY TAKES OVER IDEAL BOSTON BRANCH

The Ideal Power Lawn Mower Company recently announced a change in personnel, also some certain changes in the operation of the factory branch located at 273 Boylston Street, Brookline, which has been serving trade in this section for a number of years.

Effective first of January the name of the establishment in Boston was changed to the Ideal Mower Sales & Service, and the entire business is being taken over by Mr. R. E. Bradley.

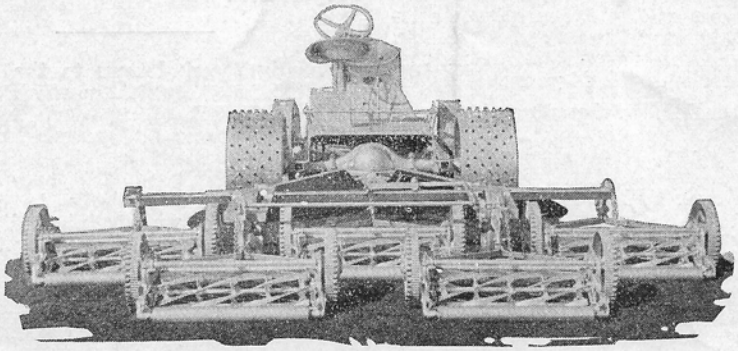
For a number of years Mr. Bradley has been in the employ of the Ideal Power Lawn Mower Company and is thoroughly familiar with their complete line of equipment, both from a service and sales standpoint, having been connected with the factory branch in Detroit for a number of years, and later acting as a special representative covering dealer and golf trades in a large portion of the southeastern section of the United States.

Mr. Bradley is thoroughly experienced in all phases of golf equipment business and we feel sure that he will be heartily welcomed by the Greenkeepers of the New England section. We know that he has every facility at his command for giving the finest kind of cooperation.

Among recent letters to the NEWSLETTER was one from the Editor of THE GOLFER of Sydney, Australia, asking for rates and permission to reprint articles from the NEWSLETTER. THE GOLFER is the only weekly journal devoted entirely to golf in Australia, and we are pleased to note that we have been heard of by this distant contemporary.

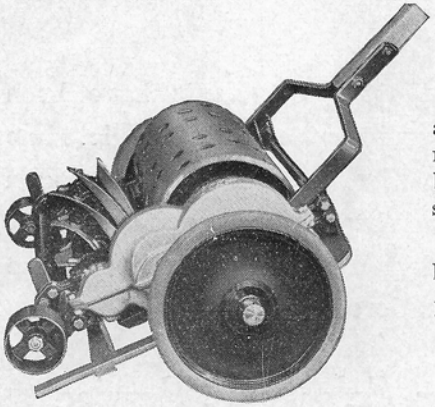
All members are again requested to send to the Editor all changes of address, or changes in green committee chairmen. If you know of a club which needs a greenkeeper, or a greenkeeper who needs a position, communicate with your Employment Committee. If you know of any member who is ill, or who needs assistance, communicate with your Welfare Committee.

Good Machinery Will Meet Lowered Budgets



Lower budgets for this coming year will demand closer study of equipment, both as to quality and price. TORO has reduced prices, yet the high quality of materials and workmanship is being maintained.

Maintenance costs may be lowered by replacing obsolete equipment with improved models, by the addition of extra gang mowers, on the roughs and fairways, and power driven machinery for tees, approaches and odd corners. Mechanical fertilizer and top dressing mixers and spreaders have lowered labor unit costs.



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