NEWS LETTER

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When you define liberty you limit it, and when you limit it you destroy it.

—Brand Whitlock.

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CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

The club champion for 1940 is Nick Bruno of the Norfolk Golf Club, Dedham, Mass. Nick won over a large field at the Ponkapoag Golf Club on the 9th with a gross of 81, very good golf considering a driving rainstorm, wet fairways, and a stretched course. A tie for second gross, 85, between N. Sperandio, R. W. Peckham, A. Sperandio and M. Ryan brought out a play-off, and N. Sperandio won on the second extra hole. After he and Peckham halved the first a stroke better than the other two. Narry put his second shot on the 9th close by the pin while Peckham was short in two, and chipped strong.

Net prizes were won by

Al. Barney—88-17-71
Ed. Hansen—91-20-71
A. Sperandio—85-12-73
Tom Mattus—87-14-73

In the morning those attending graded the experimental "pie" green, and examined the new nine holes under construction.

FAIRWAYS

By Frank H. Wilson

On a par four or five hole, what things do we look for in that area of turf that the ball is supposed to land on and come to rest, when driven from the tee? I have noticed in playing in the monthly tournaments of the Greenkeepers Club during the last sixteen years a vast improvement in fairways. Conditions that were taken as a matter of course in periods of drought, are no longer tolerated, or a determined effort is made to eliminate them by soil improvement, fertilization, and watering. Not all courses need a fairway watering system. The underlying conditions which make poor fairways should be carefully studied. A very satisfactory stand of fescue can be wiped out by overwatering. However, under conditions of shallow soil, steep slopes, soil low in organic matter, a fairway watering system has a definite place.

A continuous mat of turf forming a cushion to walk upon, holding the ball up in good shape, with a minimum amount of weeds, dark green in color, curving in outline, of good contour and wholly pleasing to the eye with its white sand traps against the green, may be considered a good fairway from a greenkeeping point of view but not necessarily architecturally. Fairways flanked with trees are certainly an asset adding to the above picture, screening out unsightly objects and opening up pleasant views. By planting berry bearing shrubs and trees the presence of birds is encouraged. An occasional flowering shrub or tree helps break the monotony. If ponds are in evidence they may be planted with water lilies (red, pink, white) and other water plants. Bulbs such as narcissus that naturalize easily planted in the rough, primroses in suitable wooded areas, rambler roses over rocks deep in the rough and an endless number of plants can be used to the pleasure and relaxation of a round of golf and setting off the prime beauty of a golf course, the fairways.

The three fundamental grasses used in most fairway seed mixtures are Kentucky blue grass, Chewing's fescue, bents, and red top, the last as a nurse grass. From the experiment turf garden conducted at the Charles River Country Club, maintained from 1928 to 1937, the best seed mixture for fairways was found to be 80% Chewing's fescue and

20% bent. This stood first on both the watered and unwatered plots of the mixture. The first 300 yards of our 18th fairway is seeded to this mixture and is a most satisfactory turf. On the soil of the experimental turf garden which is typical of the soil of this district, blue grass was poor and soon disappeared. At the end of the third year the fairway fertilizer plots were taken up and reseeded to a mixture of bluegrass, Chewing's fescue, bent and redtop. At the end of the experiment the bluegrass had disappeared and the fescue and bent had made a very satisfactory turf. The creeping bents which give a beautiful turf to look at, a good lie, are not satisfactory due to the fact that they are fluffy and the golfer is apt to hit too deeply under the ball and pop it up. Native velvet bents have given us very satisfactory fairways. To reiterate if you wish to keep fescue in be careful in watering.

The height of cut of fairways is most important. The higher the grass can be cut the more food the grass can manufacture. One and one-half inches would be most satisfactory from the greenkeeping standpoint. The golf ball however must have a good lie, standing up on top of the grass not lying in it. One inch seems to be a satisfactory height if the grass is thick. This height, however, entails, when the grass is growing rapidly, frequent mowings. Mowers in perfect adjustment and sharp help the appearance of a fairway.

Another important factor in good mowing is tractor speed. Waves or ripples in the fairways are not caused by the modern mower but by too great tractor speed. With watered fairways, in order to keep the grass cut, there is certainly a tendency to mow too fast. A solution might be in using two tractors with gangs of five mowers instead of one tractor with a gang of seven and slow down. In most cases a speed of five miles an hour will give a smooth job of mowing. Fairways mowed dry are also cut smoother than when mowed in the early morning when the dew is on the grass. Thick bent fairways are very unsightly with balled up clippings when mowed wet. Whether mowed wet or dry slow mowing gives smoother cut fairways.

Theoretically, fairways once in perfect condition should, as far as fertilization is concerned, maintain themselves from decaying clippings. Practically, it does not work out that way. Too many other factors come into play:—Insect, disease, animal and mechanical damage; droughts; fertilizer washed from high to low places and from fairway to the rough: losses from leaching in periods of excessive rainfall make it necessary to fertilize. After wet seasons fairways generally need fertilization. On watered fairways unless the water is put on in such a manner as to satisfy the capillary water holding capacity of the soil nearly but not over, much plant food passes off in the drainage water. In fertilizing, use what best suits your needs. Undoubtedly fall fertilization is better than spring. Weeds are going out at this time of year and the grass fills in and leaves little space in the spring for weeds. Fall fertilization is probably the best way to control crab grass.

Those of us who have fairway watering systems have often heard the statement, "You're a lucky guy." Are we? Are our fairway troubles over? After using one for eight years mine are not. Better fairways, definitely. One learns from experience. From an engineering standpoint it sounds easy and simple. All that it is necessary to do is buy a rain gauge and make up the deficiency by watering. Not that simple by any means, nor do I wish to belittle a fairway watering system. If handled correctly it can lead to wonderful improvement in fairways. Under certain conditions it is as much a part of the course as the fairway mower if satisfactory fairways are to be maintained. The soil of your course contains a certain amount of organic matter and is of varying depth. It will hold a certain amount of capillary water. Loss of water occurs at a varying rate depending on the thickness of the grass: area of leaf surface exposed; soil and air temperature; relative humidity; evaporation rate, which is determined by the temperature, relative humidity and wind velocity; and the fertility of the soil. The object of watering is to fill the capillary capacity of the soil very nearly but not quite to the bottom of the root zone. Water must not be applied too rapidly. The water absorptive capacity of the soil should be known and the water applied at a rate that the soil can absorb without run off. Frequently a thunder shower delivers one-half inch of water in fifteen minutes. If the absorptive capacity of the soil is one-half inch an hour you can only figure on one-eighth of an inch of water being absorbed by the soil. Individual fairways and parts of fairways differ in their water needs.

Spot watering is a tricky job. In watering knolls and side hills, other parts of the fairway are apt to get too much water. Hose and small sprinklers run out to dry spots in the day time obstruct golf and their use at night in the dark is difficult. A new part circle fairway sprinkler recently developed should prove useful. Every greenkeeper who has a fairway watering system should also have a soil sampling tool to determine at a glance the moisture in the soil to a depth of six inches. Overwatering shallows the root systems. In hot windy weather Poa annua fairways have to be watched carefully for the first sign of wilting or out they go. One of the chief difficulties in watering in times of drought is to know when to stop. Nature at any time is liable to produce too much water with what you have put on. If you rely on the weather bureau you're licked. Overwatering in hot weather produces a soft tender growth of grass. Needless to say you hear all about it from the golfers, for the ball, instead of sitting prettily on top of the grass, rests on the ground. The logical way to produce good fairways is not to water out all the dry spots but keep the rest of the turf in good condition, gradually improving the thin spots, working toward a uniform stand of grass on the whole fairway. Do not keep the fairway so wet as to kill the natural roll of the ball. At the same time the course will be soft enough to make walking a pleasure. Care should be exercised in not waiting too long before watering. If the top is allowed to become dust dry it is exceedingly hard to get penetration of water. Watering fairways ceases to be an engineering problem when the water is first turned on and requires a lot of plain greenkeeping sense, and so on through the night we water.

Keeping the fairway turf in spring growing condition throughout the golf season brings other problems, of which one of the most pressing is weeds. Without adequate fertilization they become a serious problem. With adequate fertilization the grass competes with the weeds. In watered fairways the most troublesome weeds are chickweed, plantain, dandelions, knotweed, narrow leaf plantain, fall dandelions. Sodium arsenate or arsenic acid at the rate of two ounces in sufficient water to cover 1000 square foot of surface gets the chickweed. A four ounce dose gets the rest of the weeds after three applications three weeks or a month apart. Spring and fall are the best time to treat fairways for weeds. The weather is cooler at that time of year and the damage to turf grasses is less severe. In my mind smaller doses are preferable to heavy because of turf injury. Bents and fescue are more easily damaged than blue grass. You will say that I have left out crab grass and Poa annua. I wish I could forget them.

Insects take their toll of fairway turf. Grubs of the manure, June beetles and the strawberry weevil are often abundant and sometimes disastrous. I wonder what effect grub proofing with arsenate of lead is going to have on fairways? It certainly removes the earth worms along with the grubs. Earth worms work over the soil, bringing fertilizer from the lower soil to the surface, loosening and aerating the soil. Sod web worms are plentiful in watered fairways. We have a flock of barn swallows and white bellied bank swallows that skim the fairways all day picking up sod web worm butterflies, circling d i z z i l y

around the fairway mowers. Did you ever see a flock of a thousand starlings or more vacuum clean a fairway? They get the cut worms and sod web worms. Encourage the birds, they are good insurance. Chinch bugs from their ravages on some of the lawns of Metropolitan Boston would certainly wreck a fairway. As yet I have not heard of an attack. Thrips and grasshoppers were in abundance this year.

We think of diseases more in connection with greens than fairways. This year leaf spot worked havoc with fairway grasses in some locations. Large brown patch wiped out considerable bent during the hot spell of late July and early August. Only a short time ago I saw a fairway completely peppered with small brown patch.

Skunks and crows digging for grubs and other animal injury, mechanical injury, oil and grease spots, divots, and improper drainage all add to the problem.

Sounds gloomy? Not by any means. I think that certainly golfers are enjoying better fairways than they were ten years ago.

We Hope to Help

"If I can give a man a thought," wrote Elbert Hubbard, "I've helped him. But if I can make him THINK, then I've indeed done him a service."

That's somewhat the way we feel about our **Monthly Paper,** which you are now reading.

"In time of war, the first casualty is truth."

To become a member of any organized body should be an honour. There must be someone to build the road so others may travel on it. When you associate with others in your profession you are bound to learn. Friendly arguments bring out both sides of a subject. We cannot hide our light under a bushel, but must share information with others. The Chinese proved this statement. History tells us they built a wall around the Empire so nobody would learn from them, but they found out that the people outside the wall advanced faster and knew more than they did.

—Frank Svehla.
(Reprinted from Golf in Australia)

OUTDOOR FALL MACHINERY DEMONSTRATION

by O. O. Clapper
Chairman Equipment Dealers

A meeting was held on August 23rd at the Northboro course to discuss the above matter.

Greenkeepers Arthur Anderson of Brae Burn C. C., Homer C. Darling of Juniper Hills C. C. and O. O. Clapper representing the equipment dealers were present.

It was agreed after considerable discussion and deliberations that the contemplated October outdoor tractor and mower demonstrations for the New England area be abandoned for the reasons that general unsettled war and defense preparations has placed many manufacturers behind in their new model changes, and the inability of the dealers to display 1941 models at this time would not make attendance on the part of the greenkeepers and their chairmen worth while.

As individuals we discussed the matter of shows in general as we have been informed unofficially that exhibits are being considered at Amherst next winter. You might give some thought to this idea.

I understand a similar outdoor demonstration will be held in the Ohio section this fall. We might profit from their experience if such an affair is to be considered for another year in this section.

Calling the Roll

A high school teacher in a distant town came to class a few minutes late. She placed her books on the desk, picked up her attendance record, and said:

"All pupils who are absent stand so I can get your names."

—Anon.

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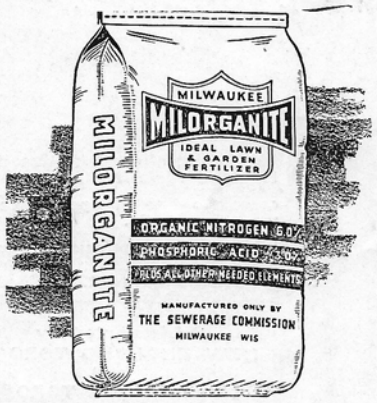

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