



UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION GREEN SECTION

Mid-Continent Turfletter

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MORE ON PUTTING GREEN CONSTRUCTION

Green construction specifications and recommendations made official by the Green Section (see the September issue of USGA Journal and Turf Management) have been the topic for much discussion both pro and con.

At present greens have been built exactly according to Green Section specifications at Orchard Lake Country Club, Oakland Hills Country Club and Franklin Hills Country Club in the Detroit area; Scioto Country Club, Columbus, Ohio; Illini Country Club, Springfield, Illinois; Hillcrest Country Club and Indianapolis Country Club, Indianapolis, Indiana; Minneapolis Golf Club, Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Seneca Golf Course, Louisville, Kentucky. There have been some others who have started to build greens in this manner but who, unfortunately, have deviated from the specifications in one way or another. Inasmuch as several interdependent factors are involved, a seemingly unimportant deviation can sometimes cause the green to behave in a less than satisfactory manner.

Proper watering practices must be determined by the superintendent. He must determine at what point the water which is contained in the soil mixture will "dump" into the gravel. When this has been determined the green should be watered until a point is reached which is just before this "dumping" phenomenon takes place. Clarence White and Howard Jones, the superintendents at Orchard Lake and Oakland Hills Country Clubs, respectively, in the Detroit area, report that when greens are watered in this way they require less water and less frequent waterings than do their other greens. Mr. Jones reports that it is a distinct pleasure and profound advantage to have at least one green which does not cause constant worry about whether he has over or under watered it. He says that anyone can be trusted to water #15. Too much water and it drains out through the sub-surface, too much rain during hot weather - "who cares?" Underwatering has never been a problem to him.

It has occurred to us that if this profound problem of watering greens can be overcome the biggest migraine in the profession of greens keeping will be circumvented. From all appearances to date this has been accomplished.

WATCH FOR FUSARIUM PATCH

Each fall and spring we have harped on the dangers of fusarium patch caused by the fungus Fusarium sp. Once again we take this opportunity to comment on this serious pathogen. Since Mid-September fusarium patch has been active. It is one of the most "mis-diagnosed" turf diseases; often mistaken for dollar spot, leaf spot, brown patch, or overlooked entirely. In the early stages turf takes on a salt and pepper appearance. Speckled light tan to reddish spots are present. These are about the size of a match head and are difficult to detect if the area is not closely inspected. Often, the first symptom is a noticeable reduction in clippings. As the disease progresses, larger spots are easily visible. These spots are usually (but not always) outlined with reddish or pinkish borders. If cadmium compounds are then applied and the disease is not checked proof is almost positive that the disease is not dollar spot but fusarium patch.

Fusarium sp. can be active throughout a broad range of temperatures and other environmental factors. However, it is most troublesome during cooler, wet, humid periods. Helminthosporium spp. are often active as pathogens at the same time.

Mercury containing fungicides (both organic and inorganic) give the most positive control of fusarium patch. Check diseased areas closely as it is often advisable to treat again in 3 to 5 days. Because this disease has been so serious in the past few years we recommend that a preventive fungicide schedule be followed during periods when Fusarium sp. is likely to be troublesome.

NEW PLANT PEST FOUND IN ARIZONA

A plant feeding mite (Aceria sp.) was found attacking bermudagrass in August 1959 in the Phoenix area. During that fall and last spring the mite caused considerable damage to bermuda lawns in that area. Symptoms first occur in the spring when lawns fail to respond to normal care and do not begin to grow. The damaged grass that does appear usually is tufted and has a rosetted appearance which is typical of the damage. The mites hide themselves under the leaf sheaths. Several hundred may be under the same sheath. Even though common bermudagrass seemed most susceptible, some fine leaved strains have also been damaged. Very effective control has been obtained with 1 pound of sulfur dust (93% 325 mesh) per 1000 square feet.

ARIZONA TURFGRASS CONFERENCE

The Arizona Turfgrass Conference was held November 16-17 in Tucson. The meetings were in the Student Center at the University of Arizona. About 60 attended the conference and each contributed greatly to the success of the conference by his active participation. Panel discussions were very successful and led to several real good discussions. Turf equipment demonstrations were held at Randolph Park. Dr. Baltensperger and Dr. Turner led the group through the turfgrass experimental plots and explained some of the work now underway.

BARRIERS FOIL RODENTS AT WAKONDA

Muskrats and other burrowing rodents at Wakonda Country Club in Des Moines, Iowa were giving superintendent Norm Westfall various degrees of apoplexy. No matter how securely he established the banks of the dam which contained Wakonda's lake water the burrowing rodents would travel around and through the embankment thus giving rise to eventual erosion and permeation of the dam. Mr. Westfall, after due pondering, arrived at a solution for this problem. He filled cloth bags with clean sand which he placed in the banks of the dam. The rodents burrowing into the bank hit the sand; the sand would fall behind them; they backed out immediately and eventually gave up their excavation in this area.

Carl Anderson, the enterprising superintendent at Woodhill Country Club in Wayzata, Minnesota, has found a good use for the manure gathered from stables owned by the club. Many of the water lines, fairways valves, and drain spigots at Woodhill are located in "peaty" areas. Thus breakage, especially at valve and drain locations has been a serious problem because of heaving. The first season the system was completed (1955), Carl reports there were 12 breaks. In 1956 there were 18.

Carl's first counterattack against this problem was to relocate the pipeline drains, placing them below the frost line. Breakage here was thus eliminated. The snap-on valves obviously could not be placed below the frost line but something must be done about this serious situation.

Another problem which faced Carl was the disposal of manure which resulted from the 15 or 20 club owned horses under his care. Carl reasoned that perhaps the manure would reduce heaving if properly used. Therefore, he placed approximately 1/4 cu. yd. of seasoned manure over and around each fairway valve, just prior to freezing weather. Since he has done this not one valve has been severed from the pipe line. He says that areas adjacent to the manure covered soil will heave as much as 18 inches but the covered area does not heave to any noticeable extent. The manure is removed and scattered in rough areas in spring before all frost has left the ground. We would say that this is solving two problems.

CCMING EVENTS

- January 27..... USGA Green Section Educational Program
Biltmore Hotel, New York, N. Y.
- January 29-February 3....32nd International Turfgrass Conference and Show
Royal York Hotel, Toronto, Canada
- February 27-28.....Southern Turfgrass Conference
Peabody Hotel, Memphis, Tenn.

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