

UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION GREEN SECTION

NORTHEASTERN OFFICE

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NORTHEASTERN TURFLETTER

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I D E A S A N D G A D G E T S

One of the important features of the Regional Service Program is to pass on ideas from one superintendent to another. Having close contact with many superintendents during the season, it is inevitable that we pick up many practical ideas, and see gadgets that someone has improvised. Several improvements in machinery available today, came about because some superintendent had to adapt or make a machine to suit his specific problem.

New machines undergo rigid testing before being placed on the market, but the superintendents put it through the real test, and they are quick to find the "bugs", if any, before too long.

This issue of your Turfletter is devoted to gadgets and ideas that we feel will be helpful and of interest to you.

Gadget #1 Prevents Bruising Aprons

The bruising of apron turf while mowing greens is a troublesome problem for many. The sharp turn of the putting green mower as the operator spins the mower on the apron takes its yearly toll of turf, weakening and bruising it to the point where it thins or dies out over the summer, or gives way to Poa annua. Mr. Tate Taylor, of Tamarack Country Club, Greenwich, Connecticut, thought up an excellent way of preventing this damage. Mr. Taylor simply made the back of the mower look like the front. He fastened castor wheel brackets to the rear, and put on a set of rollers in back of the putting green mower. As the operator reaches the end of the green, he simply lays the mower back and turns the machine on the rear rollers. Thus he gets away from the quick turn, and the traction-roller drum does not bruise as it is off the ground. Tate says his men do not want to mow greens without these rear rollers anymore because they now are in complete charge of the machine as it operates. There is no pulling or jerking at the turns, and what is even more important, the apron turf suffers no bruising.

Gadget #2 for Side-Hill Sod Cutting

When Mr. Charles Baskin, Superintendent of the Country Club of Waterbury, Waterbury, Connecticut, looked for a nursery site, he could find only a sloping bit of ground of suitable size. It was no problem for Mr. Baskin to grow the putting green turf; the problem arose when he tried to get sod cut to an even depth from this sloped area. The operator tried to guide the power sod cutting machine, but the pressure exerted could not possibly be kept constant, so an unevenly cut sod was the result. After giving it some thought, he came up with the idea of affixing a rubber tired wheel to the side. This wheel was bolted on to the housing frame with an angle iron so that the machine now rides level, and sod cut to a uniform depth can now be stripped from this side-hill nursery.

Gadget #3 Caddie Cart Converted to a Cyclone Fertilizer Spreader

Mr. Emilio Strazza, Superintendent of Round Hill Country Club, Greenwich, Connecticut, made up a fertilizer distributor from a cyclone seeder and a caddie cart. The cloth portion of the cyclone seeder was removed and a 5 gallon can was fastened over the base of the seeder. A hole was first cut in the 5 gallon can to coincide with the feeder and spreader hole in the base of the cyclone seeder. The crank handle was removed from the seeder and a longer rod was put in its place with a large pulley wheel fastened to the rod. Another pulley wheel was put on the caddie cart inside the right wheel. Both of these pulley wheels are connected by a V belt so that as the cart is pushed forward, the pulleys rotate the horizontal spreader fan, just as the crank did before it was removed. Mr. Strazza has the spreader calibrated to apply 5 lbs. of granular or pelletized fertilizers to each 1000 square feet. This spreader is very easy to handle.

Gadget #4 for a Non-Scalped and Cleaner Cut

Another idea of Mr. Tate Taylor's is that he feels that the three rollers placed in the front of a putting green mower lay the turf down before cutting it. He therefore replaces the two outside rollers with castor sheels which he extends beyond the cutting width, and replaces the center roller with a half-size roller. This allows him a clean cut full swath, except for the space covered by the small center roller, but this center roller is necessary to prevent scalping. In any event, he feels that he has minimized the amount of turf rolled before it is mowed, and thus he feels a cleaner cut is a reality.

Idea for Superintendents' Monthly Meetings

The Western New York Golf Course Superintendents Association raised funds through a raffle to purchase a 16mm sound projector. This projector is now used to show film occasionally as the educational portion of their monthly meetings. The United States Golf Association films, "Golf Etiquette" and "Inside Golf House", have already been shown at two of their meetings. Besides these, there are many other good films now available, many at no cost -- others at nominal cost. This office has a mimeographed list of available film on turf. The National Golf Foundation, 1407 So. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill., also has a listing of some fine films on golf, for which write directly to the Nat. Golf. F.

Idea for Detecting Chinch Bugs

Chinch bugs are minute insects, hard to see even with 20-20 vision. At the Cornell Turf Conference, Dr. John Naegela, of Cornell's Department of Entomology, suggested this idea to detect chinch bugs. Pour some warm water over the suspected area, then cover it with a damp cloth, such as a section of a bed sheet. If chinch bugs are present, they will cling to the underside of the sheet.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Jim Latham joins Northeastern Green Section Staff!

In keeping with the United States Golf Association's policy to provide the very best of personal service to clubs subscribing to Regional Turf Service, an additional agronomist has been added to the expanding Northeastern Office.

Jim is a Texas A & M graduate; he received a major portion of his training at the Georgia Agricultural Experiment Station, where he was engaged as a Turf Specialist. Prior to joining the Northeastern Staff, Jim assisted B. P. Robinson, the Green Section's Southeastern Director.

Jim brings word that the insect problems in the Southeast were bad this Spring, sod webworms being particularly troublesome. He suggests that we of the Northeast keep alert to insect activity.

Jim is looking forward to working with our Northeastern clubs.

Don't Forget the Field Days

August 7, 1956

Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey

August 15, 16, 1956

University of Rhode Island, Kingston, Rhode Island

Northeastern Turfletter

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