



NEWS LETTER

Forgetting all that has hindered or has troubled during the twelve months that have almost passed, let us look forward with confidence to the twelve months that are to come. May they contain just enough of struggle to make us prove our strength, just enough of disappointment to fix our resolutions more firmly, and just enough of trouble to show us how staunch friendship can be. What three other things can give such zest to life?

—Anon.

DECEMBER

1938

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

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December, 1938

Vol. 10, No. 12

The ideas and opinions expressed in the subject matter of this NEWSLETTER are not necessarily those of the Editor or the members of the club as a whole.

This is the time of year when most greenkeepers in this part of the country can pause a bit and do a little self-investigation. In spite of the added work of Winter sports of all kinds, the problems of snow removal, temporary greens, Winter work on equipment, and all the rest, there is still plenty of time to think back, to think out the possible failures, to reason why, to use the present to make the future better.

There are presented at this time of year many opportunities for self betterment, at small cost to the individual. Association meetings with their opportunities to hear speakers of note, to talk "shop" with your fellows. Conferences of various kinds, with their unique chances to help. Short courses at various state colleges. Our own Greenkeepers school the latter part of the Winter. Time is all it costs to read and re-read old bulletins and magazines. Read over methods and ideas as presented five or ten years ago, and decide whether they are right or wrong in the light of present day knowledge. We venture to say that any greenkeeper who reads over back issues of the NEWSLETTER will find something that seems new, something that will help this coming season.

It has been our custom for many years to take down a few notes of lectures heard at meetings or conferences.

Often these notes are merely thrown in to the files with other reference matter at the time, but these notes are still of interest, and a subject for possible study when time permits. Think over the following from our files, as gathered from talks during the past few years.

"Success of greenkeeper depends on other factors than growing grass."

"Have entire grasp of club's problems."

"Let's keep it a game."

"Let's take ourselves less seriously."

"Let the grass grow, instead of make it grow."

"Consider all available knowledge before deciding the answer to a problem."

"Improve drainage."

These few suggestions may show how old notes are still valuable. There seems little doubt that all of us can use the time at our disposal for self-investigation, for study and for betterment.

A few years ago we had a calendar on our desk; on this calendar was the following quotation from the sayings of Bulwer Lytton, "Take in the ideas of the day, drain off those of yesterday." Since that time we have thought of this quotation many times. How applicable it is to many lines of thought and endeavor, but how much so to greenkeeping! Greenkeeping has become more involved yearly, and it seems imperative for the successful greenkeeper to "drain off" the old ideas of yesterday which have proven false, only retaining the knowledge of them, and any parts that apply to the present or future. He should be ready and eager to "take in" and use the ideas of the day, and should be prepared for what will come in the future.

We venture to say that all green chairmen could also take stock of themselves this slack season. Have all your dealings with your greenkeeper during the past year shown that spirit of co-operation which is so essential for the well being of your club? Have you given orders only to show that you are the "boss", or do you let your greenkeeper run along with mild supervision? Have

you attended any greenkeeper conferences or meetings during the past year, so that you know just what greenkeepers are doing to help themselves and therefore their clubs? Do you read the NEWSLETTER, and have you written us with any suggestions or ideas? We are always glad to hear from you. Perfect team work between chairman and greenkeeper are necessary. We know of clubs which have this team work; we know of others which lack it.

THE GREENKEEPING SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

We have received various inquiries relative to the National Association of Greenkeepers, so we believe that the following items relative to this organization will be of interest to those of our readers who do not belong to the National association nor receive its magazine. Most of the following items are taken from The Greenkeepers Reporter, which has published six fine issues during this year under the able leadership of its Editor, A. L. Brandon.

For this past year the National Association has been known as the Greenkeeping Superintendents Association.

The annual convention will be held this Winter on Feb. 7, 8, 9, 10 at Kansas City, Mo. The Equipment Show will be held in the Municipal Auditorium, and official headquarters will be at the President Hotel. The official title of this meeting will be "The National Turf Conference and Equipment Show". The Educational Conference will take place on the 8th, 9th and 10th, with M. E. Farnham as Chairman.

The last issue of the Reporter contained an interesting report of the hurricane by our more or less regular New Jersey correspondent, Kent Bradley. Kent seems to be devoting much of his well known energy toward national ideas, and we feel sure that readers of the Reporter read his "kibitzing" articles with interest!

Thru inadvertence the results of the tournament held on October 31st at the Belmont Spring C. C. were not given in the last issue. This tournament was a Scotch foursome event with greenkeepers and green chairmen as partners, ½

combined handicaps being allowed. Winners were:

H. Mosher and H. Hayes—
96-24-72.

P. Cassidy and A. Littlehale—
87-14-73.

In a handicap tournament held for those without partners, Joe Johnston was awarded the prize with 103-26-77.

Demonstrations by the Rototiller were held in the morning.

Fire on December 3rd caused an estimated \$40,000 damage to the club house of the Weston Golf Club, Weston, Mass., the scene of several enjoyable meetings of the club. Several thousand dollars worth of trophies and furnishings were saved by neighbors and employees.

The marriage has recently been announced of Richard Finerty of Newton and Ida Gagnon of Fall River. Mr. Finerty is well known to the greenkeeping trade as the N. E. Toro representative in Rhode Island and Southeastern Mass., and Miss Gagnon is one of our long time Fall River friends, so we feel well qualified in wishing the happy couple a long and merry life together!

Tom Mattus feels that this year's deer season was a success, as he secured a fine plump 150 pound doe in the Berkshires on December 6th!

Director Koon of the Waltham Field Station has called our attention to a fine book of grasses, called "Manual of the Grasses of the United States" by A. S. Hitchcock, misc. publication No. 200, for sale by the Supt. of Documents, Washington, D. C. for \$1.75. Also to a "Handbook of Experiments in Agronomy" which is Special Circular No. 53, from the Ohio Agr. Exp. Station at Wooster, Ohio.

Director Koon also has secured a copy of a book from England, called "The Establishment and Care of Fine Turf for Lawns and Sports Grounds", by David Clouston. This book may be borrowed from the Station by our members.

DECEMBER MEETING

The December meeting was held at the Waltham Field Station on the 12th. The speaker was Dr. Jacob S. Joffe of Rutgers University. Dr. Joffe gave a very interesting and instructive talk on Soils. He said in part:

There are many many soils. Soil is a well organized body, consisting of well developed parts, each with its own work to perform. To anatomize the soil body, the soil must be studied in its undisturbed condition. In a study of a soil profile in virgin woods, there would be a surface layer of leaves from this year's fall of leaves, dead vegetation whose origin can be told. Below this there would be another layer of dead leaves, semi-decomposed, whose source can still be recognized; still lower more organic matter, origin obscure, called humus. Below these layers there is a mineral layer, the surface of which is impregnated with roots, dark on top, lighter lower, open structure. (In this soil profile study, we are talking of loam, the ideal condition.) Below this mineral layer there is another layer, more compact, heavier in texture. The line between this layer and the one above is not level, it is a curved line.

It is within this soil body that all reactions, good or bad, take place.

The top layer, or "A horizon" may contain as high as 2% iron and 7% aluminum, the second layer or "B horizon" as high as 6.9% iron and 12% aluminum, and the third layer or "C horizon" as high as 3.4% iron and 9% aluminum. These layers or better, horizons, are not parallel, and each may be divided into minor horizons, such as A-1, A-2, etc.

All the minerals in the lower horizons have been weathered in their earlier history.

Decomposition is the breaking down of the plant so that the various elements come back to their mineral state. In this decomposition, organic acids are produced. Also when this decomposition is taking place near the top of the A horizon, nitrogen and also sulphur are produced, worked over by organisms, and produce nitric and sulphuric acids. These acids are carried downward in soils by rains so that they contact the mineral layer.

The mineral part of the soil may be 97-98% mineral matter. In a sandy soil this may contain 90% silicon dioxide, and the remainder will be combinations of silicon and oxygen with iron, aluminum, calcium, magnesium, potassium, etc.

The acids in A horizon have a positive H ion. As they go downward in the soil and contact this mineral layer, they break into combinations of silicon and oxygen with these other elements, leave the H active; this causes more acidity.

In this process the calcium is taken up more easily than the iron and aluminum, so that an acid soil has a much larger percentage of these latter elements. Roots shun soils with these elements in quantity, so we must try to produce a condition where the aluminum and iron are as low in the soil body as possible, so that feeding ground is greater; roots will be close to the surface on acid soils for this reason. Organic matter becoming acid invites unfriendly molds and fungi which produce toxic substances.

In applying lime to correct soil acidity, it might be wise to apply acid phosphate prior to the lime application. Apply in Fall; we do plant wrong by applying in Spring as it will not work downward in soil during Summer.

Soil is a natural body differentiated into horizons, each one of which has its own natural functions.

At the business meeting, the Nominating Committee reported a slate of officers for the coming year; several changes of constitution were voted, and other matters of importance transacted.

SNOW MOLD

Snow Mold is a fungus disease that lies dormant on the soil. When conditions are favorable, this fungus, like Brown Patch, becomes active, but unlike Brown Patch it becomes active at zero temperatures and when the soil is wet. Melting snow is the ideal condition for the growth of this fungus, hence its name.

Christmas Greetings
and the Best of Luck to All of You
during 1939

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Snow Mold develops a mass of pinkish gray mycelia which completely kills all the grass that it reaches. So completely does Snow Mold kill the grass that it is usually necessary to reseed, or to entirely replace the affected turf. The damage by this fungus varies from year to year, and from locality to locality, but it is a constant threat in all districts where snow fall is regularly experienced.

Method of Control

Several years of experimentation in the Chicago and Detroit areas, conducted under the supervision of the United States Golf Association Green Section, has proven that this fungus can be controlled by the immediate application of an inorganic mercurial at the rate of three ounces per thousand square feet of turf.

Greens should be carefully examined after each thaw, and if any signs of Snow Mold are evident, an immediate application of an inorganic mercurial mixed with sand should be made. Three ounces of an inorganic mercurial mixed with a half bucket of sand is sufficient to cover a space 30x30 feet.

Preventive Measures

The experiments conducted in Detroit and Chicago clearly indicated that Snow Mold could be prevented by an application of an inorganic mercurial in the late fall, after the ground had frozen, but before the first heavy snow fall. Three ounces of an inorganic mercurial per thousand square feet of turf is sufficient to protect a green for an entire winter, and many greenkeepers think this a worthwhile insurance.

The experiments on Snow Mold control definitely settled the point that mulching the greens with leaves or straw is not advisable. In fact, it was found that the cleaner the greens were kept, the more likely was Snow Mold to be avoided. In some localities it is necessary to cover the greens with loose branches to prevent the snow from packing too heavily on the greens, and wherever this is necessary the preventive application should surely be applied.

(advertising leaflet)

"Happiness is the echo of the pleasant words we speak to others."

SEASONAL REMINDERS

(from Dec. 1936 — "Turf Culture" of the U.S.G.A. Green Section)

Too many golf club officials assume that as soon as the golfing season is over work on the golf course should cease. This short-sighted policy accounts for many cases of hurried and makeshift work during the rush season. It usually means waste and inefficiency as well as being unnecessarily unfair to the greenkeeper and his best workmen.

In the normal operations of most golf courses it should be possible to keep the greenkeeper well occupied during the winter months even on courses where there is no play for several weeks. On most of the better courses the greenkeeper during the winter months can also use to good advantage the services of at least one helper. Many serious interruptions and inconveniences next summer may be avoided by a little judicious use of labor during the winter months.

Overhauling Equipment

Winter offers an excellent opportunity to thoroughly overhaul machinery and equipment. Any good piece of machinery will last longer and give more effective service if it is occasionally overhauled, greased and painted. Old and worn equipment can often give additional good service with proper overhauling and replacement of worn or broken parts.

Work Shops

Any consideration of the repair of equipment and some of the other jobs naturally raises the question of proper housing for these operations. Altogether too many first-class golf courses are still maintained without an adequate workshop and sheds for housing equipment and materials used on the course. This particular season is a good time to make an appraisal of adequate building facilities in order that new construction or repair work may be started at once to provide these facilities in time to be used to advantage during the remainder of the winter.

Burning and Clearing Rough

Burning over the rough and clearing out some objectionable thickets are good jobs for late fall and winter whenever the weather will permit. If this type of work can be done early, it will keep

it off the long list of jobs that must be done during the rush period in spring and it will serve also to provide better playing conditions during the winter.

Raking Leaves

This is probably the major job in fall and early winter on courses with plenty of trees. The removal of leaves and other litter from golf turf is usually a costly procedure. A few machines have been developed in recent years designed to speed up this type of work and reduce the labor cost, but on most courses the leaves are still removed by the use of the hand rake. Until machines which can do this work efficiently are in general use, the rake is all important. It may be worth while to consider the type of rake that is adapted to the purpose. A wide rake has much to recommend it for clearing leaves from greens, tees and fairways—at least double the width of those commonly in use. An example of such a rake is described and illustrated in The Bulletin of the United States Golf Association Green Section, Vol. 11, p. 224. Men who have used these rakes have found them no more difficult to handle than the ordinary size and with them one can cover a much larger area of turf in a given time.

Using Leaves for Compost

The leaves removed from various parts of the golf course may be used to good advantage for supplying organic matter in compost. Leaf mold is well recognized by plant growers as a desirable form of humus material. The cost of hauling the leaves is practically the only expense involved as the leaves are usually raked and piled, whether or not they are utilized for the compost pile. The unsightly areas in the rough or out of bounds made by burning the leaves in piles would be avoided, likewise the disadvantage of the weedy growth which often develops in these burned areas. The addition of chemical or organic fertilizer materials as the leaf humus pile is made has been found to hasten the decomposition materially.

One of the formulae for hastening decomposition in straw or leaf stacks consists of approximately 70 pounds of sulphate of ammonia, 25 pounds of superphosphate, and 55 pounds of finely ground limestone to each ton of material. The leaves should be spread in layers of about 6 inches. Each layer should be treated with the preceding fertilizers and watered individually as the pile progresses.

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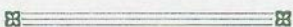
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This work will require some labor but it will be found to be well worth while when the pile is ready for use on putting greens. Leaves may also be spread on a soil bed and worked into the soil by thorough discing. Fertilizers spread on the leaves will hasten their decomposition on the soil bed as in the case of the pile.

Screening Compost

The best time to screen compost is when it is relatively dry and friable. This condition is usually reached in the late summer, when it cannot be screened due to the rush of other work. Too many times the greenkeeping force is diverted from important work during the growing season to screen some compost. This is particularly annoying to the greenkeeper in early spring when compost may be wet and soggy and when he is pushed with other jobs. Some provision for shelter for an adequate supply of dry and screened compost ought to be made. It is a wise policy to screen enough soil for next year's use during the fall and winter.

Fill Surplus Traps

For many years the Green Section has advocated the leveling and sodding of the large number of useless and expensive traps and hazards that clutter up the fairways of many courses. Winter offers many opportunities to do much of the hauling of materials needed for such changes.

Remove Rocks and Stumps

A few winter days spent in removing outcropping rocks from fairways may save money or mower repairs next summer, in addition to making playing conditions more pleasant. Large rocks and stumps in the rough may also be removed to advantage. Dynamite will greatly facilitate the work and can be used to advantage when there is little or no play to interfere with blasting operations.

Clean Drainage Ways

Another important item of work that can as well be attended to during the late fall and winter season is the matter of drainage ditches and tile lines. Choked ditches and stopped lines of tile are unable to aid in the early opening of the golf course in the spring and may result in more than an ordinary amount of winter injury. The outlets of all the lines should be inspected and all catch basins cleaned to allow capacity flow.

Install Tile Drains

A great many places on the golf

course remain wet long enough to interfere with spring play. Many of these locations would require a relatively small amount of tile and labor. Diseases frequently appear in such poorly drained parts and the turf often suffers from the water-logged conditions. Seepage areas, for example, may interfere with an entire fairway and are usually of the sort that can be rather cheaply remedied by tiling on the uphill side. Pockets can sometimes be improved by installing French drains (pits filled with sand or gravel). This work may well occupy a number of men for several weeks during the months of little play.

Cutting and Trimming Trees

The best time to cut down trees or trim off branches is during periods of good weather during the winter months. In doing work of this kind it is well to keep in mind the opening of passage ways which will admit freer circulation of air on some of the greens and tees that are in bad air pockets. The pruning of shrubbery during the winter months will often add materially to the general appearance of the clubhouse grounds. It should be remembered, however, that many of the flowering shrubs, particularly those that bloom early in the season, should not be trimmed during the winter. In such cases the pruning is best delayed until after the shrubs have bloomed next spring.

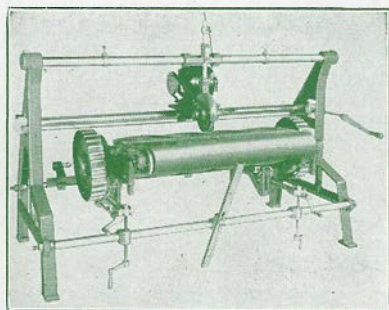
Moving Trees

Fall and winter are good times to transplant trees. This work can be handled by any greenkeeping crew if it is done at the right time. Some detailed information on the subject appears in the Bulletin of the United States Golf Association Green Section, Vol. 10, p. 136. The tree is prepared for transplanting if time permits by pruning the roots during one or two seasons, gradually cutting around the ball and watering and fertilizing to induce growth of new roots close to the trunk. Medium to large-sized trees are conveniently moved with the ball of earth frozen. Approximately 12 inches of root ball should be secured for each inch of the trunk diameter. If trenching is begun now the frost will penetrate deeply, and if desirable to wait until the soil freezes the place for the trench may be covered with straw or manure to save labor in digging. In the same way the hole for the tree on the new site can be dug now or covered to prevent deep freezing of the soil.

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and to wish for YOU
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New Year of Happiness, Health
and Prosperity.

Guy C. West.

George J. Rommell, Jr.

The hole should be dug larger than the ball in order to allow room to fill in with good soil. Piles of such soil may also be mulched against freezing.

Fertilizing in the South

In the southern States where the summer grasses are turned brown during the cold periods, it has been found that applications of fertilizer will encourage sufficient growth of grass during the intervening warmer periods to improve the playing conditions greatly. Sulphate of ammonia is the most effective fertilizer for this purpose. It should be applied during the cold period so that it may be available for the use of the grass as soon as the cold wave has passed. This method during mid-winter is effective only in the most southern portion of the Bermuda grass range.

Making and Repairing Bridges and Shelters

During slack time at this season there may be an opportunity to utilize labor to good advantage in the repair of the old bridges and shelters and possibly to install new structures wherever needed. Plans for shelters have appeared in the Bulletin of the United States Golf Association Green Section and reference may be made to the volumes and pages as follows: Vol. 3, p. 136; Vol. 13, p. 52.

Inside Painting Jobs

When weather is unseasonable for outside work there may be some inside painting of the implements, out-of-bounds and other markers, barn, and the clubhouse itself. Probably nothing has the effect of promoting a well-kept appearance as much as a new coat of paint. Winter is one of the best times for such work.

Reading

The winter months offer many opportunities for the greenkeeper to do some reading which will provide him with information which may prove of considerable value to him next season. This is a good time of the year to get together a small greenkeeper's library as part of the regular course equipment.

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NEWSLETTER officers, see page two.



We are very glad of the opportunity the
Holiday Season brings to send you our
very best wishes for another year of health
and happiness, to say "Thank You" for
your patronage and good-will and to hope
sincerely that both may continue for many
years to come.



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