NEWS LETTER

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"Give me the man who instead of always telling you what should be done, goes ahead and does it."

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NOVEMBER
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WINTER DRESSING GREENS AT RIVERSIDE

By Harold A. Mosher
Greenkeeper, Riverside Golf Course

At the Riverside Golf Course in Weston we have winter dressed our greens, tees and most fairways for the past ten years with very satisfactory results. By a winter dressing I mean applying a heavy coating of manure, loam and sand late in the fall as soon after play stops as possible. We make up our dressing as follows: 1 forkful manure, 2 shovels loam and 1 shovel sand fed into a Royer or similar shredding machine. When it comes from the machine it is thoroughly mixed and spreads very easily with flat shovels. Most of our manure we purchase from the Walker Gordon Farm in Dover. In this respect we are very fortunate as at this dairy only Servel is used for bedding. Servel is ground up sugar cane and decomposes very rapidly leaving the manure in fine condition for our use. It completely eliminates the straw or hay condition usually encountered when buying cow manure.

On several occasions I have used straight manure on our tees and fairways. This was applied late in the fall and then broken up and raked off early in the spring. On our fairways last fall we spread many cords of clear manure. This spring we broke up with wooden rakes any lumps which remained and then ran over the fairways with some old fairways units. This formed like a mulch and gave us very good results through the summer.

I have never used straight manure on our greens as I feel we get better results from mixing it with loam and sand. After this dressing has gone through the winter there is very little left showing in the spring. What little is left we break up and rake the debris off with bamboo rakes as early in the spring as we can without injury to the greens.

It must be admitted that this winter dressing is a lot of work as well as expense. However, here at Riverside we feel it is well worth while when you consider the traffic our course has and the abuse it takes. Many people have asked me if the manure does not cause many weeds in our greens. I can truthfully say it does not and anyone who has played our course will admit that our greens are free from weeds.

Another advantage of this winter dressing which I forgot to mention is that it helps in a large way to keep children and over enthusiastic golfers from using the greens and tees when they are not fit to walk on.

In closing I would like to say that I hope this little bull—or rather cow—may help someone who has hesitated to apply any winter dressing to his greens, tees, fairways or lawn.

SNOWMOLD INJURY TO TURF

One of the several causes of turf injury in northern sections of the United States during the winter and early spring months is the fungus disease known as snowmold. The name of this disease is something of a misnomer because snow is not necessary for its appearance, but it is important only in so far as it provides a favorable temperature and moisture for the growth of the fungi that may cause this type of disease. In some areas, however, such as the Pacific Northwest, the fungi grow actively in the winter in the complete absence of snow so long as there is an abundance of rain or mist.

In the early stages of the disease the fungus may appear as a thick, cottony growth covering certain more or less

definite but irregular patches of turf ranging in diameter from one inch to several feet. Later, as the grass dries, these same patches appear grayish and dead, the spots in the final stages resembling those on turf infected with brownpatch. The disease may occur during fall, winter, or spring months but is usually first noticed when the snow is melting.

This is the time of year, however, to consider possible ways and means of preventing snowmold injury to your turf this winter or next spring. If you are growing grass in northern areas where snowmold is prevalent, it is advisable to use strains of grasses which are resistant to the ravages of the fungus. Some of the grasses which are particularly susceptible, and are therefore to be avoided in such areas, are red fescue, **Poa annua,** and several strains of creeping bent such as seaside, Columbia and Inverness.

Fertilization with excessive quantities of nitrogen late in the fall has been shown to increase the susceptibility of any of the grasses to snowmold. Therefore, in regions where snowmold is likely to prevail, fertilizing should be avoided in the fall. In such regions, inorganic fertilizers are better than organic materials for late summer fertilizing because with the latter the nutrients are slowly available and feed the grass much later in the season than do the inorganic materials applied at the same time.

Covering the turf with such materials as manure, and straw in order to protect it from the cold should be avoided. The use of any such coverings which keep the grass wet after the snow begins to melt and the grass begins to grow will encourage the growth of the snowmold fungus. Snow falling on unfrozen ground will encourage the fungus both in late fall and early spring.

However, even when these precautions are taken, it is a good form of insurance to apply mercury fungicides now as a preventive treatment. Corrosive sublimate and calomel have been shown to control the disease effectively. These should be applied in late fall at the rate of 2 to 3 ounces to 1000 square feet. Either corrosive sublimate alone or a mixture of it with calomel will be satisfactory. They may be mixed with sand and applied even after the first snow has fallen. Under certain conditions which are particularly favorable for the development of the fungus or where grasses are used which are particularly susceptible to the disease, a higher rate of 4 to 5 ounces to 1000 square feet may be necessary. In the Northwest where the winters are open, more nearly perfect control is obtained by applying repeated treatments at lower rates in fall, winter, and spring. At present, no fungicide can be recommended as a substitute for the mercury compounds although the latter are now unusually expensive.

Fall Leaves For Compost

This time of year one of the major jobs in turf maintenance is to keep ahead of the falling leaves. Once they are raked into piles it is much better to use them in making compost than to burn them. Not only is the latter method wasteful, but it involves a risk of leaving unsightly scars, even though they may be on outlying areas.

Decomposition of the leaves in the compost pile can be hastened by the addition of fertilizer materials. One of the combination of materials frequently recommended for this purpose is the following—70 pounds of sulfate of ammonia, 25 pounds of superphosphate, and 55 pounds of finely ground limestone, to each ton of leaves. The leaves should be spread in a layer 6 inches deep, treated with this combination of fertilizers and watered before the next 6-inch layer of leaves is added. Such material, when well decomposed, makes excellent topdressing for turf.

Screening Compost

Since compost must be screened before it can be applied as a topdressing to turf, this should be taken care of when the compost is relatively dry and easily pulverized. Usually the compost is in this condition in late summer, but the pressure of other work which is more immediately necessary frequently makes it impossible to screen a good supply of it at that time. Hence, too often the screening is postponed until spring when it is needed again. Unfortunately at that time of year the the compost is likely to be wet and soggy so that screening is impossible. It is wise, therefore, as soon as time permits in the fall, to screen enough compost and soil for next year's demands for topdressing. Where practicable, a covering for such screened material is desirable during the winter months.

—Timely Turf Topics—
Green Section

WAR-TIME TURF MAINTENANCE

Through the courtesy of Director Ray Koon of the Waltham Field Station, we have at hand the latest issue of The British Golf Unions "Journal." Several of the articles in this issue deal with the maintenance of golf turf in Great Britain under war conditions and are of interest to all turf growers. The followng excerpts from various articles discuss such conditions:

Why the Research Station Must Continue

"Assuming a decision to close down the Research Station for the duration had been taken we must examine what would be the position. Firstly, in all research and advisory work nothing like all the results of investigation and wide experience can be committed to paper and if the Station were closed the Board would lose a great deal of experience and knowledge gained by its trained staff. **It is doubtful if the same men would be available after the war** and even if they were their knowledge would have largely become rusty. New advisory men require at least two seasons training—who would train them?

"The second important reason for maintaining the Research Station in wartime is that if the experimental plots were abandoned for the duration they could not simply be re-started. Once regular treatment (i. e., with mowers, fertilisers, etc.), is given up an experiment ceases to be an experiment and becomes valueless. The same land could not simply be ploughed up and the hundreds of plots re-started; new land would be necessary because of residual effects of previous experiments. Then there is to be considered the tremendous cost of bringing a new Research Station up to the present level of efficiency after the war and what is worse still there would be the colossal waste of the money that has been invested on the clubs' behalf in the experiments (now nearly 11 years old) and which we must remember could not be started again on a given date in the future. The fact must also be borne in mind that the Board has commitments which cannot legally be disposed of all at once."

How the Research Station Can Help Clubs.

"There is a belief at some clubs that the Research Station need not be consulted unless some urgent difficulty arises or some plan of improvement is contemplated. In actual fact, however. the Station deals very largely with routine matters of upkeep and whilst few clubs will wish during the war emergency to draw up plans for course development, all will desire to maintain their courses in as good condition as they possibly can; it is here that the Station can be of paramount assistance.

"One of the most important ways in which the Station can help clubs is to ensure that they do not waste materials or waste money in fact to make sure the most is made of the funds available. It is important at this time of the year to decide upon a programme of upkeep, consistent with local requirements and calculated to prevent deterioration. War-time neglect may soon lead to rapid retrogression and the Station can be of great assistance in detecting the early signs of deterioration and advising how to prevent them with the minimum of expenditure.

"The control of harmful pests and diseases, food production and sheep grazing on courses all come within the province of the Station. Recommendations can be made as to the best sources of materials such as fertilisers, seeds, wormkillers, and on how to utilise such waste products as may be available as substitutes or supplements for expensive and perhaps scarcer fertilisers.

"There is a grave danger during the war that Committees in their desire to economise may negative the progress made in past years. For instance, the alteration of a fertiliser formula might have serious results. This is a matter for those with exxperience and knowledge of this work. Should a certain ingredient of a fertiliser mixture become unobtainable it is best to write to the Station, explain the circumstances, and request advice. In short the Station can be of material help to all clubs during war-time in ensuring economical greenkeeping and the best use of the labour and plant available."

—From "The Research Station in War-Time" By Director R. B. Dawson.

War-Time Turf Policy.

"Experiments at St. Ives have shown the importance of regular cutting in developing the desired type of fine textured turf and suppressing most weeds. Mowing must be the last operation to

be restricted. Other work such as fertiliser dressings must be modified so as to restrict if possible the amount of leaf growth and thus the mowing, but under no circumstances must the turf suffer because of haphazard and irregular cutting. Frequent cutting is better for the turf than infrequent and short better than long, but short infrequent cutting removes the greatest weight of leafage and consequently exerts a severe strain on the plant, necessitating more liberal fertiliser treatment. Thus a saving can be effected by raising the height of cut and reducing somewhat the frequency. Less frequent mowing should not be done at the peace-time height.

"Motor mowing machines of the back roller drive type may have to be employed owing to shortage of manual labour but every effort should be made to retain hand machines or alternatively to use a motor unit which hauls a gang of hand units. Alternate use of hand and motor machines may be useful in some cases. On tees and approaches, however, the motor machine and power driven rough cuts should prove valuable labour savers. On fairways cutting is again of first importance in relation to the quality of the turf, quite apart from maintaining the course in playable condition. Power cutting for banks, surrounds, semi-rough and rough, must not be neglected and immediate expenditure on a suitable implement, upon which the Research Station can give advice, would in many cases be well justified. Fuel restrictions may interfere to a varying extent with power mowing and other forms of fuel such as producer gas may have to be considered The short article elsewhere in this issue is worthy of attention in this connection. Even the horse must not be neglected in an effort to keep the course playable.

"Reductions in the size of greens and the narrowing of fairways by the development of a strip of semi-rough, so far as existing bunkering and lay-out will permit, will reduce not only the actual amount of cutting but also the quantity of materials, for example fertilisers, sand, composts and other top dressings necessary for maintenance."

—From "War-Time Turf Policy" By R. B. Ferro, Chief Advisory Officer.

Other Considerations.

"Whilst fully appreciating the need for increased food production at home the Board feels that unless special circumstances exist on golf courses methods other than extensive voluntary ploughing up are to be preferred and would be more useful for the following reasons:—

1. Many golf courses are laid out on land quite unsuited for ploughing, for example, sand, peat, heath, or heavy clay.
2. Even where land is of a suitable texture the cost of fertilising and liming to create fertility would in many cases be very heavy.
3. Few clubs have the necessary implements or the knowledge of ploughing, cultivating and harvesting, or of the selection of suitable varieties of cereals or roots and it is doubtful whether they would make an economic or even a practical success of the work.
4. The high cost of originally laying out the courses and its value in providing recreational facilities as a relief from war-time strain.
5. The difficulties and expense of re-establishing the land as good turf at the end of the war.
6. The greater value likely to be secured by grazing sheep.
7. At present the 2 Pounds per acre subsidy applicable in England and Wales (now extended to March 31st, 1940) on 2 acres or above for land in grass at least 7 years old, does not apply to golf courses as they are not technically agricultural land. Subsidies are also offered in Scotland and Northern Ireland but are not available unless there is a change of ruling. Even if it were eventually decided that the subsidy should apply there are regulations about inspection, cleanliness, fertility, and what shall be grown and of course the subsidy is not intended to cover the whole cost.

"The Board is in a position to offer clubs help on the subject of tillage for food or other crops but whilst realising the disadvantages urges upon clubs the desirability of arranging for sheep grazing for the purpose of—

1. helping food production.
2. relieving agricultural land for crop production and so helping to maintain the sheep population.
3. keeping down grass and weeds and so saving mowing.

"It will usually be possible to obtain a rental for the grazing rights but this should be regarded more in the nature of a compensation for any damage done to the turf or bunkers.

"The Board also hopes that clubs will, where the land is suitable, select portions of the rough and convert to garden plots for production of food stuffs to be used in the clubhouse or perhaps sold. The possibility of letting unused portions of the course as private allotments might be considered as has been done on certain municipal courses.

"The possibilities of using grass mowings for manure or enslage should be considered.

"The Board is also in a position to advise on the suitability of land for horticultural purposes and in greater detail upon suitable crops, manures, and pests. In this connection there is already a tendency to overstress the cabbage family at the expense of storable roots like beet, carrot, turnip, and onions.

—From "The Plough-up Policy in Relation to Golf Courses."

From the latest issue of the GREENKEEPERS' REPORTER we learn that our old friend, Emil Masciocchi, now greenkeeper at the Onwentsia Club, Chicago, won the third annual GSA golf championship, held on October 29 at the Speedway Golf Club, Indianapolis. Emil had rounds of even par 71 and seven under par 64 for total of 135, to lead the field by 16 strokes. Incidentally the 64 was a stroke under the existing course record. Congratulations and salutations, Emil!

TREES ON THE GOLF COURSE

By R. S. Black
(Reprinted from
The Australian Greenkeeper)

Clumps of trees on the golf course add to the picturesqueness of the landscape. By careful planning the golf course architect can also employ them as a means of introducing many interesting features to the game itself, particularly for the creation of that most interesting and popular type of hole known as the "dog-leg."

Wide Fairways

Of recent years, owing to the employment of economical mowing units—gang mowers and tractor—the fairways on many courses have been widened to such an extent that, with the possible exception of finding an odd bunker or two, the "chronic slicer or hooker" finds himself little worse off than the player who hits a perfectly true ball.

Gene Sarazen, during his Australian tour, commented on the fact that many of our leading golf clubs would be well advised to adopt a vigorous arboreal policy—well-planned clumps of trees. Smaller and more tightly guarded greens would, considered Sarazen, go a long way towards helping to raise the standard of Australian golf; for unless our courses are made more difficult it is obvious that the play cannot be expected to reach the highest standards.

The "champagne" of golf comes not from compiling low scores over a spacious green sward alone, but in obtaining such scores in the face of opposing difficulties.

Trees Needed

To the badly sliced or hooked drive, a series of comparatively low hummock type bunkers, crossing the line of flight to the green, holds no terror to the player in making his next shot, whereas a clump of trees would call for "something out of the bag" and, if successfully negotiated, add a worthwhile thrill. On the other hand, the penalty would be justified in the event of failure to bring the shot off.

Select the Right Trees

Trees for such "architectural featuring" should, of course, be carefully selected in accordance with the extent of "justifiable penalty to be inflicted." For instance, if it is desired that there

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should always be a reasonable chance of being able to play over the clump, it would be a mistake to plant such trees that, when fully grown, would reach a height of a 100 feet or more, whereas if it is desired to use a clump of trees to compel a "dog-leg" method of playing a hole, then the taller-growing varieties would not be out of place.

Careful planning of tree planting can be so conducted as to add a seclusion to the individual holes. Trees of the right variety always give welcome shade at the tees, while their value in protecting boundaries from "out-of-bounds" balls is by no means a fallacy; heavy foliage evergreens are best for both purposes. Trees also attract bird life—an aspect in golf course maintenance not to be overlooked in these days of even-increasing insect life, which do serious damage, in many instances, to our cultivated turf. Birds are tireless workers in their destruction.

Expert Advice Necessary

Expert advice should be obtained in selecting trees suitable for the district in which they are to be planted. Due regard must be given to soil, drainage and situation, as well as to their special requirements in regard to "architectural featuring" and general landscape effect.

Perhaps the best guide in selecting trees is to make a careful survey of those that have been already established in the district in which it is intended to plant, and plant similar trees to those that have proved themselves most suitable.

Preparation of Soil

Remember too, that, to be successful, the ground for planting the young trees should be properly prepared. If the ground is well drained, holes for planting should be at least 3-ft. x 3-ft. by 2-ft. deep; if the soil overlays an impervious sub-soil it is better not to prepare the hole deeper than the top-soil and shatter the sub-soil with gelignite; on poorly drained soil mounds should be prepared at the site of planting.

After planting, the tree should receive regular attention, cultivation, weeding, manuring and watering until sufficiently established to look after itself.

The best time for planting is when the plant is at its resting period, and when moist, cool conditions prevail.

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