

UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION
GREEN SECTION
Southwestern Office
Texas A & M College
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS



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Southwestern Turfletter

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FILE YOUR APPLICATIONS NOW ! !

Has your club applied for Regional Turf Service? If not, will you please see that its application is submitted as soon as possible. Travel schedules for 1954 must be made up well in advance. Late applications may necessitate visits late in the year.

Response to the Regional Turf Service in 1953 was very gratifying. Approximately forty clubs subscribed and many more indicated an intent to subscribe but were delayed in doing so by the need for action on the matter by the Board of Directors.

Your comments on the service are invited. Our job is to serve you. Expressions from you concerning the type of service you need helps us to plan our work in such a way that we may do the greatest possible good.

CONFERENCE NOTES

The fall and winter months are those generally set aside for turfgrass conferences. Three turfgrass conferences in the Southwest have been held this year. One was the Central Plains Conference held at Manhattan, Kansas. More than a hundred people attended this conference and it was an excellent meeting. Members of the Central Plains Turf Foundation contributed substantially to the program, as did the staff of the Kansas State College. There was the usual fine representation from the commercial field. Highlights of this conference were the panel discussions in which the audience participated, and a visit to the turf plots where Mr. Ray Keen pointed out some of the findings of the Kansas State turf investigations.

The Oklahoma Turf Conference was held at Stillwater, Oklahoma on November 30 and December 1 and 2. This conference had as its central theme the conservation of water, and while the topics discussed covered numerous phases of turf management, they all were related to this main theme. It was pointed out that a Roman philosopher made the observation, "of all things water is best", more than two thousand years ago. The second day's program at Oklahoma was devoted entirely to panel discussions, which were very well received. Audience participation was good and everyone had the chance to ask questions that may have been foremost in his mind.

The American Society of Agronomy meetings in Dallas afforded an opportunity for turf scientists from all over the United States to meet for the purpose of hearing the presentation of several scientific papers in the field of turf management. Contributors to this program were Dr. Fred V. Gzau, of the West Point Products Corporation, Dr. J. R. Watson of the Toro Manufacturing Company, Dr. H. M. Smith of the US Department of Agriculture, Dr. R. M. Hagan of the University of California, Dr. Gene Nutter of the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station, and Mr. W. E. Zimmerman of the American Cyanamid Company.

The turfgrass group was treated to a tour of the Dallas Parks Department operations in the afternoon of the day in which the turf meetings were held. Visits were made to the Cotton Bowl, to Cedar Crest Golf Course, where the 1954 Amateur Public Links Championship will be held, and to Stevens Park Golf Course. Mr. Wylie Moore, manager of the Stevens Park Golf Course, has conducted a series of strain tests using strains of Bermudagrass and Zoysia. On the basis of his findings in these strain testing plots, Mr. Moore has planted a two acre nursery of T-35A Bermudagrass which will be used in the coming year to plant a number of the greens at the Stevens Park Golf Course. This "on-the-course" type of testing can do much to help determine the place of selected strains of grass under playing conditions.

The Golf Course Superintendents Association 25th Annual Conference and Show was held in the Municipal Auditorium in Miami, Florida during the week January 3-9, 1954. Nearly a thousand persons registered for the conference. It was a week filled with golf, social activities, educational conferences, business meeting and equipment displays. This association has enjoyed a substantial growth in the last 25 years. It has grown not only in membership, but its members have grown in professional stature. This association will hold its conference and show in St. Louis in 1955.

The Texas Turfgrass Association joined with the Texas A & M College and the United States Golf Association Green Section in sponsoring the Eighth Annual Turf Conference on January 18, 19, and 20. The conference program this year was built around one subject, namely, "water". Outstanding contributions to the program were made by Dr. J. R. Johnston, Assistant Director of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, Dr. R. M. Hagan, Associate Irrigationist of the University of California, and Dr. J. R. Watson, Jr., Agronomist, of the Toro Manufacturing Company, Minneapolis.

Panel discussions occupied a considerable portion of the sessions. They dealt with water relationships to plants, to soils, and to the enemies of turfgrasses, and with irrigation equipment. The last half day was devoted to reporting the results of research sponsored by the Texas Turfgrass Association in cooperation with the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.

THE MECHANICAL CONTROL OF RHODESGRASS SCALE

There are indications that Rhodesgrass scale damage might be alleviated to some extent by the use of the vertical type mowing equipment that recently has become available. At the Houston Country Club, Rhodesgrass scale has damaged putting greens severely. Mr. L. W. DuBose, superintendent of the Houston Country Club, used the thatch removing machine during summer of 1953 with surprising results. Where the machine was used on putting greens Rhodesgrass scale damage was reduced remarkably.

It is reasonable to assume that the use of a machine to remove surface runners would help to diminish the damage from Rhodesgrass scale. The scales attach

themselves to the exposed nodes at the surface of the ground. Any machine which will help to eliminate some of these exposed nodes will eliminate some of the places where the scale insects may attach themselves. If most of the stems of the Bermudagrass are upright, if the internodes are short, and if the nodes are covered by leaves, there will be relatively little opportunity for the scale insect to attach himself. Time will tell whether this practice will help to control scale. At the present time it appears to hold much promise.

INSECTICIDAL CONTROL OF RHODESGRASS SCALE

In the San Antonio area, superintendents of golf courses have made effective use of parathion for the control of Rhodesgrass scale. They are using parathion in combination with wetting agents and other materials in order to assure that the scale is thoroughly wetted. Good control has been reported where parathion was used under these conditions. While parathion is a rather dangerous material, it is being used in the treatment of agricultural crops and probably can be used safely on golf courses if proper precautions are used. Anyone undertaking the use of parathion and similar materials should be familiar with the rules of safety to be followed. The material must be used with the utmost care.

CEDAR CREST FAIRWAYS

In late 1952 the fairways at Cedar Crest Golf Course in Dallas were quite thin. While there was quite a lot of Bermuda present, fairways did not provide good playing surfaces. Beginning in 1953, Mr. Lee Bowman, who is superintendent of the Cedar Crest Golf Course, undertook a very heavy fertilizing program in order to get the fairways into good condition for the play of the 1954 Amateur Public Links Championship. Fifteen pounds of nitrogen to a thousand square feet were applied to these fairways in five applications. At the present time the fairways are excellent. The Bermudagrass has thickened to form a heavy dense turf and rescuegrass volunteered in the fall of 1953 to provide an excellent winter cover. Rescuegrass provides a very good turf when it is mowed properly and when it is dense. The heavy stand that presently exists on Cedar Crest fairways is affording an exceptionally good playing surface.

BENTGRASS STRAIN NURSERY AT ALBUQUERQUE

Mr. Julian Serna has planted a nursery of improved bentgrasses at Albuquerque Country Club. Mr. Serna has been able to keep excellent greens of Seaside bentgrass, but he has hopes of finding a strain adapted to his conditions that will provide even better turf. Mr. Serna has prepared the soil in this nursery very well and has planted C-1, C-19, and Old Orchard Bentgrasses. He hopes to add additional strains to this nursery for testing purposes to determine which of them is best adapted to the conditions in Albuquerque, and to determine whether or not they will provide turf superior to that provided by Seaside bentgrass.

Certainly the courses in the Southwest would do well to follow Mr. Serna's example in testing some of the grasses that have proved their worth in other areas. The Southwest has grown Seaside bentgrass for many years and Seaside has provided acceptable turf, but there are plenty of reasons for believing that the improved vegetative strains will afford even better turf.

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