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

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Southwestern Turfletter

No. 3 - July, 1955

ANNOUNCEMENTS

San Antonio Field Day

The Texas Turfgrass Association annual field day will be held in San Antonio on August 1. Registration will be from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. at the San Antonio Country Club. A tour of San Antonio's turfgrass areas will be followed by luncheon, a business meeting and a talk by Mr. O. J. Noer. Mr. John Scalzo of the San Antonio Country Club and Mr. Wallace Miller, USAF agronomist from Randolph Field, are in charge of arrangements.

New Mexico Turfgrass Conference

The first turfgrass conference to be held in New Mexico is planned for October 6 and 7, 1955 and it will be held at the New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts. Mr. Clarence Watson, of the Agronomy Department, is arranging the program for the conference. New Mexico turf growers should make it a point to attend this conference. Experience in other states has indicated that turfgrass appreciation and turfgrass management education take long steps forward whenever the state colleges begin to sponsor such conferences. Mr. Watson and his colleagues are to be commended for their efforts to improve the knowledge of turf growers in New Mexico. Mark the date - October 6 and 7!! The place - New Mexico A. & M. College, State College, New Mexico.

Oklahoma Meetings

The Oklahoma Turfgrass Association has held monthly meetings this summer. The August meeting is scheduled for August 2 at Southern Hills Country Club in Tulsa. Mr. John Price will be host. The meeting for September will be held on Tuesday, September 13 at the Oakhill Country Club in Ada. Mr. Chick Clark is host for this meeting. In a letter announcing these meetings, Bob Dunning, Secretary of the Oklahoma Turfgrass Association, says: "Dr. Wayne Huffine is doing a fine job of putting turf research on a firm and expanding basis at the Experiment Station. Let us all turn out to show our appreciation of the effort that is being made at the State College. Your attendance at the future meetings as given herein is very important." You will do yourself a service by heeding Bob's words.

"HATS OFF" DEPARTMENT

Wichita Country Club

The Wichita Country Club course was in fine shape for the Women's Open. This is an outstanding golf course and its condition was excellent. Mr. Everett Queen is the superintendent and Mr. Fred L. Dold is Chairman of the Green Committee. The fact that the course was in good condition is no surprise because one rarely finds it otherwise. Congratulations to Mr. Queen and Mr. Dold.

Houston Country Club

L. W. "Sonny" DuBose, superintendent of the Houston Country Club, is going all out in growing a turf nursery for planting the new course now being built. Sonny will have the Gene Tift strain of Bermuda throughout. He started with a small nursery of Gene Tift at the present course about a year ago. By using material from the original nursery, he has just finished planting a five acre nursery on the site of the future practice fairway at the new course. Greens, tees, and fairways will all be planted vegetatively to this strain.

To our knowledge this will be the first golf course to have fairways planted entirely to an improved strain of Bermudagrass. Both good planning and good management are required to increase four thousand square feet of turf nursery into turf for a complete eighteen hole golf course in two years' time.

The new Houston Country Club course promises some challenges both to the golfer and to the superintendent. We can be confident that Superintendent DuBose will meet the challenges facing him in characteristic style. The golfer will have to take care of himself.

PORTRABLE WATERING SYSTEMS

A great many golf courses in the Southwest are without fairway watering systems. Inasmuch as a watering system represents a rather large expenditure, some clubs feel that they simply cannot afford it. To these clubs, portable systems may have some appeal.

L. E. Lambert of the Oakwood Country Club, Dodson, Missouri and Luke Nunley, of the Little Rock Country Club, are two superintendents who are making use of this type of equipment. These two installations differ in several respects but both men are well pleased with the results they have had. While the use of such a system requires some additional labor, its original cost is very much less than the cost of a conventional watering system.

SOD WEBWORMS

Numerous golf courses have been infested with sod webworms this year. Some of the courses infested had been damaged badly before the source of the trouble was recognized. Typically, sod webworm injury is similar to that caused by dollar spot on turf. Brown spots appear which may vary from the size of a fingernail to that of a 25 cent piece. Close inspection will disclose a chewed appearance on some of the grass blades.

Sod webworms are not difficult to control but they are difficult to find. The injury is such that it is easily confused with a number of other troubles. Sod webworm attacks may come during a period of disease activity, or following a fungicide, fertilizer or other chemical burn. In such cases, the presence of sod webworms is unusually difficult to recognize because one may confuse their activity with another type of injury. One sure way to determine the presence of sod webworms is to drench the turf with a solution of pyrethrum. A solution of one part pyrethrum to 440 parts of water used at the rate of about 100 gallons per 1000 square feet will cause the webworms to come to the surface very quickly.

Sod webworms may be any of some 70 species which belong to the genus Crambus. The full grown larva is a grayish-green worm about 1/2 to 3/4 inches long. He resembles the army worm in some respects. The larva eats the leaves of tender grass at night and during the heat of the day remains below the surface of the turf in a silken tunnel. This silken tunnel is covered by bits of grass and organic matter so that the worm is very difficult to find. After reaching full growth the larva changes to a pupae and eventually emerges as a full grown moth. This moth is brownish-gray to dull gray and sometimes resembles a stick or twig of dry grass when the moth is resting with its wings folded. The moth is 1/2 to 3/4 inch in length. Observation of these small moths around a putting green area should be a "tip-off" to impending trouble.

The moth drops its eggs while on the wing. The eggs fall into the turf and hatch in 7 to 10 days, producing the small larva which begins to feed immediately. There may be several broods in a year. Therefore one must keep a constant lookout for them.

Almost any good insecticide will control sod webworms. Pyrethrum, rotenone, and arsenate of lead are among the materials used for many years for their control. Probably the most commonly used insecticide for this purpose at the present time is chlordane. It is well to use chlordane, DDT, or dieldrin as a regular preventive spray during the summer months. When adjacent areas become dry and hot, the cool moist putting green is an attractive place for the sod webworm moth to deposit her eggs.

A preventive spray program and constant vigilance can save you a great deal of trouble. And when other trouble strikes, don't overlook the possibility of sod webworms attacking while your attention is diverted.

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