

UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION

GREEN SECTION

WESTERN OFFICE



P.O. Box 567

Garden Grove, California

Phone KE1logg 2-2935

WM. H. BENGLEYFIELD
Western Director

Vol. 7 No. 5

• Western Turfletter •

P L U C K I N G T U R F C O N F E R E N C E P L U M E S

Most unfortunate feature of Western Turf Conferences is that every superintendent is unable to attend all of the meetings. For once again from Pullman, Washington to Tucson, Arizona exceptionally fine programs were presented by the State Colleges. Herewith is an attempt to pluck some of the more preceptive plumes from the well attended Conferences:

WEED CONTROL:

"Look for more and more pre-emergence weed control materials on the market in the next few years" suggests Dr. Bill Harvey, University of California (Davis), Weed Specialist. "For example, Chlordane will soon be offered to the home owner for crabgrass control. But as professional men, let's not go overboard for the new materials. Look them over, see how they work by giving them a chance on a limited area on your course and then make up your mind as to their effectiveness and possible cost.

"In our weed control work, the primary concern should not be with getting rid of the weeds, but discovering how we can manage our turf so effectively that a weed problem will not develop. This means good fertility levels, proper irrigation techniques, using the right grass in the right place; in short, Good Management!" Good point, Dr. Harvey!

Silver crabgrass (Goosegrass) has gained a foothold in California in the past few years. Other areas of the west may well expect it. Research reports indicate that heavy applications of Chlordane have given some control. The rate is 60 to 80 pounds of actual Chlordane per acre applied in early spring. This is too expensive for large acreages, but a possible solution for tees, aprons and collars.

GRASSES:

O. J. Noer of the Milwaukee Sewerage Commission reported that "Penncross bent is producing outstanding greens throughout the country. Tifton 328 (Tifgreen) is providing exceptional golfing turf in the bermuda country. Toronto bent (C-15) seems to be standing up under heavy wear better than most bentgrasses. Cohansey (C-7) continues to look good, even in some northern areas. Alert Superintendents should not overlook these grasses."

Indeed, Superintendent Bob Irvine of the Phoenix Country Club reports that Cohansey roots were over 22-inches deep in one of his greens this summer. And Bob has photographs to prove it!

Dr. V. C. Brink of the University of British Columbia reported that Congressional bent (C-19) is their best grass but that Toronto also looks very good. The Canadian workers have found fescues rather poor in their area. "Pennlawn fescue has not been much better than Rainier or Illahee" stated Dr. Brink.

GOOD MANAGEMENT - It Covers A Lot Of Territory

"Growing turfgrass the hard way is really very easy. Forget about good fertility practices and put your new men on the irrigation crew. Don't worry about running the mowers when they are dull or out of adjustment. Thatch development, layers in the soil profile, graininess ----- these are all unimportant: Unimportant that is, if you are trying to grow turfgrass the Hard Way!" Tom Mascaro, West Point Products Company.

"In order to get a good salary, we must EARN a good salary. This means Good Management in every phase of our responsibility." - Mr. Elmer Border, Superintendent, Las Posas Country Club, Camarillo, California and Vice President, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

"I know of a \$13.00 charge for fairway mower parts that could have been saved by a \$.70 bushing, if installed when needed. Then too, the \$.70 bushing could have been saved if the mower operator had greased the roller bearings four times a day as recommended in the Operating Manual. It's just good business to read (and reread) the Operation or Instruction Manual for each piece of equipment on your course. Keep accurate maintenance records. It's good management!" - Mr. W. Brinkworth, Toro Manufacturing Company.

"The right relationship between the Superintendent, Manager and Pro., is MOST important. The Manager (in most instances) is the administrator in the picture, not the turf expert. With rising costs facing our courses, efficient operation and close liaison between superintendent and manager offers the only solution to the problem of rising costs." - Mr. Wm. Hodges, Manager, Paradise Valley Country Club, Scottsdale, Arizona.

SOILS AND DRAINAGE:

"The so called 'sandy soil mixture' for greens seems to have many virtues and good drainage is one. New greens should have surface drainage in two or three directions and the use of tile for good internal drainage is equally important. Good drainage for greens cannot be overstressed," said Dr. John Madison, University of California (Davis).

Dr. Madison also suggested that the 'sandy soil mixtures' will probably require greater skill in managing fertility levels. "Sand has no buffering capacity and this will require a closer watch on nutrient requirements."

Dr. O. R. Lunt of U.C.L.A. recommends that "When we build a new green, we should consider the soil mixture and its components just as critically as a highway engineer considers the soils he will use in highway construction. Certain specifications have been developed for highway work. We now have certain specifications for putting green soils such as a minimum infiltration rate of .3 inch of water per hour. Let's use this information!"

Dr. N.A. MacLean of the University of British Columbia feels that soil amendments may play a part in future disease control work. "It may be possible to amend soils in such a manner to bring about a more favorable balance between saprophytes and parasites within the soil. In turf work, rice hulls and a combination of wood barks plus nitrogen fertilizer seem to be very good soil amendments."

ARE YOU A GOOD BOSS? - (Continuation - Part VI)

Making decisions is a most difficult and yet important part of the 'Boss's job'. Some supervisors have a terrific struggle deciding even minor issues, mainly because they never get over being afraid of making a mistake. Cultivate the habit of making brisk, clean - cut decisions. You can develop this ability with practice and by following a few simple principles.

1. Decisions will be easier and more frequently correct if you have the essential facts at hand. Keep well informed and bring out the relevant facts before attempting a decision. It is sometimes said however, that anyone can make a decision if he has all of the facts, whereas a supervisor or executive will make the same decision without waiting for the facts. To maintain a proper balance in this respect, when in doubt ask yourself this question: "Am I likely to lose more by giving a snap judgement or by waiting for more information?"
2. The very fact that a decision is difficult usually means that the advantages and drawbacks of various alternatives are pretty well balanced, so that the net loss cannot amount to much in any event. In such a case, it is frequently more important to arrive at some decision - any decision - promptly than to arrive at the best decision ultimately. So take a definite stand and see it through.
3. You do not have to be right everytime. It is said that a good supervisor or executive need be right only 51% of the time (although a little better margin would obviously be healthy).
4. It is impossible to keep everybody happy in deciding issues involving several incompatible points of view. By all means give everyone a fair hearing, but after all parties have had their say and all facts are on the table, dispose of the matter decisively even if someone's toes are stepped on. Otherwise the odds are that all parties will end up dissatisfied, and even the chief beneficiary will think less of you for straddling the issue.
5. In choosing a course of action when other factors are indecisive, ask yourself these questions:
 - a. Does the decision expedite and progress the undertaking; or does it smack of procrastination and delay?
 - b. Is the decision fair and square?
 - c. What are the odds? Can I afford to take a chance? How does the possible penalty compare with the possible gain in each of the alternatives offered? Very often you can find a solution wherein the worse possible eventually isn't too bad, in relation to the possible gains.
 - d. Do not allow the danger of making a mistake inhibit your initiative to the point of "nothing ventured and nothing gained." It is much healthier to expect to make mistakes, take a few good risks now and then, and take your medicine when you lose. Moreover, there are a few mistakes that can be turned into profit somehow, even if it's only in terms of experience.

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The greatest mistake you can make in life is to be continually fearing you will make one.

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P.O. Box 567 Garden Grove, California

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Dr. J. R. Watson, Jr.
Chief Agronomist
Toro Manufacturing Corp.
Minneapolis 8, Minn.