Some U. S. Golf Association Decisions on the Rules of Golf

How and in what order do matches take precedence? Does a threesome have right-of-way over a foursome?

Decision.—It is assumed that by "threesome" and "foursome" reference is made to three-ball and four-ball matches. Neither of these takes precedence over the other, as under the Rules of Golf three-ball and four-ball are not properly constituted matches.

A stream runs nearly parallel with one of our holes. When a ball is driven into the stream we drop back on the side from which the ball entered. Is that right? Some players contend that the hazard should be kept between the player and the hole and that the ball should be dropped on the other side.

Decision.—Unless your local committee has ruled that the stream is a "parallel water hazard," in which case the ball could be dropped on the nearer side of the stream, the player on this hole would have to be governed by the provisions in Rule 27.

What is the proper procedure in the case of a ball being sliced or pulled to and stopping upon the putting green of a hole that is not the hole being played?

Decision.—There is no rule in golf covering the situation you describe. It is, however, the custom for local committees to make provision for dropping a ball off a putting green other than the one that is being played.

May the club be soled in a road crossing a fairway, the road being a hazard?

Decision.—As the road is a hazard the club may not be soled. Refer to page 6, definition 6, in the book of golf rules.

Clearing a Lake or Pond of Vegetation

Vegetation of two kinds is often troublesome in lakes or ponds, namely (1) scums, which consist of minute plants of the algae group and which cause bad odors and flavor in the water, and (2) water weeds, which root in the bottom and rise above the surface of the lake. Scums can be removed by dragging a sack of copper sulfate, or bluestone, back and forth through the water, either from the stern of a boat or from the end of a pole handled from the shore. This chemical, if not used in excessive amount, will not injure fish in the water nor make the water unfit for drinking purposes. Copper sulfate should be used at a rate not to exceed 1 pound to 125,000 gallons of water. In order to calculate the approximate number of gallons in a lake or pond, the product of the average length, breadth, and depth of the body of water in feet may be multiplied by 6.25.

As regards water weeds, no chemical has been found which may be used successfully in killing weeds rooted in the bottom of a lake. The methods usually employed to rid water of such weeds are scraping out the plants from the bottom of the lake, occasionally cutting them at considerable depths below the surface of the water, alternately raising and lowering the surface of the lake by drainage and
subsequent damming, and stocking the lake with ducks or swans. Dragging water weeds with a heavy chain is a rather slow, cumbersome process which is not always successful. For cutting the weeds a sharp scythe blade, saw, or similar instrument may be used, and is often attached to the end of a row boat or launch with wire ropes, chains, or wire, and dragged at an angle of about 30 degrees. A submarine saw especially designed for the purpose is manufactured. This may be operated by two men, one on each bank. It is a ribbon-like, flexible saw, weighted in such a manner that it cuts the plants close to the bottom.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

All questions sent to the Green Committee will be answered in a letter to the writer as promptly as possible. The more interesting of these questions, with concise answers, will appear in this column each month. If your experience leads you to disagree with any answer given in this column, it is your privilege and duty to write to the Green Committee.

While most of the answers are of general application, please bear in mind that each recommendation is intended specifically for the locality designated at the end of the question.

1. Fall and winter applications of ammonium sulfate and bone meal.—In the last paragraph of the article ending on page 232 of the BULLETIN, October, 1925, you state that ammonium sulfate may be applied to turf during the winter. I have always understood that readily available fertilizers, such as ammonium sulfate, were of value only during the growing season and that their value was lost if applied when the grass was not in a growing state. Our fairways are very poor. They were never worked up, as far as I can learn, and were cut from the natural field of farmed-out clay, which is very thin and underlaid with gumbo clay. All wet locations we have now well drained. Compost soil is scarce here, and we have enough only for the greens and approaches. We have, however, purchased 10 tons of bone meal, which we are planning to spread this fall. Would it be advisable to mix ammonium sulfate with the bone meal when we use it? (Ohio.)

ANSWER.—It is true that the most economical use of ammonium sulfate is made during the growing season of grasses. Occasionally, however, it is advisable to apply this fertilizer rather late in the fall. The growing season moreover varies with latitude, extending in places quite into midwinter. Growing conditions in the fall are especially favorable to fairways in the crab-grass belt, as at that time of the year crab grass is dormant, and anything to stimulate the growth of turf grasses at that time of the year tends to thicken the turf for the following season. Bone meal is a slowly acting fertilizer and requires some time to become available. Experience has indicated that in your latitude it is used most economically when applied in February, and we would advise you to defer its use until that time. We would advise you to use ammonium sulfate only when conditions are favorable to the growth of grass. Accordingly, we would not consider it economical to mix ammonium sulfate with bone meal, as the two are best applied at different seasons of the year.