

The Greenkeepers' Club of New England

By John Shanahan, Brae Burn Country Club

In January, 1923, a group of greenkeepers, in the Boston District, met to consider the advisability of forming an organization for social and educational advancement of greenkeepers and the greenkeeping profession. A letter was sent out to all the greenkeepers in New England, asking them to a meeting to discuss the matter further. At this meeting, which was held in February, 1923, about fifty responded to the invitation.

The Greenkeeper's Club of New England was organized at this meeting and was the first association of its kind in the country, founded solely for and by greenkeepers, themselves.

Since that time, regular monthly meetings have been held. The winter meetings are held in Horticultural Hall, Boston. At these times lectures have been given by authorities on various subjects pertaining to greenkeeping, as well as discussions among greenkeepers themselves, of the various problems confronting them. Each year the club has invited the green committee chairmen of New England to a luncheon meeting, to give them an idea of the aims and purposes of the club.

The summer meetings are held at various golf clubs. The first outdoor meeting of the club was a demonstration of golf course equipment. This was the first meeting of its kind ever held in New England and was attended by a large number of both green committee chairmen and greenkeepers. Since that time, this has been an annual event. At the other summer meetings the forenoon has been devoted to demonstrations and inspection of the course. After lunch and business meeting a golf tournament is held. It has been the aim of the club to visit courses where different problems could be studied.

The club has had a cordial invitation and welcome from the golf clubs visited and in several instances the club has been the personal guest for the day of the local green committee.

Two meetings have been held at the Massachusetts Agricultural College at Amherst where grass plots have been examined and lectures given by the college staff.

The club has shown a steady growth from the start and has now a membership of over eighty. A fine spirit of fellowship has been developed among the members. Many individual problems have been solved, and a better understanding between green chairmen and greenkeepers established.

Sulfate of Ammonia and Earthworms

Four years ago at Baltusrol earthworms or rather, worm casts, were regarded as a greater problem than either weeds or brown patch.

At that time ammonium sulfate was not used to any great extent—certainly not more often than twice a year, and then only in light quantities.

During the past four years the method of maintaining the putting green turf has followed very closely the general practice advocated by the Green Section of the U. S. G. A.

The only fertilizers used have been ammonium sulfate and ammonium phosphate, the former principally. They were applied either with topdressing or in solution by means of a proportioning machine.

No worm eradicator has been applied to any of the greens since August, 1926, and whilst the greens are still brushed before mowing, the worm casts are so few that this operation is hardly necessary.—Major R. Avery Jones, Baltusrol Golf Club.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

All questions sent to the Green Section 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 Section.

• 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. **Fairway grasses for sandy soil.**—A portion of our course is over high, dry land of a sandy soil with gravelly subsoil. On the fairways here the turf is cuppy, the grass growing in bunches with small barren spots between these bunches. We have consulted an architect with a view to improving these fairways, and he recommends that these fairways be spike-rolled in the fall and then spread with 15 tons of stable manure and 15 yards of clay loam per acre. After this dressing is evenly distributed, it is to be leveled with a brush harrow and allowed to lie dormant over winter. In the early spring the fairways are again to be spike-rolled two ways and 300 pounds of his general-purpose fertilizer applied per acre. The surface should then be brush-harrowed again and seeded with a special fescue fairway mixture at the rate of 125 pounds to the acre. This is then to be again brush-harrowed, and lightly rolled. We are sending you a sample of the top soil from these fairways. Before taking any steps in the matter we should appreciate your suggestions. We might add that we have experienced considerable difficulty in growing bent on this soil. (Maine.)

ANSWER.—The sample of sandy soil you send should, in our opinion, grow perfect turf. The program suggested by your architect is a very expensive one. Your soil is similar to types of soil where fescue is often employed with great success. The only other grass that does well on that type of soil is Rhode Island bent, which can be also secured as Colonial bent, from New Zealand, and in the South German mixed bent, of which it constitutes about 75 percent of the mixture. We would not advise you to spike-roll your present turf, or to disturb it in any way, but to seed on top of it, about the middle of August, a mixture of 10 pounds of South German mixed bent seed or Colonial bent seed (preferably the former) and 20 pounds of redtop seed, per acre. These grasses will take care of the cuppy lies, and in the course of a few years the redtop should disappear and the fescue probably be crowded out entirely by the bent. Of course, if before seeding you could at no great expense topdress the