

Southern Florida Fairways

By Frank Swanson

On all the five courses of the Florida East Coast Hotel Company our special endeavor is to get the fairways all in carpet grass, which we believe is our best fairway grass. At present the fairways are generally a mixture of close-lying weed growth, Bermuda grass, St. Augustine grass, and carpet grass. We find that these last two grasses will gradually crowd out weeds and even Bermuda grass. The turf on some of our fairways is 10 years old; on others the planting was as recent as three years ago. For the past five years or more our program has been to make two applications of fertilizer a year, and only on the approaches and areas receiving most wear. We use a 5-8-2 commercial fertilizer, applying it spring and fall with a mechanical distributor, at the rate of 300 to 500 pounds per acre. Of course, since we maintain winter play only, this treatment does not interfere with play. On the tees we follow the same program, except that we make the application twice as heavy. Considering cost of material, hauling, ease of distribution, as well as results obtained, we favor the use of commercial fertilizer. With new plantings, in order to hasten the development of the turf, we have found it advisable to apply sulphate of ammonia to the soil at the time of planting and to keep the areas watered; but with established fairway turf our program does not include the use of either ammonium sulphate or watering.

Organic Fertilizers on Fairways

By Erich W. Pahl

Four years ago our fairways at the Interlachen Country Club, near Minneapolis, were fertilized completely with a mixture of muck (heavy peat soil) and manure in the proportion of one part of manure to three parts of muck. Since then the fairways have all been piped for watering, and they held up in good shape until last fall, when we again applied the same mixture to the weaker spots, which already are showing the benefit. The application was made with a manure spreader, which will throw an even spread, and was applied reasonably heavy. This spring we dragged it in with a matting. We used this material because we had enough available, but as our supply is now exhausted we are planning on a yearly fertilization program, taking six or nine fairways each year. We expect to use activated sludge for this purpose, and may try in comparison some of the other commercial fertilizers. On washed slopes we make a heavier application, and keep it watered thoroughly. Our tees are fertilized the same as the greens.

We water our fairways every other night, and if necessary, on high spots, we leave the sprinkler on all day; but we find that with regular watering we seldom need any all-day watering. Our turf is now about 16 years old, and is on a heavy clay soil with very little loam on top. The predominating grass on the fairways is bluegrass, with plenty of bent of all varieties covering large spots on practically all the fairways. This bent has come from seed in the original seeding of bluegrass and redtop, and since we have been watering the fairways it has spread very rapidly.