

FROM THE WESTERN OFFICE

By CHARLES G. WILSON
WESTERN DIRECTOR, USGA GREEN SECTION

Golf course superintendents in the West are faced with a wide range of temperature, moisture and soil conditions. Often these can occur within a very narrow geographical area. California alone, with its long temperature coastline, mountainous peaks and desert floors, offers every range and combination of climatic conditions found in the entire West.

In this vast region we are credited with having both the hottest and coldest spots in the nation, and the diurnal cycle in a given area may be as much as 50 degrees Fahrenheit. It is not uncommon during the summer in the northern interior valleys of California to have temperatures of 110 degrees or better during the heat of the day and nights with temperatures in the low 60s. On certain summer days a few seconds drive from Berkeley, Cal., through the mountain tunnel to Orinda, Cal., can bring a temperature change from 60 degrees to nearly 100 degrees.

Along portions of the northwestern coastline rainfall normally may be more than 100 inches a year, and in parts of our interior valleys the amount of yearly precipitation may be so minute as to defy accurate measurement. Even in many of the high rainfall areas, the rains come from October to June, thus leaving a period of at least three months when artificial irrigation is necessary to maintain green color and good vigorous growth. In low rainfall areas irrigation is necessary twelve months of the year, and in the Rocky Mountain area supplemental watering is needed even during the winter months to prevent desiccation and loss of the turf from drying winds that are practically devoid of moisture.

Water-use rate by the turf as influenced by light intensity, temperature, humidity and wind varies greatly throughout the area. During the summer irrigation season it may exceed 2.5 inches per week in dry desert areas and be less than an inch per week along the coastal slopes. This means

COMING EVENTS

Nov. 16-20: American Society of Agronomy Meetings, Baker Hotel, Dallas, Texas. L. G. Monthey. (Marvin H. Ferguson, Chairman of Turf Division).

Nov. 30-Dec.2: Oklahoma Turf Conference, Oklahoma A. & M. College, Stillwater, Okla. Bob Dunning, Program Chairman.

Jan. 3-9: 25th Annual Turf Conference and Show, Golf Course Superintendents' Association of America, Municipal Auditorium, Miami, Fla. Agar M. Brown, Secretary.

Jan. 5-7: Northeastern Weed Control Conference, Hotel New Yorker, New York. Walter C. Jacob, Secretary-Treasurer.

Jan. 18-20: Eighth Annual Texas Turf Conference, Memorial Student Center, Texas A. & M. College, College Station, Texas. Marvin H. Ferguson, Program Chairman.

Feb. 8-9: Annual Conference of Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents, Lord Baltimore Hotel, Baltimore, Mr. E. N. Cory, Director.

Feb. 15-18: Penn State Turf Conference, Pennsylvania State College, State College, Pa. H. B. Musser. (Noon Feb. 15 to Noon Feb. 18.)

March 1-3: Mid-West Regional Turf Conference, Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind. W. H. Daniel.

that throughout much of the West we must use more water than is common to eastern irrigators. Present sprinkler equipment is not entirely suited to watering our golf-course turf. Because it applies water too rapidly for most soils under turf to absorb moisture without excessive runoff, the practice has been to take the easy way out and water frequently at light rates. This is a fundamental cause of most of our turf problems.

Soils range from highly acid to highly alkaline in reaction and, in texture, from gravel to some of the heaviest clay adobe in the world. Some of our heavier soils are known to be the most fertile in the nation. Conversely, some of our newly constructed desert courses are on light soils where for all practical purposes the

LOS ANGELES MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSES' PROPAGANDA



You have heard of the fellow who wears his sentiments on his sleeve. William H. Johnson, golf-course manager of the Los Angeles Municipal Golf Courses, wears his on his jeep, and hopes all golfers will heed. The men are, from the left, Ray W. Ditmore, park foreman; Allan G. Macdonald, assistant golf-course manager; and Mr. Johnson.

soil serves no other benefit than to anchor the turf cover. Often the irrigation water available greatly influences soil reaction, and in many instances can be so high in total salts and chlorides as to adversely affect turf growth. This is especially true with bentgrass.

This wide diversity of climatic, soil and water conditions that affect turf growth in the West naturally presents a wide range of problems. Yet our capable

golf-course superintendents can and are growing better turf for the golfer's enjoyment of his game. Better turf is happening because of what he does, rather than in spite of his efforts. Our western golfers are rapidly advancing away from the thought that water and mowing alone will provide good turf. In subsequent issues we shall discuss some of the factors pertaining to turf management that are important in this area.

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S SECTION

Getting the Oklahoma City Golf and Country Club's golf course in condition for the Amateur Championship was not an easy job. Bob Ervine came to the club as superintendent late in 1951, and the conditions he found were rather discouraging. Greens were layered and thatched and fairways were mediocre.

Bob brought a great deal of experience with him, however, and he knew how to go about the task ahead of him. Bob has held a superintendent's position for more than twenty years. He spent 17 years at The Oaks Country Club and three years at the Indian Hills Country Club, both in Tulsa. His experience and knowledge have