

## THE 25th ANNUAL TURF CONFERENCE AND SHOW

More than 900 golf course superintendents registered for the 25th Annual Turf Conference and Show in Miami last month. They were treated to a week filled with golf, social activities, educational conferences, membership business meetings and equipment displays.

The educational conferences were highlights of the week's activities. The topics discussed covered a broad range of subject matter, but all of the discussions related to the superintendent's efforts to do a better job for his golf club.

Some of the significant remarks are listed here.

Leonard Strong, in opening the conference, remarked that the Golf Course Superintendents' Association had grown both in membership and in its professional standing in its twenty-five years of existence.

Director Fifield, of the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station, said: ". . . research has done a job for Florida agriculture. . . . We must get back to the laboratory . . . . We can expect as many changes in the future as we have witnessed in the past."

Professor Frank Goodwin, of the University of Florida, provided a very entertaining lecture on The Value of Human Relations. Professor Goodwin said: "A formula for getting along with people will not work . . . Little things count, such as the importance of a man's name, the value of a smile, the contagious nature of enthusiasm, cheerfulness and friendliness."

Miss Patty Berg pointed out that golfers like a well-kept golf course, one that permits proper play of the game, and that they want more, namely, beauty. She said: "The turf affects the game; the game affects the turf." Miss Berg mentioned the importance of the average golfer and the value of a professional in making the game what it is. But, she said, the superintendent is a miracle man and

one of the most important men on any golf course.

Frank Dunlap discussed Developing Recognition for the Superintendent. This advice was given: (1) Form a local association, (2) Affiliate with the national association, (3) Learn to write a good letter, (4) Be civic-minded, (5) Form an advisory committee within your local association, (6) See that your local association has a regular publication.

Marvin H. Ferguson, of the USGA Green Section, said: "Improved grasses and good management are both important. Neither can substitute for the other. A good manager can have good turf with a mediocre grass and superior turf with an improved grass. A poor manager will have poor turf, no matter what grass he uses. Some improved grasses require special management techniques".

Joe Valentine, who has groomed the Merion Golf Club, in Ardmore, Pa., for seven USGA Championships, offered much advice on how such preparations should be done. A selected statement: "Do not overwater. Greens should be firm enough to offer a challenge to a skillful player. Do not keep them so soft that a poorly played shot will hold".

Dr. R. M. Schery, of the Monsanto Chemical Company, suggested that soil conditioners can be most helpful to golf course superintendents if they are incorporated in topdressing.

Dr. Ralph E. Engel, of Rutgers University, concluded an excellent discussion of Thatch on Turf and Its Control by recommending these practices: (1) Use lime properly, (2) Fertilize frequently, (3) Make use of mechanical devices that cut, rake and tear, (4) Cultivate frequently.

Alex McKay is optimistic about the future of bent for greens in the South, but he pointed out that exceptionally good management is required.

Two panel discussions on Better Turf

Management were conducted simultaneously. One covered warm-season grasses, while the other covered cool-season grasses. Speakers on these panels stressed adequate fertilization, adequate cultivation, good drainage and adapted strains of grass.

Dr. Gene Nutter, of the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station, discussed methods of developing new grasses and mentioned the following strains as possibilities for use on golf courses in the South: Tiffine, Tiflawn, Everglades 1, Gene Tift, Ormond, Texas 8, Florida 50, and Florida 80.

Henson Maples pointed out the importance of planning and timeliness in carrying out year-around maintenance. He stressed the importance of selecting good machinery and providing for its proper care.

Dr. B. P. Robinson, of Tifton, Ga., says that the key to weed control is a good grass, properly managed.

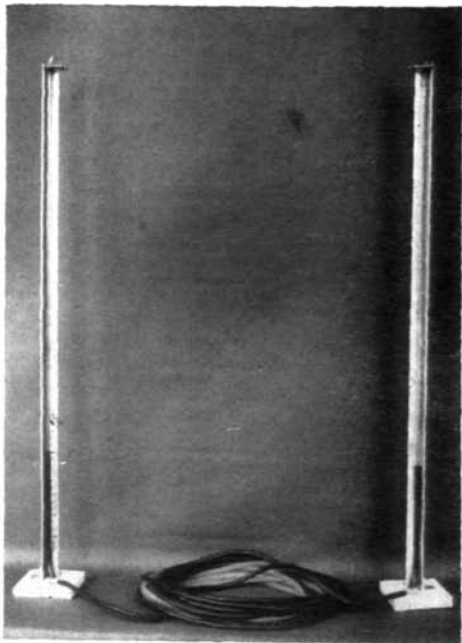
Dr. E. G. Kelsheimer, of the Florida Experiment Station, in discussing insect control, said: "Recognize symptoms of insect damage quickly and apply the proper insecticide." He emphasized that insect control is closely related to good management.

Dr. Jim Watson, of the Toro Manufacturing Company, said: "Poor water relationships lead to disease, thence to weak turf, thence to weeds. Waste is the eventual consequence".

Robert Bruce Harris, golf-course architect, pointed out ways whereby the architect can make golf-course maintenance easier. He emphasized that courses can be designed for easy maintenance without sacrifice of character from the playing standpoint.

These bits of information are samples of what the superintendent gained. It should be recorded that there was exceptionally good attendance until the very end of the program. St. Louis was announced as the site of the 1955 conference.

### POOR MAN'S LEVEL



This device is known as the "poor man's level." It was built by John New, engineer at the Naval Ordnance Laboratories, Silver Springs, Md. Employees at the Naval Ordnance Laboratories recently formed a golf association and constructed a nine-hole golf course on the grounds. To make the job of establishing contour, grades and slopes easier, New devised this ingenious level. It is easily used, quick and accurate. Equipment needed consists of two pieces of angle iron or aluminum approximately three feet long, two chemist clamps, two blocks of wood, 50 feet (more or less) of transparent plastic hose and eight screws.

On the left pole is a sliding ruler which is graduated in inches. Since the device works on the principle that water seeks its own level, one-half inch on the scale is equal to one inch difference in elevation.

Place both poles together, open the chemist clamps at the top (this allows water to come to a level), adjust the sliding ruler on the left pole to zero, leave one pole on that spot and move the other pole to the place where the grade is to be established.

When not in use, close the chemist clamps, and the water will not evaporate or leak out.