

## Keep Your Collars Neat

**H**OW DO THE COLLARS on your putting greens look? Are they ragged and worn, or are they well kept and nicely manicured?

A great many putting-green collars appear to be rather thin, somewhat weedy and showing the effects of too much wear. In contrast to this, there are superintendents who are able to keep collars of putting greens in very nice condition, making a beautiful frame around the putting green.

A great deal of the difference is in the manner in which the mowers are turned at the edge of the putting green. Most superintendents have their men make one or more circles around the green with the putting-green mower before starting to mow crosswise. The mower sometimes is turned on the putting surface but more often is turned on the collar. This turning naturally brings about more wear and more compaction on the collar. Some additional wear at these points cannot be avoided. Frequently, however, the grass seems actually to be burned by the friction of the driving roller on the mower. Fast turning, with the mower running at full speed, contributes to this situation.

### **A Solution**

It is believed that collars could be kept in better condition if the man were instructed to throttle the mower down when he comes to the edge of the green, turn it slowly on the collar, making a wide circle, and then to accelerate again after he is back on the putting surface and has begun to mow.

In many cases the desire to hurry the operation prompts superintendents to teach their men to turn the mowers rapidly without much, if any, throttling down of the engine, even though the superintendent realizes that such rapid, sharp turning causes a great amount of friction and consequent damage to the collar of the putting green. It is believed to be poor economy to do a job so rapidly that the turf around the green is damaged.

The matter of keeping good collars is

especially important in the areas where there are bermudagrass fairways and bentgrass greens. In order to prevent the encroachment of bermudagrass into the bent greens, it is necessary to maintain a protective collar of bentgrass. This bentgrass is difficult to maintain at best. When mower damage contributes to the difficulties, it becomes almost impossible.

### **Cutting at Intermediate Height**

There is another matter which deserves some thought in the maintenance of putting-green collars. That is the change in mowing height from the collar to the putting surface. There are golf courses on which the height of the turf on the collar is the same as the height of the turf on the fairway. This may range from three-quarters to one and a half inches. In contrast, the putting green is maintained at a quarter of an inch. It may be seen that this differential mowing produces a very abrupt change. Sometimes golf balls may lodge against this shoulder of higher turf and a difficult lie is provided.

One solution to this problem is to make a couple of turns around the putting green collar with the mower set at an intermediate height so that there is not the abrupt change in mowing heights. An easy method for maintaining this intermediate height was described in the *USGA Western Turfletter* of August, 1953. An account is given of a device built by Forrest Bishop, superintendent of the Tri-City Country Club, Kennewick, Wash. Mr. Bishop extended the shaft of the scalping roller on each side of his greens mower so that this shaft would hold three and one-half inch pulleys, which acted as snap-on wheels for rapid conversion of the greens mower to a collar mower. These pulleys raised the height of the cutting blade just enough to give an intermediate height of mowing. This saves the necessity for having a special mower for this job and it does not require adjustment of the mower blades.

A good looking collar is important on a shirt or on a putting green.