



Traction bar is bent and welded across front of hopper.

We Built a Truckster-Mounted Topdresser

by VIC CEDRONE

PINEHURST Country Club, with its five 18-hole golf courses, is a superintendent's delight. Sometimes, though, it also can be a headache. During the height of our season (six months of the year), we receive an average of 280 to 320 rounds of golf daily on each of our five courses. At that time of year, every piece of machinery must be in top running

condition. We cannot afford breakdowns in equipment because it is most important that all operations stay ahead of play. Once caught by golfers, production for the rest of the day is minimal. For example, a man can mow 15 fairways without interruption in four hours and then spend four tortuous hours cutting the remaining three fairways in traffic. It's frustrating to the superintendent, annoying to golfers and indeed has significant impact upon the budget. It was at a time like this last year when we decided to improve our topdressing method.

Pinehurst has several topdressing machines, all of which we consider unsatisfactory for one reason or another, i.e., amount of time required to topdress a green, or distribution of topdressing was not consistent. It was our opinion that we could improve upon any topdresser in our equipment inventory, and not only save our time, but also reduce inconvenience to the golfer.

Richard Yow, our equipment manager, is very imaginative and is willing to attempt to fabricate any type of specialty machinery not available commercially. Yow and his crew of

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mechanics went about the task with abandon. Several ideas were discussed and after thorough study of each, a definite plan evolved to convert our walking topdresser to a mounted, riding model.

The first stage was to cut the front wheel off the topdressing machine. Next, the two sides of the traction frame were heated, pulled together, and welded square across the front of the hopper. The traction and feed shafts were removed. The rear support bar was shortened one and one-half inches, thus allowing the hopper to sit level in the golf cart. The clutch handle was remounted on the left side of the hopper. The feed shaft was cut in half and mounted on the left side of the hopper through the sprocket which pulls the brush. A piece of the old traction frame was cut and welded to the hopper with a pillar block bearing to give support to the chain sprocket and the clutch pulley. The clutch pulley was mounted on the same adjustable part of the frame so that we could still use the standard V belt and chain that comes with the topdresser. Two brackets were then welded to the rear of the topdresser to align it with the rear mounting pins on the truckster's short-dump bed. The gas tank and engine breather were modified so that the engine compartment would not interfere with the truckster seat.

ALL THE PARTS taken from the traction part of the topdresser were re-used; every part on the truckster-mounted topdresser can be ordered from the manufacturer.

We tried it on one green, calibrated it and immediately knew we had a winner. We topdressed 54 greens the first day. We can now topdress an 18-hole golf course in two hours, have the topdressing dragged and watered-in before the golfers catch up. We found the slowest part of the operation was dragging the topdressing soil into the green. We built a drag using 2 x 4's and two steel drag mats and mounted it on a golf cart. Thereafter we moved along very smoothly with little or no interruption to play.

(Top) The remodeled topdresser is now ready for mounting on the truckster.

(Right) The riding topdresser — the finished product. Author Vic Cedrone (left) and builder Richard Yow (right).

