The USGA Research Committee (left to right): Stephen J. Horrell, Charles W. Smith, W. H. Bengeyfield, Harry W. Easterly, Jr., Dr. Paul Rieke, James B. Moncrief, H. E. Neale, Dr. James R. Watson. Dr. Marvin H. Ferguson is not present.

The Green Section's New Turfgrass Research Committee

TO GUIDE the USGA's proposed multi-million-dollar turfgrass research project over the next 10 or more years, a Research Advisory Committee has been formed. Since last January, it has already held three important planning meetings.

"We believe this will develop into one of our most important undertakings," said Harry W. Easterly, Jr., USGA Senior Executive Director. "In time, the research program developed by this Committee could lead to major breakthroughs in all phases of turfgrass maintenance, including golf, athletic fields, lawns, parks, highways, etc."

The Committee is comprised of some of the nation's leading turfgrass experts:

Dr. Marvin H. Ferguson, Research Director, American Society of Golf Course Architects; Dr. Paul Rieke, Associate Professor, Michigan State University; Dr. James R. Watson, Vice-President, The Toro Company; Stephen J. Horrell, Chairman, USGA Green Section Committee; Harry W. Easterly, Jr., USGA Senior Executive Director; Charles W. Smith, USGA Director, Administration and Services; William H. Bengeyfield, Committee Chairman and National Director, USGA Green Section; James B. Moncrief, Former Director, Southeastern Region, USGA Green Section; Harold E. Neale, USGA Director of Development.

The primary purpose of the program is to develop minimal-maintenance turfgrasses. Emphasis will be placed on water-conserving, salt-tolerant, cold- and heat-tolerant, disease- and insect-resistant grasses having low nutritional requirements. The ultimate goal is a wear-resistant turf with the above qualities that also provides excellent playing surfaces. The original concept was developed by A. M. Radko of the USGA Green Section and Dr. James B. Beard of Texas A&M University. Funding has recently been provided for the start of a study on stress mechanisms within grass plants.

Another major Committee effort will be to develop a computerized reference source for all published turfgrass research literature. The literature sources will be gathered from throughout the world and made available through a computer data bank. Thus researchers, teachers, extension specialists, course superintendents, etc., will have access to turfgrass research listings as to title, data, where located, etc. This will serve a great purpose for turfgrass information and future advances.

To improve and increase germplasm for future turfgrass breeding projects, the Committee has provided funds in recent months for several overseas grass plant collection trips. Expeditions to Asia and South Africa (related article in this issue) have already been funded. With this new germplasm, the Green Section will be able to sponsor various breeding programs to achieve the objectives noted above.

The Research Advisory Committee serves, without compensation, at the pleasure of the USGA Executive Committee. It will coordinate and become the watchdog over the entire project to insure proper progress, expenditures, and direction toward these and future essential worthwhile goals.