

## Buying Seed for Northern Fairways

C. V. PIPER AND R. A. OAKLEY

The matter of economy in purchasing seed for the fairways is one that may well be given serious consideration. In seeding the fairways of a new 18-hole course, which will comprise about 50 acres for the fairways alone, approximately 10,000 pounds of seed is required. It is considered that 200 pounds of seed to the acre is the most desirable rate of seeding. North of a line from Richmond to St. Louis the customary seed mixtures for fairway use are 1 pound of redbtop to 4 pounds of Kentucky bluegrass, or 1 pound of redbtop to 4 pounds of red fescue; the redbtop-bluegrass mixture is the more commonly used. Either mixture may indeed be used advantageously in the territory mentioned, but in nine cases out of ten the redbtop-bluegrass mixture gives the better results. The relative costs of seed at present wholesale prices are about as follows:

2,000 lbs. redbtop, at 18c.....	\$360
8,000 lbs. Kentucky bluegrass, at 25c.....	2,000
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	\$2,360
2,000 lbs. redbtop, at 18c.....	\$360
8,000 lbs. red fescue at 60c.....	4,800
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	\$5,160

Aside from the saving in purchase money, we strongly recommend the redbtop-bluegrass mixture as the better one for northern fairways.

In all the territory mentioned it is usually desirable to add about 10 per cent. of bent seed; but bent seed at present is very scarce and expensive.

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## The Course With Limited Means

A member of the executive committee of the Green Section recently spent an afternoon with the chairman of the greens on a nine-hole course in the Middle West, and was taken off his feet by the greeting, "Your Green Section and BULLETIN may possibly be fine for the course that is extravagantly maintained at an expense of from \$15,000 to \$25,000 a year, but you and the BULLETIN are 'too far uptown'—too fancy for 99 per cent of the courses like ours with only nine holes and only \$3,000 a year to spend."

Our member tried to explain our desire to promote modest-cost golf and our efforts to obtain material for the BULLETIN that would be specially helpful to just such courses, but the explanations did not seem to be acceptable, and \$20 a year for the BULLETIN was declared to be a wanton extravagance that would be instantly repudiated by the board of directors.

The two started around the course, and the first thing they came to was a green set in the end of a ravine with high banks on three sides, woods on the east and south, and water constantly running under the green through a large drain. There was not a hatful of grass on the green, but it had been recently sown with twenty-five pounds of "putting-green mixture" which cost 50 cents a pound. The green had been sown the third

or fourth time and was just as far from being a green as it was before it was touched.

In response to a request for an opinion, the executive committee member endeavored to explain the impossibility of ever getting a good green in such a location because of the uncontrollable seepage; and on the seed question he explained that better seed than was being sown could be bought of the local seedsman for less money.

The next green, and the next, and all of them were literally covered with vigorous growths of all the varieties of crab grass possible to imagine. Some of the plants were from six to eight inches in diameter, and one or two greens that had been prepared for seeding looked as though they had had the smallpox. Another green was found in a drainage hollow, and its soil condition was proved by large areas of sedge which were being taken out, leaving places 12 to 18 inches in diameter perfectly barren and ugly.

There was not such a thing as a fairway on the lot, but there were three or four weird-shaped greens, about which were a lot of dinky, shallow, ill-kept sand traps. The chairman explained that he had just paid out \$150 for sand for these traps, though there was not one from which a ball could not be bunted out with a putter. The seed purchase of the year amounted to \$250, the sand was \$150, and the traps and new work not included in the maintenance item of \$3,000 cost \$1,500. There was not a shovelful of compost on the place. There was grass enough on both the greens and fairways to make a good start, and there was too much, except on the crab-grass greens, to make seeding of much benefit. The greens and fairways both needed fertilizing and dressing. When questioned about fertilizing, the local chairman said they had never done anything except to buy and use a car of commercial humus the previous year at a cost of \$500.

There was a little free lecture on the removal of crab-grass in the first stage of its career, when it obviously costs less to get it out than after it has sent its tentacles out in all directions. There was an attempt to show that \$250 spent for compost and fertilizer would get better results than that value of seed. The executive committee member would have liked to have said what was in his mind about the dinky traps and the \$150 worth of sand; for the nature of the ground was such that there were all the natural hazards about the greens that any one could want; and why a club with only \$3,000 to spend should deliberately waste it on such traps and sand was beyond imagination. There were four or five pulpit tees built up a foot or so above the natural surface and always rectangular in shape, and all inconceivably ill-kempt in appearance. The rest of the tees were sensible—nothing but mowed sections smooth enough for the purpose, but it was explained that the funds ran out so that these tees could not be built up and finished.

The ridiculous phase of the whole situation appeared in the local man's statement that the nine holes were too "sporty" for the members, so it was intended to build nine more that would be easier to play. Instead of the course being too hard, it was too bad. There was not a thing about it to attract a member to go near it.

Any one with any sense could see how the \$3,000 a year could be spent to better advantage and how the waste could be turned into green grass.

With just a little sense and no more money, some grass, and in time turf, could be put under the players' feet.

The great aim of the Green Section is to be helpful to the courses that must be maintained for little or nothing; but it is hard to help those who know too much to learn.

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### Uniform Grass on All the Greens

DR. MAYNARD M. METCALF, *The Orchard Laboratory, Oberlin, Ohio*

Is it well to have the grass uniform on all the putting-greens of a course; or is it better to have one quality of grass on one green and other qualities on other greens, some grass being fast, some slow, some very slow? These diverse effects could easily be secured. One green might have a rich admixture of clover, making a very slow green. The coarsest strains of creeping bent are much slower than the finest-leaved strains, and there are all degrees of intergradation, and there are other good greens grasses of various degrees of fineness, making greens of various degrees of speed.

Putting-greens of varying quality (very slow, slow, fast, very fast) add decidedly to the difficulty of a course, each type of green calling for its own kind of putting. Half or more of the strokes are taken on or onto the greens, and diversifying the quality of the grass on the greens adds immensely to the difficulty of the game. Is it an advantage to have greens of diverse grass qualities?

There is chance here for difference of opinion, but the writer believes that uniformity in the quality of the grass upon all the greens of any one course is a great desideratum. Putting is perhaps the most ticklish part of golf, and in this department of the game confidence is perhaps a little more important than in any other. With uniform greens through the course one gets the feel of the greens and putts with confidence. On the other hand, diverse conditions on the greens turf worries a man badly in his putting, and all the more because the degrees of difference in the turf are hard to estimate by the eye and are even harder to carry accurately in mind when one is familiar with the several greens. Diversity of quality in the greens adds a most tricky element of hazard and, it seems to the writer, an undesirable one.

If it be admitted that uniform greens are an advantage, then emphasis is placed upon the stolon method of planting greens, for one can plant his greens nursery with stolons of a single strain of creeping bent, even all from a single plant, thus securing uniform quality in the greens planted with stolons from this nursery. The greenkeeper can select carefully for his nursery the strain which seems all around the best, and can know in advance just the quality of green he will ultimately have.

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**Betterment of heavy clay fairways.**—The best way to improve fairways on heavy clay soil is to top-dress frequently with sand. The sandy layer helps absorb water quickly and prevents the clay from puddling and baking. Every addition of sand until one inch is secured will help.