

Low Fertilizing Value of Peat

That peat has a low fertilizing value is the opinion of the United States Department of Agriculture Fertilizer Council, which has been studying the problem as a result of many inquiries. During the past few years peat has frequently been advertised for sale as "humus," to be used as fertilizer or in place of fertilizer or manure. It has been alleged that special processes, such as "bacterization," occasionally give it unusual power to improve soil conditions and plant growth. The department council finds that peat, as well as muck and similar materials, whether bacterized or not, are distinctly inferior to stable manure or mineral fertilizers for increasing crop production. Although it is too bulky and too poor in available plant food to serve as substitutes for these materials, certain kinds of peat appear to be suitable in the growing of specialties or as a potting soil in greenhouse forcing. In the manufacture of mixed fertilizers the use of peat as a conditioner, as well as a filler, appears to have been satisfactory to the mixer.

According to the statement made by the department council, a well-decomposed layer of peat contains little plant food of any kind. The rather high percentage of nitrogen occasionally found in peat or muck is due not to the presence of available nitrogen, but to the slow accumulations of nitrogenous material of an extremely inert character, the more soluble substances having been lost. Peat deposits represent slow accumulations of layers of plant material of different kinds, and show great variation in texture and quality. Many peat deposits are agriculturally unsatisfactory and some peat contains substances which actually injure plants. However, considerable areas of peat and muck soils are under cultivation and these frequently show high productivity for many kinds of truck crops or as grass land.

The claims of unusual value for bacterized peat appear to be based more or less directly on statements made a few years ago by Professor Bottemley, of England. Further experiments in this country and abroad have failed to support this theory and no laboratory process for the "bacterization" of peat which improves its fertilizer value has been discovered.

A Few Kind Words; or What Keeps the Green Committee On the Job

"We joined the Green Section of the U. S. Golf Association and desire here to say that we are deeply indebted to this wonderful organization for the invaluable aid and advice they gave us during the time that our course was being constructed. Time and time again questions arose relative to many of the details connected with the work on our course with regard to which we found it necessary to obtain not only the advice of our architect and our professional but also of other experts; and the Green Section always came to the front, without charge to us other than the small membership dues we pay annually, and gave us the benefit of all they had learned from many years of experience with golf courses."—*Mr. Benjamin C. Ribman, President, Fresh Meadow Country Club, Flushing, Long Island.*

"You are to be congratulated on this move. Our public course, in common with others, strives to give facilities to players at the lowest cost possible. Assistance from an agency whose sole interest is to accumulate and disperse intelligent information for the sake of golf itself will result in fewer errors and

lower costs. Our organization feels indebted to you."—*Mr. Louis B. Harris, Municipal Golf and Tennis Association, Wilmington, Del.*

"It is pretty generally thought that the chairmanship of a greens committee is a thankless job, but after having been elected a life member of our club at the last annual meeting I am forced to believe that this is not true. I am naturally very proud of the honor, but my reason for mentioning it here is because I feel that the Green Section of the U. S. Golf Association is responsible for it. All I have done has been to bother the life out of you people, study THE BULLETIN closely, and endeavor to comply with what I so learned. I wish to thank you for your untiring assistance to us in the past year, and wish you much success for the ensuing season."—*Mr. R. A. Young, Highland Golf Club, Indianapolis, Ind.*

Some U. S. Golf Association Decisions on the Rules of Golf

Question.—In a two-ball mixed foursome, A and B (the men) and C and D (the women), A and C playing together and B and D playing together, it is C's shot from the tee. She tees her ball and swings, but does not strike the ball. A, not being satisfied with the way C had teed her ball, removed the ball from the tee and made a new tee, to suit his style of playing, on another part of the teeing ground. Had he the right to do this, or should he have driven the ball from the tee which C had made? In other words, after the ball had been put in play, had he the right to lift it?

Answer.—A ball is in play as soon as the player has made a stroke at a teeing ground, and it remains in play until holed out, except when lifted in accordance with the rules. Therefore, after C had struck at the ball it was in play and should not have been touched. The penalty for lifting the ball is two strokes in medal play and the loss of the hole in match play. (See rule 6.)

Question.—In match play, opponents A and B are both on the putting green on their first shot, A being about 25 feet away and B being about 10 feet away. A, without sending his caddy to the flag-stick, putts, and his ball strikes the flag-stick as it stands in the hole, bounces up, and drops in the hole. B protests that A should have removed the stick from the hole; A claims not. B then putts out, making a hole in three. Who wins the hole?

Answer.—In match play either player may have the flag removed at any time, and the fact that A hit the flag-stick and the ball dropped in the hole does not incur a penalty. B had the right to have the flag-stick removed if he had wanted to. (See rule 32.)

On the Special Importance of Good Fairway Near the Greens

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Some fortunate courses have nearly uniform condition of turf upon fairways and greens, but of most courses this can not be said. Turf of only moderate quality through the major part of the fairway is not a very serious disadvantage, but irregular turf just short of the greens is a serious disadvantage. It is here that most balls must light on the approach shots, and the turf should be so even and uniform, so free from cuppy spots, ant hills, mole runs, and worm casts, as to allow one to approach with predictable results. The high, deadstop ball lighting on the green itself is not the only good approach shot in golf. It should be possible to use the pitch-and-run and also the run-up ball, except upon "island greens," from which a running shot is purposely excluded, and of this sort of green there should be not many examples in the eighteen holes.

Recent inspection of a score of very good courses in different parts