

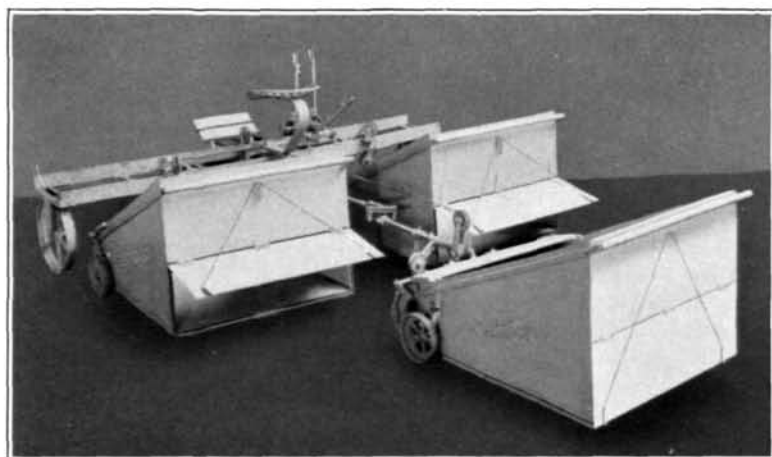
Crab Grass

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One of the greatest difficulties that exist in growing a fine turf on golf courses is the control of crab grass.

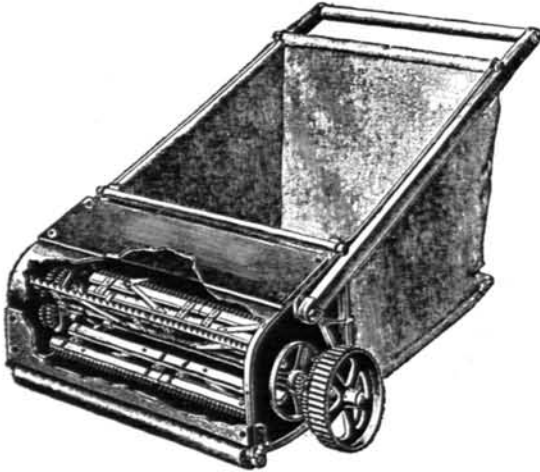
As far as the greens are concerned, the safest and best method is to cut the crab grass plants out of the turf when they are very small, some time in June. We have found by experience at Merion that the amount of crab grass on the greens has decreased materially each year by cutting the weed out; and if that is done early enough the greens will not be injured and will be perfectly playable. We had a good illustration of the evil results of failing to follow this practice, during the war time, when we discontinued work on our west course; and since then it has taken us three years to get the greens back in the shape they were in before we discontinued the cutting out of crab grass and other weeds.

For the control of crab grass on fairways and tees, a lawn-mower company has devised, at our suggestion, a triplex lawn cleaner, based on the hand lawn cleaner, which was used to gather up leaves, sticks, etc., and which covers the same area as the triplex lawn mower. In the accompanying illustrations are shown the complete triplex sweeper, one of the sweeper units with the front cut away to expose the cylinder or revolving rakes, and the working parts of the machine, namely, the steel wire teeth, the divided rake head, hinges, retaining springs, shaft, small gears, and the radial arms with a curve designed to give the best suction and the most effective throw.



On both ends of the shaft are the ratchets, or pawl cups, in which the pinions operate in conjunction with the ground wheels. The rake heads are divided and hinged, and supported by flat steel springs, to prevent breakage to them or injury to the turf, when any foreign substance is encountered. In each pinion are two pawls, working independently, and the machine can be driven from either side. The rakes are 3 feet wide, thereby giving, with the overlap, a sweeping width of 8½ feet. Our method of

using the cleaner has been to run it over the fairway in order to make the seed heads stand up, then follow with the lawn mower, and then the lawn cleaner again, which gathers up from 80 to 90 per cent of the seed. We tried it late in 1921 on some of the fairways, and it showed a very beneficial effect. It not only gathered up a great deal of the seed, but it re-

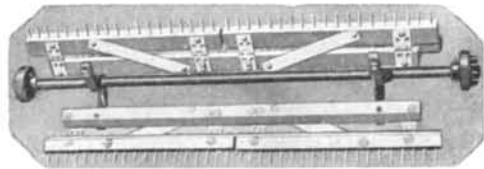


duced the individual plant of crab grass from an area of say 8 inches square to 2 inches square, thereby giving the good grass more of a chance to spread in the fall and not be smothered out. There is, of course, plenty of the crab grass seed still left on the ground after the cleaner is used, and it will thus be impossible to eradicate all of the grass.

Last year we gave the cleaner a more thorough test, using it both on our east course and on our west course. Unfortunately there

was only one machine in existence, while two are necessary for the two courses, as the grass should be cut before the seed ripens, otherwise much of the seed is beaten off onto the ground in the gathering. The results of last fall's work were not very definite, owing to the very severe drought, but we are hopeful that this spring and the coming fall will show a marked improvement.

I am very hopeful that other clubs will test this scheme, or improvements on it, and see what results they get. The cost of the machine is not great, and if the results are as we hope it will be well worth while, as it will give the permanent grass a chance to grow. It is already proved that it makes the playing surface much better—that is, not so spongy and soft in the fall, but more like the spring and summer conditions. We have not yet reached a stage where very definite statements can be made as to the efficacy of this process, and it is hoped that the experiments of other clubs along the same line will establish the fact whether or not the method is efficacious. We will have two machines this year, and by next year ought to have some definite information on the subject to announce through THE BULLETIN.



We shall be glad to answer any questions with regard to the machine and to show the machine in operation to any interested visitors.