

Special Maintenance Duties of the Southern Greenskeeper

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THE southern greenskeeper's problems are not, in their broader aspects, particularly different from those of the northern greensman. Mowing, weeding, fertilizing and similar maintenance duties are performed in very much the same manner wherever the golf course is located.

There is, however, one important difference—the southern course receives its heaviest play during the winter months and the southern greenskeeper must accordingly keep his course in playing condition twelve months in the year, whereas play on the northern course ends about December 1st and the northern greenskeeper simply puts his links to bed until spring, some four or five months later.

The principal problem of the southern course, then, is to keep the greens, and the fairways to a lesser extent, in good condition through the winter. What makes this a problem is the fact that no one species of grass will serve all year round.

Fall Seeding Necessary

My experience has been mainly with courses along the Mississippi gulf coast. In such a climate, I have never found any grass better than Bermuda for summer greens. It gives us a fairly smooth putting surface, is reasonably resistant to weeds, and is easy to keep up. But it dies out and becomes brown and dormant about the middle of December.

Accordingly, about this time of year, I sow the greens rather heavily with a 50-50 mixture of redtop and Italian rye, so that by the time the Bermuda dies down, the winter seeds have formed a playing carpet.

Within a month, I have better greens than I have in summer and they last until well into February, when the Bermuda comes up again. I use two kinds of seed in my winter greens because the red top is somewhat bunchy and the rye acts as a filler.

Principle Southern Weeds

Obviously, there are some operations to be done before the winter seed is put in,

principally weeding. Along the gulf coast there are three important injurious weeds. There is bull-grass, which looks like the crab-grass of the north, but coarser; carpet grass, which forms our fairways and is ideal for that purpose, but very bad and hard to keep out of the greens. The third weed has a small round leaf about a third of an inch across, and spreads very rapidly like a slender vine. I do not know its name.

The bull-grass and the carpet-grass must be cut out of the greens by hand so as to get to the roots. For the third weed, a vigorous raking of the greens with a fine toothed rake will remove the long runners very quickly.

I top-dress the greens about three weeks after putting in the winter seed, and again a little later. In this connection, I find that Italian rye is very delicate and will be killed if too heavily top dressed; so I am very careful to dress the greens very lightly and work the material well in with steel mats so that only the roots are covered.

Tees Also Seeded

As soon as I am through seeding the greens, I do the same for the tees, which are larger than usually found in the northern states because in the south the turf is thinner and so takes a longer time to recover from heavy play. My tees are large enough so that any part of them can have plenty of time to erase divot marks.

Fairways Require Little Care

Winter care of gulf coast greens is not out of ordinary routine. They must be sprinkled and mowed and weeded if they are to be kept in good condition. The fairways require almost no attention; the carpet-grass hardly grows at all. Occasionally I send a mower over them to trim up the edges of the rough and to clip off the tips of the leaves of the carpet-grass, which turn brown after a frost. This browning does not effect the fairways in any way, but unless the leaf tips are clipped off, the fairways look burned and dead.

The gulf coast region is very flat, the rainfall is heavy and drainage is very poor. For this reason, open ditches will carry away excess rainfall much more rapidly than tile and should be installed along the sides of each fairway. Smaller ditches in which the carpet-grass will grow, should cross the fairways at frequent intervals. Be sure they are shallow enough so a golf ball will not be stopped by them, and locate them intelligently with reference to the shot areas of the players.

Shallow Traps Best

Traps should never be deep because of the excess rainfall. There are two rea-

sons for this: the heavy rains will wash the sand from the slopes and cause no end of maintenance to keep in shape; and the drainage is so poor that water will stand in a deep trap for days after a rain.

Whether or not a grass will ever be developed that can be used on southern greens the year around I do not know, but if it ever is developed, the work of the southern greenskeeper will be very much lightened.

I hope some variety of bent is developed that will withstand the scorching sun of summer and the frosts which are sometimes most severe, of winter.

When the Golf Club Capitalizes Its Name

By WALDON FAWCETT

EVEN though the directorate of a golf club be positively squeamish as to anything that smacks of commercialism, yet has the time come when consideration must be given to the question of capitalizing the club name. Even if a club has no compulsion, in these days of mounting overhead, to demand dividends of all its resources, there remains the force of example, or club custom. Golf organizations in all parts of the country have put forward "club specials" in soft drinks and "club brands" of cigarettes, even as there are club favorites among the dishes on the menu. And the idea is catching.

There is no question but what capitalization of the club name is capable of contributing to the club revenue. There is, perhaps, room for debate on the score of effect upon club prestige, though one school of opinion holds that it adds rather than detracts from club reputation to license the use of its name, say, on a service garage. Whatever the conclusion on this count, there is the obvious enhancement to club income from the profits on the sale of private brand merchandise. This is true in proportion whether the private branding be applicable to all-the-year staples in the entire gamut from ginger ale to golf balls, or whether it be restricted to annual specials as, for instance, Christmas boxes of candy.

Study Obligations

However welcome the income that "own label" specialties bring to the golf club, it

is necessary to face the fact that club name capitalization brings its responsibilities as well as its rewards. Club management is warranted in making a study of the obligations as well as the recompense before undertaking to put the club name to work as a sponsor or salesman. Foresight is particularly desirable in order that nothing in the actual operations of private branding or club branding shall ever reflect upon the fair fame of the club. There are a few unfortunate clubs in the United States where the ejaculation, "Oh, those club cigarettes!" carries a world of scorn and reproach. Club stewards and hostesses and club officers are repenting at leisure the haste of contracts made without realization of the pitfalls of private branding when not safeguarded by proper specifications and guaranties.

Solicitude for club reputation is calculated to cause an organization, once it has decided upon name capitalization, to approach gingerly the question of whether the club shall do its own capitalizing or shall have it done by proxy under its auspices. That is to say, there is a question of policy involved that is basic and fundamental. Shall the club undertake the application and administration of its house mark or club brand by contracting for the manufacture or packing of goods under the club caption? Or, as the alternative, shall the club farm out the privilege to a lessee or concessionaire who will take over the whole operation of the plan but will, of course, pay the club for the privi-