

UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION GREEN SECTION EASTERN REGION

NORTHEASTERN DISTRICT

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY

MID-ATLANTIC DISTRICT

PLANT INDUSTRY STATION
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EASTERN TURFLETTER

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I D E A S A N D G A D G E T S

"Necessity is the Mother of Invention". Never were truer words spoken so far as golf course maintenance and management is concerned. Superintendents strive to make the maximum use of every piece of equipment, they improvise or make changes in order to get top mileage for every dollar expended. In our travels we have the opportunity to see many of these ideas and gadgets at work. Here are a few that may be helpful to you.

1. A slicer for putting green turf. Credit for this gadget we believe belongs to Mr. Manny Francis, Supt. of Vesper CC Lowell, Mass., although we recently observed it in use at Pelham CC, Pelham Manor, N. Y. where Mr. Steve Kristoff is Supt. Many clubs have as standard equipment a power sod cutter which does a fine job of cutting sod to a uniform depth and has made the task of sodding greens, tees, aprons and other turf areas much easier. This sod cutter employes the principle of an oscillating movement of the cutter blade to do its fine work. This is but one job for one machine and when not in use, like other specialized equipment, it sets in the barn for long periods unused. These men did something about it--they took a worn cutter blade and welded the serrated, triangular sickle bar knives, which are standard for all hay or cutter bar units, vertically $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches apart to the worn cutter blade. Thus they employ all the good principles of the power sod cutter to slice their greens. The improvised gadget costs less than \$10 to make, and it is excellent to use on greens to cut thru thatch, isolated dry spots, for overseeding, or prior to fertilizing, liming, or top dressing. According to Steve, they can do nine greens a day at Pelham with the improvised turf slicer.



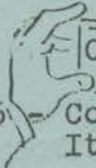
2. Don't discard that old barber's chair -- do as Mr. Ray Bringham, Supt at the Rhode Island CC, West Barrington, R. I. did with one. By removing the back and replacing the seat with a flat board surface he converted the old barber's chair into a swivel workbench. By use of the swivel operating handle, which is standard for barber's chairs, Ray can turn the improvised workbench to any desired position from any working angle.
3. To brighten up the furniture on the golf course, Mr. Albert "Les" Allen, Supt. Kernwood CC, Salem, Massachusetts paints his benches various bright colors using auto enamel. He favors the light pastel colors which not only show to advantage, but are also very easy to clean. A damp cloth does the trick according to Les.
4. To fix ballmarks on greens -- "an ice-pick is an excellent tool for the job" -- so says Mr. Larry King, Supt. at North Hills CC, Douglaston, Long Island. Every one of his greens men carries an ice-pick as standard equipment. The best way to repair a ball mark, according to Mr. King, is to place the ice-pick vertically (not at an angle) into the soil just outside the ball mark and push or slant the handle in the direction of the bruise. Do this at four equal points around the ball mark, then step on it, and it's as good as new. Many try to lift the ball mark by placing some instrument (a tee, a key, etc.) under the bruise and stretching the turf. This is not good practice according to Mr. King ... "it takes longer to heal."
5. Ever use a grapefruit knife to snip common or silver crabgrass? We all know it's not necessary to remove crabgrass roots, but so often they are difficult to sever from the crown of the plant. It takes a razor-sharp knife to do so. The serrated cutting edge of a grapefruit knife is made to order for this task, it is angled just about right, too, and it doesn't become dull easily. Try it sometime--it works fine.
6. Polyethylene to the rescue -- Last winter the freezing weather closed-in on the Northeast sooner than expected and many were unable to complete projects underway. One who was caught in this predicament was Mr. Elmer Michael, Supt. at Oak Hill CC, Pittsford, N. Y., who had just lifted some fine Merion bluegrass sod from the nursery. The sod was all rolled and stacked neatly when the "deep freeze" set in around Thanksgiving Day. Fearful that he would lose the sod completely he decided to cover it with a polyethylene tarp. The sod was covered thru to April when it was laid on the tee, weak but still alive.

Incidentally, and in the same vein, Mr. Ed Casey, Supt. at Baltusrol Golf Club, Springfield, N. J. has made it a practice with good success to cover stolons, when planted late in Fall, with a polyethylene tarp also for winter protection.

7. Aerifier converted to spiker -- by Mr. Mario Finizia, Supt. Wannamoisett CC, Rumford, R. I. which does an excellent job -- spikes 18 greens in one day. Mario did it this way: (a) He removed the aerifier spoons. (b) He then bolted bands of steel 1/4" thick and 4 inches wide to each of the outside discs, and extending across all discs. Twelve in all were placed on the discs. (c) To these bands of steel sickle bar knives were welded 4 inches apart in staggered pattern (6 on 6 bands, 7 on the others alternately). Estimated cost of conversion was \$65.

SEED PRICES UP!

Because of unfavorable growing and harvesting conditions, grass seed production in 1959 will be lower than average. The Crop Reporting Board forecast for Kentucky bluegrass, for example, is expected to be about 9,340,000 pounds as contrasted with 64,570,000 pounds harvested in 1958. The '59 yield is the lowest since 1934. Other grass seed crops are also expected to be much lower than in average years--hence, this year's prices will be higher than in normal production years. The usual law of supply and demand.



COMING EVENTS - 1959

September 15 - Cornell Field Day - Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. Dr. John Cornman.

September 17 - Rhode Island Field Day - University of Rhode Island, Kingston. Dr. Jesse DeFrance.

The Pennsylvania State Turf Field Day will not be held this September, according to word from Dr. Joseph M. Duich, due to the relocation of the plots to allow for University expansion.

Pinhole leaks costly -- according to the Plumbing and Heating Industries Bureau, a pinhole leak can waste about 95,000 gallons of water in a year. At a representative rate of charge of \$1.90 per 1,000 cubic feet, this means a loss of \$24.14. A monetary loss always hurts, but even more painful is the waste of precious water supplies. If this impressive loss is possible in the home, there is even more waste potential on the golf course where faucets and valves are more numerous, pressures higher, and pipe lines so much more extensive. Let's not be guilty of waste with one of our most precious commodities -- it pays to keep systems in good repair.



Eastern Turfletter

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