

# GRASS CLIPPINGS

by Gordon Witteveen

Some time has passed since I last wrote under this heading in our Magazine. The reason is simply that we have had an excellent supply of copy and there was no need for filler material. But with the summer now upon us, the golf superintendents are back tending their courses and the professors are busily working on their various research projects. At Greenmaster headquarters, we are once again reaching the bottom of the barrel of our supply of articles. It would be easy to reprint the lectures from the various turf conferences that have taken place this past winter, but that would be duplication of the worst kind, since all our members and all golf clubs in Canada have already received copies of the conference proceedings. This, by the way, is another example of the excellent cooperation that exists between the R.C.G.A. and the C.G.S.A. Several sets of envelopes have been run off through our addressograph machine and are in the hands of the R.C.G.A. main office. Every time a mailing goes out concerning the maintenance of the golf course, these envelopes are used so that all our members get their information direct.

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If you have time to read at all during the busy summer schedule, I recommend an article in the May issue of

Golf Digest about artificial turf. First introduced in the Houston Astrodome, hence its name - "Astroturf", it is now being used on a nine hole layout in the U.S. Apparently, the material is very expensive, but this is supposedly offset by the greatly reduced maintenance cost. No doubt, as more clubs start using the material, it will become less expensive with mass production techniques. Just a few years ago, the whole idea of artificial grass on tees and greens seemed far fetched and belonging in the space age, but is now an absolute reality. And if you think that it will never happen in Canada, you are wrong too . . . Just the other night, I had a call from one of our members whose club was considering installation of Astroturf on tees and greens for 1969. The question arises: Will artificial turf become a serious challenge to our professional objectives? There are, in the history of man's progress, certain parallels that we can draw on. Margarine did not put the farmer out of business, but think what the diesel engine did to the steam locomotive! Somewhere between these extremes our future will probably rest.

In the meantime, our most positive response to this threat lies in the production of quality turf at economical prices. Whenever grass turns brown through either winter damage or summer heat, we use the phrase "It'll come back!" Indeed, it mostly does, except with artificial turf now on the market, it may not come back in time.

Talking about grass reminds me of a neighbor down the street. He has to be the world's greatest optimist. Just like mine, his lawn is built on five feet of subsoil.



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In five years, he has not applied a single pound of fertilizer. The other day, the fellow in the hardware store caught this neighbor in an extravagant mood and sold him an expensive grass catcher for his lawnmower. I wonder what clippings he intends to gather? To make matters worse, he is also a golfer, and will probably be someone's Greens Chairman in years to come.

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Consultants, Agronomists, Turf Experts or whatever other title they go by are getting more numerous every year. You can get free advice or expensive advice and even unsolicited advice, but all the advice in the world does not make the grass grow. It is you - the course superintendent - who puts the men to work in the morning. The decisions that you make at that time on that day and on every day determine the condition of the golf course. There are few experts around at that time of day. They usually come when they can impress the Greens Chairman or Club President with their gift of the gab, which is considerably later in the day.

## LAPEL PINS

The C.G.S.A. publicity committee, under the chairmanship of Joseph Reid has designed a lapel pin which displays the Association crest in an attractive manner. These pins may be obtained by sending a cheque or money order in the amount of \$2.50 to the head office at 31 Diana Drive, Downsview, Ontario. This sum includes postage and handling charges. Please allow three weeks for delivery.

## Montreal for '69

March 10-11-12 - R.C.G.A. Turfgrass Conference and Show in conjunction with the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association will be held at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal. This will be the first bilingual turf meeting in the world - a date to remember!

## FREE PASSES FOR THE "OPEN"

All members of the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association who are associated with golf clubs may obtain a free pass for the Canadian Open at St. George's this year. Persons wishing to take advantage of this privilege must present their 1968 membership card at the main gate on Islington Avenue. They may also be required to present personal identification such as a driver's license. The granting of this privilege has been arranged through the cooperative efforts of the R.C.G.A. governors and the C.G.S.A. directorate.

The 1969 Open will take place at Montreal's Pinegrove Country Club where Doug Lamb is superintendent. In 1970, the Open will return to Ontario and be hosted by the London Hunt Club where Morley Findlay has been in charge for several years.



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