

## U. S. Golf Association Decision on the Rules of Golf

**Question.**—A and B are playing against each other at match play. A's second shot stops 3 inches from the cup. B's second ends in a trap. B plays his third and does not get out of the trap, and then takes a sort of hopeless swing at the ball, which hits the face of the trap, flies off at an unexpected angle, and strikes A, and from A goes on the green and in the cup for a four. A's ball in the meantime is, of course, still within 3 inches of the cup in two. B claims the hole, and the question is, whether or not he gets it. The rule, of course, says if a player's ball strikes his opponent's, the opponent loses the hole.

**Answer.**—Rule 18 covers the situation. It is the opponent's duty to keep out of the way until the hole is given up. A hole is given up when contact of the two minds agree, when they then pick up their balls and continue the game.

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## Spreading Top-Dressing

By LYMAN CARRIER.

One of the important details in greenkeeping is the spreading of top-dressing. Many of the older men in the profession know how to do this to get good results. But some greenkeepers apply top-dressing by such slipshod methods that the greens are damaged as much as benefited. It should be understood that top-dressings are used for two different purposes. If the right materials are employed they promote the growth of the grass. This is perhaps the more important reason for top-dressing. But it is highly desirable to top-dress sometimes even when the growth of grass is satisfactory, in order to fill up depressions and produce a smooth putting surface. We hear much about rolling to make the greens smooth; but it is the writer's observation that it is easier and more satisfactory from a turf-growing standpoint to fill the depressions than to roll out the bumps and ridges. An uneven surface is the cause of several of the ills with which putting greens are afflicted. It is often impossible to mow them without scalping the high points; and pounding away at these bumps with a roller does not do the grass any good.

**MATERIALS TO USE.**—The subject of composts and top-dressings has been quite thoroughly discussed in past issues of THE BULLETIN. It is the purpose of this article to call attention to the methods used by some successful greenkeepers in spreading the materials on the turf. Briefly, any soil is useful for top-dressing turf if it does not run together with water and then bake into a crust, does not contain gravel stones or other coarse particles which will deflect a ball, and does not contain seeds of troublesome weeds, pests of various kinds, or substances poisonous to grass. Top-dressing materials for putting greens should be screened. Screens with a quarter-inch mesh are most frequently used. Sand with a considerable quantity of gravel stones in it should be screened through an eighth-inch mesh. This fine screening is best done with the sand alone before it is mixed with manure or other soils. There are power machines now on the market for mixing and screening compost and other top-dressing materials. These are efficient and save a great deal of hand labor.

**AMOUNT TO USE.**—There is a temptation, when greens have not been properly top-dressed in the past, to overdo the matter when the practice is once started. Light and if necessary frequent top-dressings are better than a very heavy application at one time. Dressings of from  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch are ample. This takes from  $2\frac{1}{4}$  to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  cubic yards of material for a 6,000-foot green.

**HOW TO SPREAD TOP-DRESSING.**—The first step in top-dressing is to get the material on the green. As it is not advisable to drive on a green with carts, wagons, or tractors, the next most efficient way is to take it on with a wheelbarrow. When reasonable care is exercised it is perfectly safe to use a broad-tired wheelbarrow on a green. If the wheelbarrows are equipped with the usual narrow tires, they can be remedied by having any blacksmith shrink a 3 or  $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch tire over the one that is on the wheel. The load should be dumped over the wheel and not tipped off sidewise; this prevents cutting the turf with the rim of the wheel. An ordinary wheelbarrow load is about the right amount to spread from one place; that is, a wheelbarrow load will give about the proper dressing to the area that a man can conveniently cover while spreading from one pile. It is easier, and the work can be done in less time, to spread it from a pile on the green than from the wheelbarrow.

The spreading is done with a shovel. A neater job can be done with square-pointed shovels than with the round-pointed ones, and there is also less danger of injury to the turf by careless workmen where the square-pointed ones are used. It takes some practice to spread top-dressing evenly with a shovel. It is not a job for a man with a stiff back or a wooden head. Those who bat right-handed usually swing the shovel of top-dressing to the left, throwing it so as to cover a curved strip about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide and 5 to 7 feet long. (See illustration on page 75, March, 1923, BULLETIN.) By taking a short step backwards with each successive swing of the shovel, an area 10 to 12 feet across is covered from each dump of the wheelbarrow.

**FINISHING THE JOB.**—No matter how evenly the spreading is done, the top-dressing should be worked off the leaves and down around the crowns of the grass. Whether this is properly done or not is the main cause of the difference between a green with a smooth, even putting surface and one which is rough and pitted. A heavy top-dressing covering the green leaves will cut off the sunlight and kill the plants. There are several methods of smoothing out top-dressing. Mr. William Flynn and many others use the backs of wooden rakes. A good job can be done that way, but it is a little slow. Some whip the greens from one side to the other, or from the middle, both ways to the sides, with long bamboo poles. Others use home-

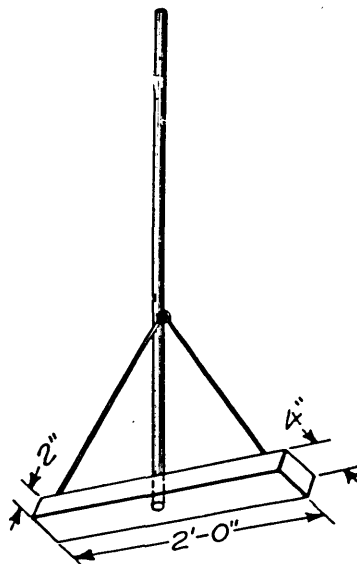


Figure 1. Wooden rubber used as spreader for top-dressing.

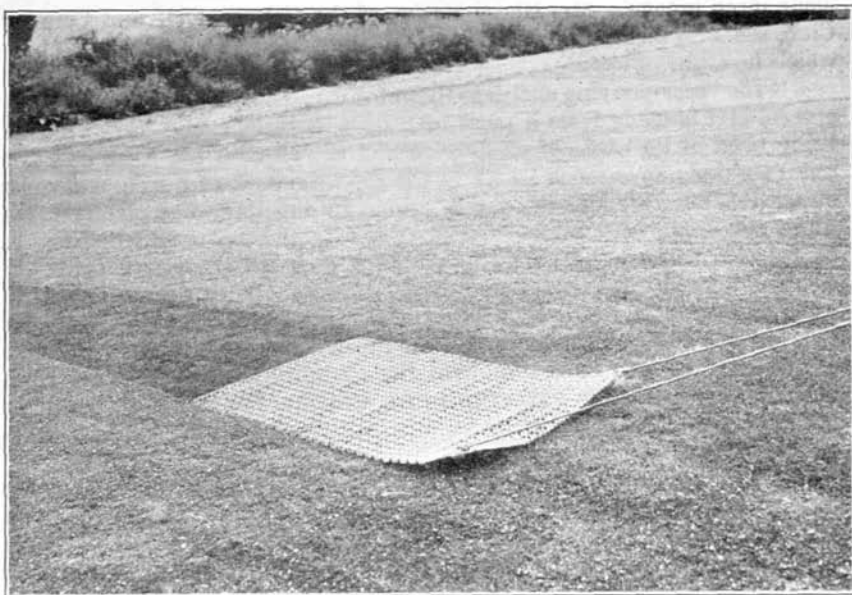


Figure 2. Metal door-mat used as spreader for top-dressing.

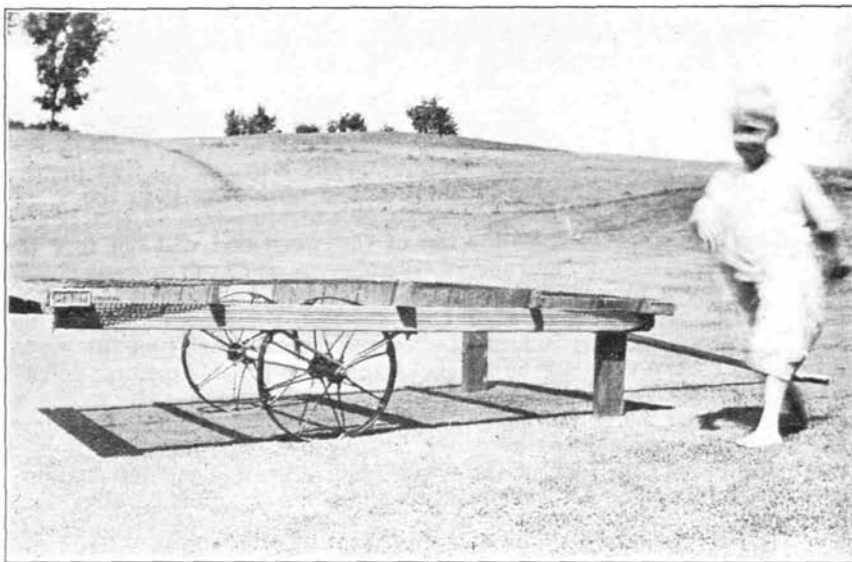


Figure 3. Woven wire bed-spring used as spreader for top-dressing.

made birch brooms. Mr. Harry Pryke, of the Calgary Golf and Country Club, sends in a sketch of a rubber, here illustrated (figure 1), and about which he says:

"The accompanying sketch is that of a wooden rubber for top-dressing greens, and is made from a piece of 2 by 4, 2 feet long, a broom handle being fixed at an angle of 45 degrees and stayed with hay wire and two small staples. It is much better to use than the back of a rake and gives better results. We use it on our course in the following manner: We place our sifted compost on greens with a hand-barrow and scatter the heaps with a shovel. The men then each take a rubber and draw the compost toward them from one end of the green. They do not rub backward and forward, but draw firmly toward themselves, keeping the rubber true on the turf. This trues up the green as well as dresses it. The coarse material can be drawn onto the approach, or taken away, as is desired. Naturally the rubber acts as a straight-edge and fills up all the little hollows. The green is afterwards matted, and a wonderful improvement is found."

Several greenkeepers use heavy cocoanut-fiber doormats, which are drawn over the green. The writer prefers the flat-link metal doormat (figure 2), a device used by Mr. William Connellan. This does the work very rapidly. If there is too much top-dressing in one place it works up through the mat and is carried to the depressions where it is needed. Mr. Charles Erickson, of the Minikahda Club, has still another kind of spreader (figure 3). He uses a woven-wire bed-spring, single-bed size, to the under side of which he has attached two wheels so as to make it easier to move from green to green. In use, the spring is turned upside down, with the woven wire next to the grass, and it is then hauled back and forth across the green.

With regard to the bed-spring which Mr. Erickson uses he gives us the following interesting information, at the same time detailing the steps he follows in the complete process of top-dressing:

"I am enclosing a picture of the bed-spring which I use when top-dressing the greens. You will notice it has wheels on it, so that it is not necessary to haul it around in a wheelbarrow but may simply be pushed around to the different greens. In top-dressing a green, the first thing I do is to haul my top-dressing to the green. I next place it in the wheelbarrow, which has tires about 6 inches in width, so that it will not be necessary to place boards on the top of the green and will not tear the turf. It is then dumped and spread with shovels. The top-dressing should lie on the green for about 20 minutes or one-half hour, until it is thoroughly dry. After it is dried, I have one man come with a bed-spring, turning it over, pulling it around, and rubbing the dirt into the green. After this I use a special rake which I have made for this purpose as well as for the purpose of raking up crab grass and removing the refuse or the extra dirt. After this operation I use a scraper about 2 feet long, with which I go over the entire green, making it as smooth as a table. By using the bed-spring I avoid the necessity of screening my top-dressing; and we all know how slow a process is the screening of black dirt when it is wet."

After the top-dressing is evenly distributed and smoothed out, the green should be rolled and watered.