

Yarrow as a Putting Turf

Mr. Don F. Kennedy, formerly chairman of the green committee of the Beach Grove Country Club, Walkerville, Ontario, contributes the following interesting information on the satisfaction that yarrow as a putting turf is giving on the Beach Grove course. In a good many places in the country very satisfactory turf of yarrow has been found on putting greens. Our present attitude toward yarrow is that under most conditions it is not objectionable, but that it does not possess enough real merit to make it really worth while to endeavor to secure pure yarrow greens. The seed of yarrow on the market is of a different strain from the yarrow coming with German mixed bent seed, being much coarser than the latter. There is no doubt that under some conditions yarrow may be highly desirable. It is much better in soils of a sandy type than on the heavier soils. We quote from Mr. Kennedy's letter:

"Your BULLETIN of May 22, 1924, contained a query from a New York course (Question 10, page 129) regarding yarrow which came up in their putting greens, apparently as a result of being mixed in with creeping bent seed. The club was quite worried about the yarrow and undecided as to whether to weed it out at that time (September) or to wait until the following spring. Your advice was to let the yarrow alone, not considering it objectionable.

"Three or four years ago the writer was chairman of the green committee of the Beach Grove Country Club, Walkerville, Ontario, while the course was being constructed. During an inspection trip covering a number of Canadian courses, I noticed on the beautiful greens of the Ancaster Course, at Hamilton (which, by the way, is my idea of the closest approach to perfection in turf that I have ever seen), a small closely knit grass or weed resembling a miniature fern. The plant grew so thickly together that it was almost impossible to see down into the roots, and made a perfect-textured putting surface. On inquiry, I found that this plant was called yarrow, which was the first time I had ever heard the term. All of the greens had some of the yarrow, and many of them, as I recall it, contained as much as 30 to 50 per cent.

"I then endeavored to get some yarrow seed for use on our course the following summer, and after writing to perhaps a dozen seed houses in both United States and Canada finally located what appeared to be the only commercial stock for sale, which was a lot of 25 pounds and of which I was offered not over five pounds at \$3.50 per pound, which I purchased.

"The seed looked like mustard seed in size and appearance. I promptly trotted it to the greenkeeper, and then my troubles began. The greenkeeper was English and had never heard of yarrow being sowed in greens, and accordingly saw no reason why yarrow should ever be sowed in greens. I let the matter rest for a week or two and then tried him out again. Needless to say, he was still of the same opinion. Being unable to persuade him to use the yarrow, I finally instructed him to do so on one green only, which was one green that did not come through the first winter successfully. It looked as though this green was going to be a total loss for the season anyway, and I figured that a little experimenting couldn't make it any worse.

"Being busy with other matters, I forgot this one for two or three weeks and finally when I inquired as to how the seed had gone, I was told that the weather had been wet or dry or something and that he had not

put it in yet. Subsequent inquiries every couple of weeks brought forth different excuses, but put no seed in the ground.

"Finally, after waiting until about the first of July, I got the greenkeeper by the hand, went up into the tool shed, and got him to dig out the five pounds of yarrow. Together we went over to the bad green and cautiously scattered perhaps two pounds of it, gave it a slight top-dressing, and put our further faith in the Lord. In about three weeks the yarrow started, and then it kept on growing. The yarrow seemed to help the other grass as well, and by the first of September our wrecked green was the best one on the course. The yarrow seemed to disperse itself about quickly with the other grass (mostly New Zealand fescue), filled up all the bare spots, and made a beautiful putting surface.

"I forgot about the matter for some little time, when one day the greenkeeper rather diffidently came to me and wanted to know if I didn't think I could get him a little more yarrow seed. I asked him what he had done with the remaining three pounds and as an answer he took me to three other greens where he had scattered it and where it had already begun to help. We succeeded in getting, I believe, another 25 pounds, which was scattered pretty well over all the greens. That was three years ago. Yarrow is still going strong and is spreading slowly. The more it spreads, the better we will like it.

"The front half of our course is quite sandy and the back of it is heavy clay. All of our greens were built up on a foundation of perhaps from 12 to 28 or 30 inches of sod chunks and similar matter, with a layer on top of that of 6 to 8 inches of mixed loam. This mixture was aimed to be about half way between clay and sand, so that the results we got from yarrow on our putting greens were in reality little influenced by our natural type of soil."

Some U. S. Golf Association Decisions on the Rules of Golf

QUESTION.—A and B were engaged in a close match. At the seventeenth green the lights and shadows made the line of putt difficult. A asked his caddy to stand with his heels together behind the hole to show him the line of putt. B objected, claiming it was against the Rules of Golf so to aid the playing of a putt. B said that the hole could be indicated only with the flag. Was A within his rights?

ANSWER.—B has no basis for his objection, as A was well within his rights to have his caddy stand with his heels together behind the hole. This is of course taking for granted that the caddy was not touching the ground with a club or doing anything to indicate the line of the putt that would be in a manner in violation of the Rules of Golf.

QUESTION.—Is it permissible on the putting green to remove a worm cast in the line of a putt? If it is, may a person use the back of his hand or the sole of his putter lightly to brush the cast aside? I recall that there is a rule which specifies that one may not touch his line of putt, and which apparently would indicate that the worm cast must be let to remain and not to be touched.

ANSWER.—Paragraph 2 under Rule 28 covers this point clearly. It is not permissible to use the back of one's hand to remove loose impediments on the putting green.
