

N. Y.; Lincoln Hills Golf Club, Ludington, Mich.; Elmsford Country Club, White Plains, N. Y.

### Applying Topdressing to Putting Greens

By W. R. Hurd, 2d, Golf Division, United Shoe Machinery Athletic Association

For mixing and sifting the compost for topdressing on our course at Beverly, Mass., we are using a machine which operates on the principles of gravity and centrifugal force. By running the machine slowly we can eliminate most of the undesirable stones, but sufficient are left to be a detriment to the greens, in that mowers are continually hitting them and dulling the knives. To remove these stones after the topdressing is applied to the greens, we took a greens sweeper, cut out the bottom of the pan, and inserted a wire screen of  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch mesh or less. After spreading the compost on the greens by hand, and using a steel mat for distributing it uniformly, we sweep the greens with this especially devised greens sweeper. This removes all the fine stones, and in addition works the topdressing down into the turf. When a light application has been made one cannot see that any topdressing has been applied. We are now however installing a pulverizing plant for pulverizing the compost, and thus do away with the necessity for sweeping the greens after the topdressing is applied.

### The Truth About Peat

By K. F. Kellerman

Peat deposits in the United States show wide diversity in texture and chemical composition. It should be remembered that these deposits are the remains of hundreds of years of accumulations of dead plants, often of different kinds; so, as might be expected, there may be variation not only between peat deposits, but between different layers or portions of the same deposit. For example, much variation in percentage of nitrogen is reported, and the deposits with a high percentage are claimed to be much more valuable than the low-nitrogen deposits.

This may be true, but for use as fertilizer or as top-dressing on grass or other crops the value of any peat is extremely slight. The nitrogen or other elements found by chemical analysis in peat are in a very inert condition; indeed, as compared with manure or commercial fertilizers, the elements in peat are practically unavailable to plants.

During the past few years peat has frequently been advertised for sale as "humus" to be used as fertilizer, or in place of fertilizer or manure. Special processes, such as the "bacterization" of peat, occasionally are alleged to give to peat unusual power to improve soil conditions and to aid plant growth.

In general, extensive investigations show that peat, as well as muck and similar materials, whether "bacterized" or not, is distinctly inferior to stable manure or to mineral fertilizers for increasing crop production. The claims of unusual value for "bacterized" peat appear to be based more or less directly upon statements emanating a few years ago from Professor Bottomley, England, regarding the beneficial effect on plants of the so-called bacterized peat. Further experi-