

UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION GREEN SECTION

SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT
TEXAS A&M COLLEGE
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT
PLANT INDUSTRY STATION
BELTSVILLE, MARYLAND



SOUTHERN TURFLETTER

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CONVERTING TO WINTER GRASS ON GREENS

This is the season when questions arise about changing from Bermuda to cool-season grasses. Where fine-leaved Bermudas are grown there is a trend toward the use of redbtop and bent. Good results have been reported from the use of both grasses. It is advisable to use one or the other of these grasses, or a combination of both, rather than to take a chance on frost damage this season.

Seed redbtop and bent at the rate of about 3 pounds per 1,000 square feet. If next spring is cool and late, you may wish to allow the bent to be carried up into June as the Bermuda will be slow in making a substantial growth. The redbtop may be expected to make a faster change-over in the spring.

Ryegrass continues to be used during the winter on common Bermuda-grass greens. It makes a good combination with the common Bermudagrass as a putting surface. Ryegrass usually makes the best growth in April and May when one is interested in the Bermuda. The transition from ryegrass to Bermuda seems to be more difficult than that of bent to Bermuda.

Seed Treatment

In the South we experience what is normally called a "damping off" disease which causes failure in seedlings of grasses. This is especially so if one seeds too early in the fall. Damping off is the result of the activity of one or more fungus disease organisms, such as Rhizoctonia or Fusarium. This information suggests that it would be advisable to treat seed with fungicides. These fungicides could be one of many, such as Arasan, Semesan, Captan and numerous others. The seed may be treated by placing it in a small cement mixer and adding the correct quantity of fungicide to the seed, followed by thorough mixing. It would be desirable to follow the directions on the container of the package in which the fungicide is purchased. Dampen the seed if you are using a dust so that the fungicide will stick to the seed. Be sure that precautionary methods are taken by the men who are handling the fungicide to prevent any mis-use of the material. Most seed-treating materials will be harmful if they are inhaled, and some persons suffer skin irritation from contact with them.

Care of Seedlings

If the seed have been treated and are coming up in a good stand the fungicide used for treating the seed should protect the seedlings for a short period of time. It should last from a week to ten days, at least. If a close examination of the seedlings is made each day, one should be able to observe any damping off disease that might begin to attack the young seedlings. If a weak-looking seedling or an off-color plant is observed examine the plant very closely at the ground surface to see if there is a darkened condition of the stem at the soil surface. In case this condition exists, it would be advisable to spray the seedlings with a fungicide to prevent their further damage by disease. It is advisable at all times to follow the directions on the container or package in which a fungicide is purchased. Be sure that seedlings are well attached to the ground and that the mower is sharp and carefully adjusted before mowing the young seedlings.

"GREEN PLASMA" WITH "INSTANT GREEN"

It is doubtful if many golf course superintendents have been much impressed by the recent large display advertisements in newspapers throughout the country which announced the discovery of "Green Plasma" with "Instant Green." This discovery is supposed to turn grass green in 60 seconds after application. You may interpret the statement so that it claims that grass will be kept green 365 days a year. However, the advertisement mentions several sprinklings of "temporary brown areas." Most experienced turf managers know instinctively that such miraculous claims should be accepted with caution. So it is with this latest "find."

"Green Plasma" consists of urea (46% nitrogen) and a coloring agent (primarily malachite green dye) which the advertiser calls "Instant Green." Of course, urea is a good source of nitrogen and malachite green has been used for a great many years as an ingredient of some fungicide formulations and as a dye for turf. Sometimes, however, the claims of an advertiser are such that (despite careful and critical reading) one may not recognize that the advertiser is talking about products that are thoroughly familiar to the reader.

The National Better Business Bureau, Inc., Chrysler Building, New York 17, N. Y., serves a very fine purpose in acting to protect consumers from misleading advertising. The Bureau has investigated this particular product and has been able to affect some modification of the wording of advertisements. In Advertising local Better Business Bureaus, the National organization has anticipated some complaints and has stated: "The validity of such complaints depends on the individual customer's propensity to take claims out of context."

TURFGRASS CONFERENCES

October	21-22	Louisiana Turfgrass Conference, Lafayette, La.
December	9-10-11	12th Annual Texas Turfgrass Conference, Texas A. & M. College, College Station, Texas

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Many golf courses throughout the South have initiated a program to change from common Bermudagrass greens to one of the fine-leaved types. Unless solid sod is used the greens are out of play for six to eight weeks. This quite often means a large number of unhappy golfers. To keep this number to a minimum the project should be well planned by the superintendent and green committee chairman so that the job can be done in the shortest possible time and with the least inconvenience to the golfers.

Such a program should include the following points:

1. Advertise: Post notices well in advance of any major work of this nature, explaining the "why's" and "how's" of the project, the length of time it will take, and the aim of such work. No one should be surprised to find a green plowed up.
2. Prepare: This is the most important feature of a smooth-running operation. Temporary greens should be more than a rough, sandy circle in a fairway. Choose the sight of the temporary green several months in advance of its use. Begin fertilization, topdressing and mowing so that it will have a relatively good putting surface when it's time for use. If the broadcast method of planting is to be used, stockpile a supply of screened, sterilized topdressing so that the planting operation will not be held up while more is prepared. As in other methods of planting, there should also be enough soil on hand to provide for the smoothing operation after growth has begun.
3. Work Efficiently: The size of the crew should be sufficient to do the job without any wasted motions. If the planting material is purchased, make arrangements with the grower for having the grass delivered on certain dates so that the work will not be held up for lack of grass. Smooth-working, well-organized crews can plant a lot of grass in a day.
4. Follow Up: After planting keep the temporary greens in good condition so that it will not be necessary to open the new greens for play too soon. Do not open the newly-planted greens until there is a smooth, completely-covered putting surface. The golfer will be better satisfied. A rough green or bare spots on the putting surface will not be welcomed after two months on a temporary green.

A green which is really ready for play will go a long way in helping a golfer forget the temporary green or the money he has spent for the changeover.

Southern Turfletter

USGA GREEN SECTION

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