



# UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION GREEN SECTION

## Mid-Continent Turfletter

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### POA ANNUA AS A WINTER FAIRWAY

Where bermudagrass is used as a fairway turf, the problem of winter color is a constant one. Some clubs overseed with ryegrass and thus have a good color throughout the winter. However, ryegrass presents some difficulties, too. It is expensive to do the seeding in the first place and when the ryegrass is established, then it must be mowed during much of the winter. It sometimes remains too long in the spring and the scattered surviving plants form clumps.

Perhaps the majority of clubs play on dormant bermuda and the winter annual plants that volunteer. One of the ever present volunteers is Poa annua. It is quite simple to remove Poa annua and other winter annuals from bermuda turf with sodium arsenite or with light applications of some of the triazine products.

The removal of all winter annuals leaves a dormant bermuda turf that shows no green color at all throughout the winter. In the Southwest, brilliant winter sunlight on the whitish dormant bermudagrass turf produces a glare that is quite unpleasant to the golfer.

These considerations have led some superintendents to the conclusion that they should attempt to encourage Poa annua in fairways. Judicious irrigation and fertilization when Poa is germinating will insure a fairly uniform stand. Poa annua growing on a dormant bermuda base provides excellent fairway turf. For a short period during the spring, the seed producing habit of Poa is objectionable but does not seriously interfere with play. The only drawback to Poa annua fairways is the fact that such an abundance of seed is produced, the greens are quite likely to become heavily infested. Even well kept vigorously growing greens seem to be susceptible to the invasion of Poa when there is such a tremendous source of seed.

When a selective control for Poa annua in putting greens is found, it will indirectly solve a recurring fairway problem in a large section of the country. Until then, superintendents and their clubs will be forced to choose between "off-color" winter fairways, color at the expense of planting ryegrass, or color at the risk of serious infestation of greens by Poa annua.

#### BUFFER STRIPS BETWEEN BENT AND BERMUDA

Wherever bentgrass is used on greens and bermudagrass on surrounding areas, there is a recurring threat of invasion of the green. Several superintendents have solved this problem by planting buffer strips of grasses that are less likely to invade the bent but which will compete with the bermuda turf on adjoining areas.

Tifgreen (Tifton 328) is one grass which has been used. It has the attribute of blending well with bentgrass insofar as texture is concerned and therefore invasion is not so serious as is the case with the coarser textured common bermuda. However, it is a vigorous grass and does tend to compete vigorously with the bent turf.

Tiffine (Tifton 127) is one of the grasses which has been used most successfully for this purpose. Tiffine resists the invasion of common bermudagrass, yet observations indicate that it does not make serious inroads into the bentgrass turf. Tiffine is of such a texture that it blends nicely with the turf on most bentgrass greens.

#### FLUFFY TURF ON APRONS

A troublesome area on some golf courses is the apron surrounding the putting green. Where greens are bentgrass and fairway is bermuda, there is some threat of invasion of the putting green by bermudagrass. Some clubs have sought to impose a buffer strip in this area by seeding Seaside bent. It can be mowed closely and it provides a dense turf and therefore a good playing surface.

Because Seaside bent has a strong tendency to produce a heavy mat, it sometimes becomes objectionable. A dense mat sheds water and localized dry spots may appear on slopes. Such a mat also provides a rather unsatisfactory playing condition. While the turf is dense and closely clipped, it is not firm and is loose and fluffy. A club cutting into this turf is either stopped or it takes out a very large divot of loose matted grass.

Everett Queen, golf course superintendent of the Wichita Country Club, was faced with this problem a few years ago and he has corrected the situation through careful and constant attention. Aerifying helps to open up the mat so that water gets into the soil, thus localized dry spots are avoided. Soil brought to the surface in the cultivating operation is broken up and worked into the turf. The soil serves as a light topdressing and perhaps helps to hasten the decay of dead stems and leaves contained in the mat.

Careful vertical mowing and raking will remove some of the accumulation of vegetation, though these operations often remove more live grass than dead grass. Removal of top growth does cause new leaves to come from nearer the ground and a tighter turf is the ultimate result.

BOB MITCHELL G.C.S.A.A. CHAMPION

Robert Mitchell, golf course superintendent at the Sunset Country Club of Sappington, Mo., is the current golf champion of the Golf Course Superintendents Association. Bob won the championship in a play-off. His score for the play-off round was a one over par 71 at the Palm Aire Lodge and Country Club, Pompanino Beach, Fla. Our congratulations to Bob! He is not only an excellent golfer, he also does a fine job of golf course maintenance.

NATIONAL GOLF DAY - 1962

On June 2, Gene Littler, 1961 USGA Open Chamion, and Jerry Barber, 1961 PGA Champion and 1961 Player-of-the-Year, will play an 18-hole match at the Aronimink Golf Club, Newtown Square, Pennsylvania. This course will be the site of the 44th PGA Championship on July 19-22.

The Littler-Barber match will be known as the "Round of the Champion" and the winning score will be the target for golfers who compete on National Golf Day. In 1961 - 73,759 golfers played in the event.

National Golf Day is an especially significant date for clubs which subscribe to the Green Section Visiting Service because this event is the source of a substantial amount of money which is used for the support of turfgrass research. Our subscribers are urged to encourage participation by their club members. The \$1 entry fee will be well used for the benefit of golf charities and educational programs.

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Has the U.S.G.A. Green Section been of service to you this year? We hope so because this is our reason for existence. Our goal is to assist member clubs in the upkeep of their golf courses by furnishing them current, scientific and impartial information which will help them do a better job.

Through your support, the Green Section sponsors research and brings the results of this research directly to you in the form of personal visits, regional turfletters, journal articles, participation in turf meetings and by telephone and correspondence.

To benefit from an organization designed to serve your interest in better turf-grass you should subscribe to the Green Section Visiting Service this month by sending your application to the United States Golf Association, "Golf House", 40 East 38th Street, New York 16, N. Y.

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