

Regional Roundtable – A quick look at what's happening in your area.

Recently, John Foy and Pat O'Brien had the chance to reflect on several weeks of travel in the Southeast and share their observations.

John Foy

Winter overseeding is a management practice that is no longer performed at a large number of golf courses in the Southeast Region because of the agronomic consequences including the additional consumption of resources such as water and the added costs incurred with overseeding. Yet, there are courses around the region where tees, fairways and even rough are still overseeded to provide a lush green and actively growing turf cover when the base bermudagrass is in a semi-to-fully dormant stage during the peak play season. During several recent Course Consulting Service visits, I observed that the transition from ryegrass to the bermudagrass base is underway. A proactive management program that gradually thins out the overseeding canopy at the same rate that the base bermuda is able to fill in and maintain turf coverage is ideal for minimizing but not totally eliminating the "Spring Transition Blues," a phrase used to describe the period when perennial ryegrass is fading away, but the bermudagrass base is not in top shape. Slightly lowering the height of cut and frequent light verticutting helps to thin out the overseeding so that increased sunlight can reach the underlying bermudagrass. In combination with these cultural management practices, it is important that adequate fertilization is applied to support sustained active bermudagrass growth. The transition process needs to be completed as soon as possible in the early summer so that the base bermudagrass has at least 100 growing days without competition in order to ensure that the bermudagrass is able to fully recover from the cumulative stresses of overseeding.

Pat O'Brien

During recent Course Consulting Service visits to the western North Carolina mountains and the North Carolina transition zone, several interesting observations were made. *Pythium* blight caused catastrophic damage to *Poa annua* putting greens at a mountain golf course that received approximately 12 inches of rain during April. Two putting green sites required resodding, and seven other sites will be patched with sod. The cooler soil temperatures and heavy rainfall worked in tandem to produce text book like conditions for the *Pythium* blight.

In the transition zone of North Carolina, Tifway bermudagrass fairways at a golf course were severely damaged by February's cold weather where temperatures remained below freezing for a 10 day stretch. Approximately 16 acres of fairway turfgrass were killed. Latitude 36 bermudagrass, a new cold tolerant bermudagrass developed at Oklahoma State through USGA funding, will be row planted at the damaged areas on this course in mid-June. It should take about 8 weeks for these fairways to recover with this renovation method. Use of this new bermudagrass variety with improved cold hardiness will help to improve the business model at this golf course for the next round of extended cold winter weather.



***Pythium* blight fungus caused devastation to this *Poa annua* putting green in the Western Carolina Mountains during early May. A few patches of bentgrass were the only plants that survived on this putting green.**



In response to increasing temperatures and humidity, the winter overseeding on this fairway quickly declined and exposed areas of weak and thin bermudagrass.

The “Transition Blues” is one of the consequences of winter overseeding.

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