

Apprentice Corner

Fusarium Patch Disease (*Microdochium nivale*)

This is the commonest and most damaging disease of fine turf. It attacks at all seasons of the year, from the extremes of muggy weather in summer to under snow in winter.

The disease first shows as small patches of dead grass, from 2.5cm upwards which, if not controlled, spread rapidly and coalesce. Later stages show characteristic, clearly defined margins, with sometimes fluffy white mycelial growth on the dead and decomposing leaves.

***Microdochium nivale** characteristically attacks annual meadow grass dominated turf, but can also be severe on *Agrostis*. This is especially true of some strains of *Agrostis*.*

High humidity, coupled with weakened or stimulated growth caused by smothering and the use of autumn/winter fertilisers, predisposes turf to attacks.

Prevention is better than cure. Ensure good ventilation by clearing away shading trees and



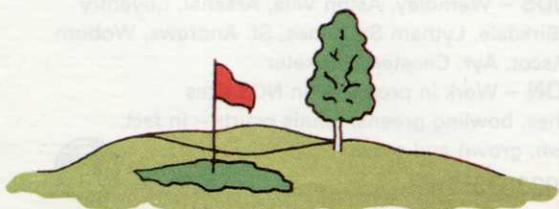
Above: Fusarium 'damping off' fescue.
Below: Fusarium Patch Disease.

scrub; switch dew regularly, especially in the warm 'growthy' periods of summer; do not top-dress turf unless there is active growth to absorb it; never use autumn/winter fertilisers and discourage annual meadow grass dominance by correct management.



Whether it be construction, drainage or **TORO** irrigation

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