I t was great to see such well argued and thought provoking articles by Arne van Amerongen and Tony Howarth in the May issue. My first reaction was to note that the subject matter was basically the everlasting debate about Poa annua, fescue and bent. All this indicates to me that after twenty years of political in-fighting between rigid dogma and liberal experimentation by agronomists, we are no further forward toward any consensus on even the basic ground rules, such as grass species and subsequent management.

I am sure we all agree that pure fescue greens licked keen by sea breezes are the only true golf greens. On established greens anywhere, management by Arthurian principles is the best way to try and emulate them. New constructions on inland sites are, however, a case apart. The specification of the seed mix and in many cases the planning of the aftercare is generally in the hands of agronomists.

Some stick doggedly to saving fescue where it is surrounded by Poa annua. The new sward, subjected to heavy play and minimalist policies can only result in a weak turf ripe for invasion. Others see creeping bents with scant regard for whether the resources to manage such a grass (including the ability to limit winter play) are in existence or not. Whenever has been tried, it seems there has been very little success in producing Poa annua free greens. Those that have owe it more to a cut-it-out-and-patch-it policy than to a systematic approach. Creeping bent is a case apart. The specification of the seed mix and in many cases the planning of the aftercare is generically in the hands of agronomists.

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