Beating the heat

Buffalo billed as wonder grass

BY PETER BLAIS

Barton Creek Country Club in Austin, Texas, is experimenting with two varieties of buffalograss that will eventually be available nationwide and could save the golf industry millions of dollars annually in water, fertilizer, pesticide and mowing expenses.

Prairie buffalograss developed at Texas A&M University was introduced to the perimeter rough and along steep bunker faces of the new Ben Crenshaw-designed course beginning in late June.

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Isolite expected barrier-breaker

BY MARK LESLIE

Isolite is no panacea, Lou Haines is quick to say, but it could lower the body count in impending water wars.

Haines, the technical services director of New Golf Concepts, Inc., of Westminster, Colo., is optimistic that tremendous inroads will be made into America's golf courses by Isolite, which

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Maintenance schedule: Of hoofs and horns

Gordon Moir is head greenkeeper at Fraserburgh Golf Club on Scotland’s Buchan Peninsula, just north of Aberdeen. His course is exposed on three sides to the North Sea. There is no drainage in his fairways. Only greens can be waters. On average, the course receives between 22 and 27 inches of rain per year and is exposed to dry winds throughout the summer.

The 27-hole layout was designed by James Braid after World War I. Its 6,220-yard medal course hosts 16,000 rounds annually. The greens staff has four full-timers and one student trainee. Moir and two assistants are “qualified” — graduates of technical institutes.

The maintenance budget this year is $135,000 — half for salaries and the rest for equipment and supplies. Moir earns $20,000 per year.

Maintenance at Fraserburgh calls for triple cutting of the greens six days a week in season and one cut per week through winter. In the summer, greens are verticut every week and top dressed every four or five weeks.

The recipe for Moir’s special mixture of fertilizer treatment sounds — and smells — like a witch’s brew. To every 100 square yards of turf, he applies three pounds of sulphate of ammonia, one pound of hoof and horn (pulverized hoof and horn of cattle), one pound of dried cattle blood, one pound of potash, and a half-pound of iron sulphate. "All that's missing is the tongue of newt — and that's the difference!"

The mix is spread by hand.

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Appears as small yellow-green blotches. A cobweb-type growth is often seen, especially in the mornings. Banner fungicide at 1-2 oz./1000 sq. ft. provides low cost-per-day-of-control, preventing disease for up to 28 days.

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