Poa triv problems widespread & serious

By MARK LESLIE

Poa trivialis infestations of "epidemic proportions" are being reported in bentgrasses and some Kentucky bluegrasses, affecting golf courses across a broad portion of the United States. The question is, has it always been present? A rough bluegrass, poa trivialis is "very aggressive," said Terry Buchen, The Legends Group director of agronomy. "It will take over bentgrass. Even when the seed is blue tag-certified, it's getting through [inspections]."

"If you talk to the seed companies, the problem doesn't exist. But if you see new golf courses out in the field, it's absolutely a shame how much poa trivialis is there," said Stan Zontek, director of the U.S. Golf Association Green Section's Mid-Atlantic Region. "It's a huge problem. There are some supers who are fit to be tied."

"I totally disagree with Stan and his statement on new golf courses," said Dr. Rich Hurley, director of research at Lotus Seed and perhaps the nation's foremost expert on poa trivialis. "You take me to 120 old courses and I'll find poa triv in fairways, greens and tees. I'm not saying it can't come in the seed, but it's all over. Take an example from Georgia north, coast to coast, blindfolded and I'll find it and I'll find it quick."

"It's a hysteria pointed at the seed companies when, if there is a hysteria, it should be: 'This stuff is everywhere.'" According to Zontek, the situation has it always been present? A rough bluegrass, poa trivialis is "very aggressive," said Terry Buchen, The Legends Group director of agronomy. "It will take over bentgrass. Even when the seed is blue tag-certified, it's getting through [inspections]."

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THE PUBLIC ARENA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>PARTICIPATION RATE</th>
<th>GOLFERS</th>
<th>ANNUAL Rounds PLAYED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West North Central</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>2.7m</td>
<td>55.1m</td>
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<tr>
<td>East North Central</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>5.6m</td>
<td>93.9m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mountain</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
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<td>31.7m</td>
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<td>11.8%</td>
<td>1.3m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>3.3m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle Atlantic</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10.5%</td>
<td>4.0m</td>
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<td>7.8%</td>
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<td>22.9m</td>
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<tr>
<td>West South Central</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>1.8m</td>
<td>32.0m</td>
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</table>

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NGF report

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year’s “Golf Participation in the U.S.” report is based was conducted for the NGF by Market Facts, Inc. of Chicago. As in past years, a total of 30,000 households were surveyed and results were weighted with key census demographic variables to ensure their national representation. This allows the national participation rate to be estimated to within 0.2 percent with 90 percent confidence.

*On our estimates of rounds, I think we’re in a 2- or 3-percent error range," said Beditz, "which is a lot of rounds when you think of it on a national basis. But we do need more accurate results. One thing to remember: These are consumer estimates from the previous year — they’re not facility-based. We’re working a methodology that is based directly on the turnstile.

“Ther hasn’t been any material change in rounds played, though we have been adding 2 or 3 percent each year to the course supply. We would be delighted if we could see equal growth in rounds played. We haven’t, on an overall basis. Some markets are as busy as they could be. In other areas, they may be over built and rounds are down... As all politics is local, so is rounds-played."

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