

New Method Speeds Coverage with Bermuda Plugs

By O. J. NOER

THE performance of U-3 Bermudagrass turf has been outstanding in Southern California — once it became established. U-3 has done well in many other parts of the country for use on tees, in fairways, and on athletic fields. Its behavior has been best in the transition belt between North and South and along the northern fringe of the Bermuda grass section of the country.

In California vegetative plantings of U-3 Bermuda grass plugs in existing turf have been slow to spread due to competition from other grasses. This has restricted the use of U-3 there and might happen elsewhere.

Z. Mahdi, an Egyptian graduate student in the Department of Floriculture and Ornamental Horticulture at the University of California, Los Angeles, was impressed with the U-3 strain of Bermudagrass and became interested in its propagation. He found a way to speed cover with the plug method of planting.

The accompanying pictures show the method devised by Mahdi and the growth



2. — 4-in. West Point plugger in place to remove plug for planting.

response from plugs set out in early summer. The pictures were taken October 5, 1952 on the trial plots at UCLA Turf Garden.

Key to Fast Growth

By using fertilizer to stimulate growth of the U-3 Bermudagrass, and a maleic



1. — Mahdi takes 2 in. core from U-3 Bermuda turf from nursery of pure U-3.



3. — Mahdi shows 4 in. U-3 Bermudagrass plug ready for planting.



4.—After setting 4-in. Bermuda plug in plot Mahdi pours fertilizer in center hole. One plot was sprayed with maleic hydrazide before plugging to check growth of other vegetation.

hydrazide spray to check growth of the existing vegetation, Mahdi found an effective way to convert a turf area quickly into U-3 Bermudagrass by planting plugs.

The U-3 Bermudagrass plugs were taken from a nursery of pure U-3 turf. The plugs were 4 in. in diameter with a 2-in. hole in the center. When the plugs were collected, the 2-in. center core was removed first with a 2-in. West Point plugger.

Then the 4-in. plugger, made by the same firm, cut and removed the plug for planting. The area into which the U-3 Bermudagrass plugs were to be planted was sprayed with a solution of maleic hydrazide at the rate recommended to check vegetative growth. The plugs were set on 12 to 24 in. centers and the center holes were filled with a bland type fertilizer to stimulate growth without burning.

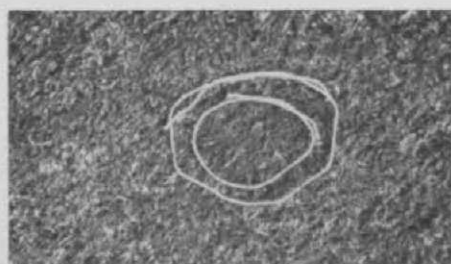
In order to test the method's effectiveness, plugs were placed in one strip without maleic hydrazide treatment or fertilizer. On the second strip maleic hydrazide only was used, and fertilizer only on the third. The fourth strip received both. By fall the spread of the fertilized plugs in the maleic hydrazide plot was most remarkable.

The results indicate that fertilized plugs set on 18 to 24 in. centers will

make solid turf in a single season or less, provided growth of existing vegetation is checked first by spraying with maleic hydrazide.



5.—Without fertilizer or maleic hydrazide spray plug made no appreciable growth. Plugs in this and following photos planted in June. Photographed in October.



6.—This plot sprayed with maleic hydrazide before planting but plugs were not fertilized.



7.—Fertilizer was used on this plot but no maleic hydrazide.



8.—Exceptional growth where maleic hydrazide was used before planting and plugs were fertilized at planting time. Inner circle represents size of original plug.