

A—I don't mind in the least, because I believe in the treatment. Please be warned that not everyone in the turf-grass industry shares my view.

The application is one-half pound of hydrated (spray) lime (227 grams) to 1,000 square feet, suspended in enough water to cover thoroughly. Spray on the grass in the evening after play has stopped. Leave the material on the turf overnight and rinse it off the blades the next morning before mowing. Repeat in a few days or as needed.

The effect of the spray lime is to freshen the grass. It seems to have a "cooling" effect. Caution: Do not use hydrated lime in connection with any fertilizer that contains soluble N. It is okay to use it in combination with powdered ureaform. It is okay to use one pound per 1,000 of sprayable sulfate of potash in combination with the lime if K is needed. K stiffens the grass blades and aids in translocation of nutrients and sugars. A bonus effect of the hydrated lime is that it checks algae and discourages some grass diseases. Note that I do not claim that the material is a fungicide. The small quantity of lime used will have no appreciable effect on the pH levels. If you are skeptical, try it out first on a portion of the nursery or on the practice putting green.

Q—We have been told that Penncross creeping bent has been developed from three grasses, one of which is indigenous to South Africa. Is it the South African grass that gives Penncross its resistance to heat and humidity and contributes to its all-around hardiness?

We see no way of reducing the thatch (built up by high cutting) except by topdressing. Do you have any suggestions? (Virginia)

A—Whoever told you that Penncross has a parent that is indigenous to South Africa has been grossly misinformed. The three parents of Penncross are vegetative creeping bentgrasses. One is Pennlu from a green at Lulu Temple CC, near Philadelphia. The other two are selections from numbered seedlings, which developed from Washington-Metropolitan crosses. Penncross does well in South Africa, but none of the parents originated there.

Before Dr. Joe Duich at Penn State

convinced Penncross growers (Bill Rose is one of the leaders) to produce only Certified seed under strict control, much of Penncross seed was adulterated. The thatch and puffiness wrongly attributed to Penncross developed mostly from the adulterants.

De-thatching by weekly vertical mowing is good management during the spring period of lush growth when healing is rapid. It can greatly reduce the need for topdressing. Don't neglect limestone, which stimulates biological reduction of thatch. Keep the grass on the "hungry" side and avoid stimulating of top growth with soluble (quickly-available) nitrogen.

Q—I am a senior at Western Michigan University majoring in agriculture and am interested in becoming a golf course superintendent. What are some of the best schools in the United States for undergraduate work, Masters, specialists and Ph.D. programs?

(Michigan)

A—Because I know nothing of your background, nor of your scholastic achievements, my advice is to write to each of several schools and request their brochures. There are the two-year courses and the academic four-year curriculum. Give the schools as much information about yourself as you can and request application forms. Some courses are oversubscribed.

Here is a practical list of schools and top men:

Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich. 48824, Dr. James B. Beard;

Penn State University, University Park, Pa. 16802, Dr. Joseph Duich;

Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind. 47907, Dr. William H. Daniel;

Georgia Coastal Plain Experiment Station, Tifton, Ga. 31794, Dr. Glenn Burton;

University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass. 01002, Dr. Joseph Troll;

University of Maryland, College Park, Md. 20742, Dr. Douglas Hawes;

Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Va. 24060, Dr. Richard Schmidt.

Without a doubt, I will hear from the schools I did not name, so that I can update you later. These will give you a good start.

Q—Please let us have your opinion on zoysia for tees. (Missouri)

A—The success of zoysia on tees will depend largely on 1) the kind of zoysia, 2) your management and 3) winter play.

There have been some good examples of zoysia Matrella (Manilagrass) tees in Missouri, but they seem to have declined over the years. A bad winter may have had something to do with it.

Meyer (Z-52) zoysiagrass has been used on tees, but its thick, dense growth largely precludes overseeding with cool season grasses for winter play. I lean now toward the coarser types of zoysia (Midwest and common from seed), which are more open and more receptive to overseeding.

Slow growth and slow healing of divots are two negative factors. Billbug has ruined much zoysia turf. It is quite expensive to establish, but is economical of maintenance. If you go into zoysia for tees, I recommend growing it in a nursery for solid sodding. Plan to overseed each fall season using a blend of elite ryegrasses and bluegrasses. □

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