

## BENTGRASS FAIRWAY VARIETY TRIAL

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Because of the tremendous demand for bentgrass seed, and the resultant shortages in supply in the mid-1980's, many seed companies have recently released new, seeded bentgrass varieties. In fact, more varieties have been released in the past two years than in the previous ten. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is sponsoring a uniform variety test for bentgrasses that will be established this fall. These trials will contain 20-25 varieties and will be planted in three locations, one at putting green height, one at fairway height, and one at fairway height at the Forest Akers Golf course.

This trial was established in the fall of 1988 to begin to evaluate some of these new varieties. The data in Table 9 displays the quality ratings taken during 1989. The plots were slow to establish and the Putter seed was contaminated with a broadleaf weed which had to be selectively removed. In addition, the National seed was slow to establish and contaminated with Poa annua. We attempted to remove the individual annual bluegrass plants from the plots by hand and reseed.

The initial results show that the Penn varieties are the top performers. However, Putter and Cobra looked better as the summer progressed and may simply require more time than the Penns to reach maturity. National and Lakeshore do not seem to have the same level of quality as the other five varieties. The two colonial bentgrasses, Exeter and Highland, are not at the same level as the creeping bents. By accident, we discovered that the colonial bentgrasses are much more susceptible to phenoxy herbicide injury than the creeping bentgrasses. A routine herbicide application of Trimec caused serious injury to the colonial bents while not injuring any of the creeping types.

This study will be superseded by the new USDA trials to be established this September. However, this test does give some indication that Putter and Cobra are two varieties that merit continued observation.

TABLE 9. Bentgrass fairway variety trial

	Quality Ratings			
	<u>7/11</u>	<u>8/2</u>	<u>8/17</u>	<u>Average</u>
Penncross	8.7	9.0	9.0	8.9
Pennlinks	8.0	8.3	8.7	8.3
Penncross	8.0	7.7	9.0	8.2
Putter	7.3	8.0	8.8	8.1
Cobra	7.0	7.5	8.7	7.7
National	6.3	6.8	7.0	6.7
Lakeshore	5.0	6.2	7.2	6.1
Exeter	4.0	5.3	5.5	4.9
Highland	<u>4.0</u>	<u>4.0</u>	<u>6.0</u>	<u>4.7</u>
LSD	1.5	1.9	1.9	1.4