

# *Poa Annua? No!*

By JOHN McNAMARA, First Vice President  
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**A**BOUT twelve or fourteen years ago my interest was first aroused in regard to *Poa Annua*. There were patches of it growing in many places on the golf course, growing very thick and with a nice green color. It looked so good to me that I thought, for some reason, it would make a fine grass for tees. My greens at that time were in good shape, but I had a little trouble with the tees. At that time this variety of grass was unknown to me and so I sent a sample to Washington and there they gave me the name "*Poa Annua*," for the classification of this variety and many others, I have the Bureau at Washington to thank.

## *Annual or Biennial?*

I became so interested in *Poa Annua* that I transplanted a patch of it near my house to keep it under close observation. Whether this grass is an annual or biennial I cannot say as it appears on the course from season to season. It shows up from the end of February to first of March and continues to thrive until the latter part of November. During the middle part of the summer it loses

its green color and attains more yellowish color. After I knew the name I wrote one of the large seed companies in the East to try and purchase some seed and they informed me that there was none on the market.

## *Too Stiff for Good Putting Surface*

I am glad that I did not get it at that time as it seems we have more *Poa Annua* now than we care to have. Its strongest flowering or seeding time is in June and that is the time my objections to it are strongest as it is much too stiff for a good putting surface.

Some greenkeepers favor this variety as it does much better on their greens and fairways than other grasses. *Poa Annua*, they say, is better than no grass at all. I find that on a green composed of a light humus soil, the *Poa Annua* thrives and grows coarser than in a heavy or clay soil.

Some say they can get it out of the green. I am sure that I know of no way to get rid of it, except by letting the golf course go into a hay meadow for a few years.

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# *In the Red River Valley*

By ARTHUR JENSEN, Greenkeeper, Fargo Country  
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**W**ILL try and write an article on golf in North Dakota, and the troubles of an 18-hole course run on small finances.

This like many other clubs is run on a very small amount of money, but so far we never have reached a set amount on running a course, and I don't think it will ever be that way either as seasons, soil, demands of players, and sizes of green differ all over the country, and I have found here that within a radius of twenty-five miles the soil is entirely different.

This course is situated along the Red River of the North, right in the fertile Red River Valley, but,—and its a big but too, we have the heavy gumbo soil to contend with and I sympathize with any greenkeeper who has it. With a reasonable amount of moisture we can grow things quicker I believe than anywhere but with dry weather it's hard as brick. The greens can be nice and soft one day, and the next with a strong wind and sunshine they will bake and crack and be as hard as pavement. So far we have discovered nothing to overcome that. I would like to see different opinions on it. We use plenty of sand, but unless you have about a half

inch of loose sand the ball will bounce right off. In dry weather I have seen cracks in the fairway nearly large enough to lose a ball in.

Our greens are small in comparison to most courses. They average from four to five thousand square feet—that helps us in labor. We have a pretty well trapped course, but I believe for a club of small finances they should leave all traps and bunkers out, with the exception of a few holes like the small ones, unless there are some natural hazards.

I have started with bent up here and it does very well. I have had a small piece in one green for two years and it withstands all the elements very well. One thing that bothers us a lot is the barren ground in winter. Our upper nine is perfectly flat, and the snow never stays. I have tried brush on the greens, but owing to the high winds the greens are swept clean no matter how much is on. This fall I will have enough bent for three greens—I am using the nursery method entirely, and lay the turf on the greens. It may be slower, but I believe in safety first, as that way if you should have had luck your greens are still in play.