

# Doggone It—What Is Dog Bent?

By E. E. PATTISON, Director

International Seed Testing Laboratories, No. 11 Park Place, New York City  
Formerly Seed Analyst U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

PERHAPS you have had someone ask you the above question. The interest in this specie of bent has been stimulated by our golfers who have been playing this spring on the attractive links in the British Isles.

So many of them have been singing the praise of "dog bent greens" and so few of us in America know the grass by its British name. Dog bent is just another name for Velvet bent which is botanically known as *Agrostis canina*. To those of us who know Latin the common name Dog bent appears as a straight translation.

While part of the credit for the excellent putting surface must be given to the species of grass yet one must not lose sight of the fact that at least part of the credit must be given to the climate of the Isles. The latter we can't import but we can make an effort to get Velvet bent green and those who have tried know that success is possible.

In previous articles written by the writer the question of seed supply was discussed in detail but for those who missed this issue we are repeating a few facts.

## Supply Is Very Limited

THE supply of Velvet bent seed is very limited. We know of just two fields producing seed, both are outside of our country. One is a natural field which up to two years ago produced seed

which was approximately 90% pure *Agrostis* spp. and 85% of this 90% (actually 76.5%) was Velvet the other 15% being *Agrostis vulgaris* (also called *Agrostis tenuis*) commonly known as Rhode Island bent. Seed of the 1925 and 1926 crops gave excellent results

in this country, the Rhode Island bent being hardly noticeable. However, the field did not yield the same amount of Velvet in 1928. While we did not see samples of the whole yield the samples we did see and examine,

tested 85% pure *Agrostis* spp. and only 60% of this 85% (actually 51%) was Velvet. We do not believe such seed should be sold for pure Velvet bent. Without doubt it is valuable seed but it should be sold for what it really is, that is a mixture of Rhode Island and Velvet bent.

The other field was planted with the idea of seed production and has been constantly treated for this purpose. Last year's climatic conditions were such that the yield was exceptionally small. The 1927 yield the major part of which was used in the U. S. A. gave seed testing 98% pure *Agrostis* sp. and 95% of this 98% (actually 93.10%) was pure Velvet. We are advised that the yield this year is expected to be satisfactory and that part has already been reserved.

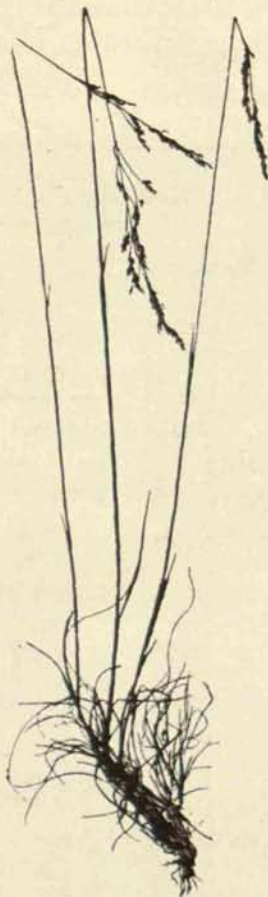
Velvet bent is one of the natural ingredients of South German Mixed bent seed and it is from small plugs taken from greens seeded to South German Mixed bent that some of our wiser greenkeepers have started their Velvet bent nurseries and plots. Those of us who have seen the beautiful Velvet green recently constructed

by Mr. Mitchell of Kernwood Country Club, Salem, Mass. and also the wonderful nursery plot of Mr. Wilson at Charles River Country Club know that propagating Velvet vegetatively pays in more ways than one.

For many years to come there will not be



AGROSTIS CANINA  
(Velvet Bent)



PLANT AND SEED  
OF VELVET BENT



enough seed to sow pure Velvet bent greens but those wishing Velvet bent greens can start their nurseries with 10 to 20 pounds of seed or from Velvet bent plugs and with intelligent vegetative methods have in two or three years enough sod for several greens.

There exists in some minds the idea that Velvet is more susceptible to turf diseases than the other bents. This idea we believe to be entirely erroneous. From our observation we would say that it was less susceptible especially to the large brownpatch.

## BENT GRASS SEED

There are some thirty varieties of Bent grass and one should have some practical knowledge relative to handling them if he is to give worth while advice as to the variety which will give the best results. There is no one variety that is a sure "cure all" in all localities. The kind that produces a "Rolls Royce" turf in California or Washington may prove to be a "second hand flivver" in Missouri, New York, Wisconsin or other states. I am a farmer. Most of my farms are devoted to the growing of different varieties of the Bent family of grass and some of these varieties make the finest turf of anything in existence. I have had a great deal of experience covering many years in furnishing golf clubs, municipal parks, athletic fields, etc., with fine turf grass seed for their putting greens, fairways and lawns. I always endeavor to furnish those varieties of bent that from experience do the best in those localities where the seed is to be used.

**WHEN YOU PURCHASE SEED DIRECT FROM THE FARMS WHERE IT GROWS YOU ARE ASSURED OF AN ABSOLUTELY FRESH, VIABLE, ACCLIMATED, WINTER HARDY PRODUCT THAT WILL PRODUCE MORE PERMANENT AND DESIRABLE RESULTS ON YOUR COURSE THAN ANY SEED OF FOREIGN ORIGIN.**

Boost one of your own American industries to the extent of purchasing your seed from the American farmer who grows it.

**A. N. PECKHAM, Kingston, R. I.**

# Hillcrest—A Test for Champions

**H**ILLCREST Country Club, located at Hickman Mills, a suburb of Kansas City, Mo., is a real test for champions. For the past two years the National Open Qualifiers have been held there and this year it is the scene of the Missouri State Amateur Championship.

From the back tees Hillcrest measures sixty-five hundred and thirty-seven yards with a par of seventy-three. Most of the putting greens are Kentucky bluegrass, although two are creeping bent and one Cocoos bent. George Robb, the greenkeeper, states that Hillcrest is



GEORGE ROBB, GREENKEEPER  
Hillcrest Country Club,  
Kansas City, Mo.

considered to have the best golfing terrain around Kansas City.

There are many natural hazards which add to the beauty of the Hillcrest course. The holes show great variety in contour and design and each has its own characteristics which call for carefully played shots. The last few holes of the incoming nine are so arranged as to increase with difficulty, compelling a player to finish strong. Another notable feature of Hillcrest is the fact that the holes stream out in every direction, thus requiring a player to use splendid judgment on windy days.



NUMBER 18 GREEN

*This hole is 343 yards and the green is level and well bunkered*



NUMBER 1 TEE AT HILLCREST

*In the background is the rambling spacious clubhouse located in a setting of trees and shrubbery*