

NATIONAL BENTGRASS VARIETY TRIALS- SUNNYVALE MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSE

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A "Field Day" for the National Bentgrass Trials was held at the Sunnyvale Municipal Golf Course. This golf course is under the supervision Kenneth A. Sakai, CGCS, and the variety trials are under the direction of Dr. Ali Harivandi, University of California, Cooperative Extension, in cooperation with Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California. This location is one of seven locations in the U.S. for National Bentgrass Variety Trials. The collection of commercial and new experimental varieties for these trials is under the direction of U.S.D.A. Varieties for evaluation are submitted by private seed companies and public institutions to U.S.D.A. which then distributes seeds to cooperators for the establishment of evaluation trials.

Two major species of bentgrass are used for turf on greens and tees. These are creeping bentgrass (*Agrostis palustris* Huds.) and colonial bentgrass (*Agrostis tenuis* Sibth.). Both of these species have a low tolerance of drought, heat and wear, as well as high susceptibility to diseases, high rate of thatch build up, and high nitrogen requirements. Stolons of creeping bentgrass develop roots and shoots at their nodes, giving rise to the nickname "creeping". Colonial bentgrass by contrast has minimal creeping tendencies since stolons or runner growth from the crown of the plant is reduced or absent. Various bentgrass cultivars produce a broad range of colors, from greenish-yellow to dark green and dark blue. Golf greens planted with creeping bentgrass are mostly cut to a height of less than 0.25 inches and tees are cut at a height of 0.50 inches. Heavy thatch, scalping and overall quality decline are problems related

to cutting bentgrass to a height greater than 0.50 inches. Golf greens cut very closely may need 12-18 lbs. of nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft. per year; cut slightly higher, nitrogen requirements can be reduced to 6-10 lbs. per 1000 sq. ft. per year. Bentgrasses are extremely susceptible to most diseases such as Pythium blight, Fusarium blight, Fusarium patch, brownpatch, Helminthosporium spp. diseases and dollar spot. Varieties Penncross, Seaside and Emerald are common creeping bentgrass cultivars used on golf greens in California.

Materials and Methods

Preparation of the sites at the Sunnyvale Golf Course began in 1989. Two of the three sites were prepared by mixing 2 inches of organic matter by volume into 6 inches of top

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