



Nothing Like A Fresh Coat Of Paint

By Keith Happ, regional director, Central Region

December 2, 2014

Warm-season grass has transitioned to dormancy in most, if not all, of the Central Region of the United States. Despite what many golfers think, the grass is not dead. The “off-color” appearance of dormant turf is often a factor for golfers as they comment on playing quality. For economic reasons, some courses that overseeded their dormant, bermudagrass fairways with ryegrass every year have stopped committing maintenance dollars to produce a short-term effect. Now, it is much more common for turf managers to paint fairways to provide definition. In fact, on a recent Course Consulting Service visit in November, golfers mistakenly thought the bermudagrass fairway turf was still growing while the bermudagrass in the rough was totally dormant. The golfers did not know the fairway turf had been painted.



A fresh coat of paint can make all the difference to golfers when they play on dormant bermudagrass.

When warm-season grass is dormant, treatments can be conducted to eliminate winter weed competition. Examples of winter weeds include chickweed and *Poa annua*. Even if bermudagrass fairway turf is painted, cost-effective, winter weed-control programs can be conducted. Both selective and nonselective herbicides can be used when the base warm-season turf is dormant.

Some turf managers have tank mixed colorants and herbicides when treating fairway turf. The main benefit of controlling winter weeds is eliminating

competition to the warm-season grass as it breaks dormancy in the spring. Also, university research is examining colorants to see if there is a physiological effect on plant health and vigor in the spring.

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