

Midwest Breezes



The Club at Strawberry Creek

Rick Jacobson has designed a traditional links style golf course just over the border in Kenosha where MAGCS member, Matt Kregel is golf course superintendent. There are many incredible features to highlight about this great new golf course, but for this issue I will focus on the success that Matt is having with fescue grasses.

The faces of the bunkers are grassed with 100% Aurora Gold Hard Fescue. Matt reports that the Aurora stays at a height of 6 – 9 inches with no mowing, no fertilization, and minimal water. And Aurora Gold is reported to be tolerant of Round-up. While Matt has yet to experiment with Round-up on Aurora Gold Hard Fescue, he has been assured that an application of Round-up provides the dual benefit of non-selective control of all invasive vegetation, plus it acts like a growth regulator to keep the Aurora growing at a dwarf height.

The fescue mix that was used immediately off the green surrounds and rough is as follows:

- Aurora Gold Hard Fescue @ 25%
- Little Big Horn Hard Fescue @ 25%
- Big Horn Blue Hard Fescue @ 25%
- Camilla Creeping Red Fescue @ 12.5%
- Tiffany Chewings Fescue @ 12.5%

Matt states, “All areas in-play were seeded with this mixture to allow one to find their golf ball. It is meant to be more of a shorter grass on the thinner side, allowing openings, not necessarily full coverage. It penalizes you for hitting into it but it allows you to find the ball and advance the ball out of it. No fertilization or water is applied to these grasses. The grassing lines of these areas follow the coverage of sprinklers. During grow-in all the sprinklers were full circle, allowing the fescues to germinate and root, but once the fescue was established the heads were turned to part circle to only water the short grass. The Toro 855 head makes this a relatively easy task.”

The generously wide bentgrass fairway and golf holes at Strawberry Creek are framed and separated by prairies and mounds. The deep out-of-play areas were seeded with the following prairie mix:

- Little Blue Stem @ 27%
- Blue Gramma @ 18%
- Side Oats Gramma @ 27%
- Virginia Wild Rye @ 18%

- Big Blue Stem @ 2.5%
- Indian Grass @ 2.5%
- Red Top @ 5%

These grasses will be entering their third year this season, and Matt is looking forward to their full impact on the landscape as they begin to emerge.

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The greenside bunker on the 4th hole, a 147 yard par 3, is surrounded by by a special fescue mix.

This 468 yard finishing hole of the front 9 plays directly west into the wind, and will test the best of players. A solid drive down the right side challenges the fairway bunkers and yields the best approach to the green. The approach must carry the creek to reach the putting surface.

