

Bentgrass in Florida Year-Round

by SCOTT WAHLIN Miami Lakes C.C.

I do not believe that bentgrass as a year-round putting surface in Florida should be promoted by the Florida Golf Course Superintendents. I believe the use of bentgrass in this manner will hinder the consistency of putting greens in Florida, develop additional disease and control problems, and put unreasonable demands on the industry.

Many times I have heard people speak in terms of percentage of bentgrass in overseeded greens. If a green is 50% bentgrass, does this mean that each square foot of that surface is approximately 50:50 bentgrass to bermudagrass? This has certainly not been the case in the bentgrass greens I have seen. In these greens there was definitely a much higher percentage of bermudagrass in wear areas (areas where pins are frequently located). Bentgrass that was persisting was spotty. Is it possible to get these two creeping

grasses to form a uniformly blended community? I believe putting quality would have been more consistent on these greens if they had been 100% bermudagrass. Another factor concerning consistency relates one green to another on the same golf course. Most courses have individual greens that behave better than others. I believe this problem is compounded when bentgrass is added. Percentages of bentgrass from green to green on a given course will vary.

The pests and control measures associated with bentgrass in Florida are confusing. The spray regimens which have been discussed seem excessive to me. I know there are other superintendents who feel the same. We deal with these chemicals all the time. How are these spray programs going to sound to someone who is already upset with pesticide use? I believe we are looking for real

trouble in this area. Allow me to relate growing bentgrass in the Florida summer to raising cattle in the desert. It makes about as much sense to me as to blame *Pythium* spp. for the death of a bentgrass plant in the Florida heat and humidity as blaming the buzzard for the death of the cow in the desert. Killing the buzzards is pointless.

I think our industry is in an exceptional position to look towards the future. We have an outstanding product to offer. It is my opinion that the use of bentgrass year-round in Florida is unnecessary and will eventually hinder the growth of our industry in Florida. It was said at the Bentgrass Seminar on October 9th that the very wealthy will demand and have the best possible playing conditions. I know this is true, but I have a feeling that in Florida they will be putting on bermudagrass in the summer.

WHY PAY OEM PRICES?

JACOBSEN
TORO
CUSHMAN
RYAN

"FULL LINE R & R PRODUCTS"

OVER 1400 QUALITY REPLACEMENT PARTS

- ★ FREE NEXT DAY DELIVERY PLAN
- ★ GUARANTEED LOWEST PRICE
- ★ LARGEST INVENTORY IN SOUTH FLORIDA

PRECISION SMALL ENGINE CO.

2510 NW 16TH LANE
POMPANO BCH. FL 33064
(305) 974-1960

CALL TOLL FREE 1-800-345-1960
FOR FREE CATALOG

"THE TURF PARTS PROFESSIONALS"

JOHN DEERE OLATHE

RANSOMES
HAHN
EXCEL

CYPRESS MULCH

Economical Bulk Loads
or
Convenient Bags

Wood Stakes

- SURVEYING
- CONSTRUCTION
- LANDSCAPING
- FARMING

DELRAY STAKE AND SHAVINGS INC.

9500 W. Atlantic Ave.
Delray Beach, Florida 33446
(305) 737-6458