

SUREGUARD® HERBICIDE: OUTSTANDING POA CONTROL IN DORMANT BERMUDAGRASS

SureGuard® HERBICIDE

When Damon Dean rooted around in his Bermudagrass roughs, looking for any sign of surviving *Poa annua* after a fall application of SureGuard® Herbicide, he came up happily empty.

"You dig down in there and you can't find any *Poa*, and that's awesome," said Dean, the superintendent at Keith Hills Golf Club in Buies Creek, N.C. "SureGuard is the only one I know of that has that ability—giving you postemergence control—and I think that's awesome."

SureGuard provides turf professionals with fast-acting postemergence and season-long preemergence control of *Poa annua* in a single application when applied to dormant Bermudagrass in the fall (typically November–December). SureGuard also delivers consistent postemergence and long-lasting residual control of winter annual broadleaf weeds such as chickweed and henbit.

"SureGuard has a unique fit for fall treatments after *Poa annua* has germinated, providing postemergence control as well as season-long preemergence control," said Dr. Jason Fausey, regional field development manager for Valent Professional Products. **"No other product can be applied once and work this well on *Poa*."**

Flexibility of application

SureGuard has low water solubility and binds tightly to the soil. And, unlike many other preemergence herbicides, SureGuard does not inhibit root growth. This can help turf recover from winter injury and spring dead spot damage. Plus, SureGuard will not delay spring Bermudagrass green-up.

For optimum postemergence control, SureGuard should be applied when *Poa annua* is young and actively growing during Bermudagrass dormancy.

"If you put out SureGuard at dormancy, you don't have those ragged weeds popping up and making things look bad. You get a smoother transition," said Dr. Bert McCarty, professor of horticulture at Clemson University. "People don't mind Bermudagrass going dormant as long as it's not full of weeds. SureGuard helps ease that going into winter."

New mode of action

SureGuard also provides a novel mode of action that supports resistance management strategies for *Poa annua* and other tough, glyphosate- and ALS-resistant weeds.

"SureGuard fills a need," McCarty said. **"It provides good *Poa annua* control in the fall... and it's a pretty versatile material that gives us another rotational option to help with resistance issues."**

Making quick work of *Poa*

Despite generally cooler temperatures in late fall, SureGuard performed well in McCarty's trials when applied at a rate of 12 oz/A.

"SureGuard is a lot quicker-acting than existing products, which slow down when it cools off," McCarty said. "SureGuard seems able to do its thing regardless of the temperature or the weather. You start seeing activity within hours instead of days."

At Keith Hills, the home course for Campbell University golf, Dean remains impressed with the results delivered by SureGuard.

"It was clean," he said of his roughs. "I plan on using SureGuard again, that's for sure."

For more information on SureGuard, contact your Valent territory manager or visit www.valentpro.com/sureguard.



Untreated Control
Image Taken: Jan. 18



SureGuard 12 oz/A —Nov. 1
Image Taken: Jan. 18
(78 Days After Application)

SureGuard provides excellent control of *Poa annua* when applied to dormant Bermudagrass in the late fall.

Source: Dr. Scott McElroy, Auburn University.



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MOWING

rough damage, not to mention white grubs and skunks, crows, etc. going after them. All in all, however, he feels most courses have bounced back pretty well.

"This year, with the rain we've had and the work done last fall really attacking those areas that were damaged, I really haven't seen an issue in my visits earlier this year," says Skorulski. "Now that they did have some gray leaf spot damage, some that maybe didn't do it before might be more willing to treat at least a band of primary rough around the fairways. But many had the attitude with ryegrass that, 'Well, if it goes, it goes. I'm just going to get grasses on there like Kentucky blue or turf-type tall fescue that won't be impacted by that disease.' It's a more holistic approach."

Some superintendents may have had the idea of fertilizing more than usual to speed up recovery, Skorulski says, but with all the rain the Northeast and New England has received, that may have been regrettable.

"That has become an issue – trying to keep it cut and playable for members. There are more complaints from golfers that the rough is so thick, but we've had

the resources to fertilize and treat areas outside of "down the middle" for white grubs and other insects will do so. And they'll also core aerify these areas at least annually.

"Some will overseed, if they feel they need to, with perennial ryegrass or a gray leaf spot resistant type of ryegrass," he says. "Many are trying to interseed with turf-type tall fescue or Kentucky blue."

Those courses will also apply fungicides, and weed management will be better.

Courses that don't have the resources will have to focus on primary playing areas and attack some areas where there is a history of problems, says Skorulski.

"Maybe it's a traffic issue they will try to correct, or switch out grasses," he says. "They will go after those problem areas and try to get them regrassed and reestablished and maybe get money for treating for grubs and an extra weed application."

Chris Hartwiger, USGA senior agronomist for the Southeast Region, says weather conditions have been ideal for explosive Bermuda growth. At first, Bermuda was slow to come in, with March being as cold as January – a plus

"If you want Bermuda to just explode and grow, give it more than enough water, fertilizer and warm, tropical temperatures. That will put some clubs in trouble."

– Chris Hartwiger, USGA

10 inches of rain in many places over the last four weeks," he says. "A lot of the problems of last fall have been forgotten because of all the rain we've had, so it has almost gone to the other end of the spectrum. Now it's too much of a good thing."

Many times, having a solid rough maintenance program comes down to resources. Skorulski says courses that have

for golf maintenance and not a problem for plant health. The heat, however, arrived the first week of June – what Hartwiger nicknamed "kudzu weather" for the 85- to 95-degree days and 70-degree nights – with a wet period following it.

"If you want Bermuda to just explode and grow, give it more than enough water, fertilizer and warm, tropical temperatures,"



EQUIP YOURSELF

Proper equipment is integral to an effective rough management program. Without it, you could be sacrificing the aesthetic appeal and health of your turfgrass...and maybe yourself when your members riot.

Obviously, there are many contours and hills in rough areas that mowers must negotiate, and Jacobsen has just the machine to handle them.

"The hilly and contoured roughs of golf courses are just as challenging for superintendents as they are for golfers," says Rachel Luken, product manager for Jacobsen. "The peaks and valleys of these areas can be very difficult to maintain, especially in inclement weather. Our new AR522 contour rotary mower is equipped with SureTrac four-wheel drive traction and weight transfer control, allowing it to glide over ground contours and climb hills with ease – even in wet, slippery conditions."

The ability to power through large areas of lush grass is important, too.

"On your less-contoured roughs and native areas, power and productivity are most important to superintendents," says Luken. "Our R311T wide-area rotary answers those needs by pairing a 59-hp Kubota engine with an 11-foot width-of-cut – a combination that allows superintendents to knock down tall grass quickly and easily."

Safety of players is also a consideration, given that some courses mow roughs during play and run the risk of debris being thrown from side- or rear-discharge mowers. An option for the TurfCat out-front rotary reduces that risk.

"One deck option is a 60-inch fine-cut flail, an industry exclusive," says Bryan Holby, product manager for Jacobsen. "Superintendents love the flail deck on the TurfCat for roughs and native areas because it safely discharges clippings and debris down into the turf instead of projecting out the side or rear of the mower."

John Deere Golf's 8800 TerrainCut Rough Mower is also designed to allow operators to easily tackle rough terrain. The 8800 features the GRIP All-Wheel Traction System providing hill-climbing and traction capabilities, 43.1 horsepower and a turbo-charged diesel engine so users can mow, climb or do both. The double-acting steering cylinder helps to equalize turning efforts, which allows the operator to hold a straight line with less effort.

"At John Deere Golf, we know precision is key when it comes to turf care in the golf industry, so with that in mind, the 8800 was designed to offer a double-yoke mounting system needed to closely follow terrain around the course," says Tracy Lanier, product manager, John Deere Golf. "Once the decks are in the mowing position, the double-yoke system provides a full range of motion independent of the hydraulic lift system. Also, to help create a flawless cut, the 8800 has five 21-inch rotary mowers with superior ground following across an 88-in. cutting span. The lightweight design of the 8800 will also help reduce the impact during times of stress or above normal rain amounts when the rough can become harder to manage and still maintain the after-cut appearance."



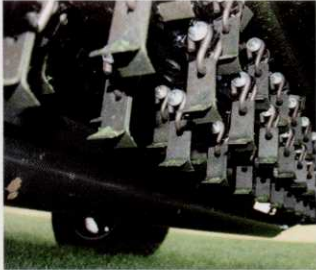
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MOWING



Many times, having a solid rough maintenance program comes down to resources.

says Hartwiger. "That will put some clubs in trouble."

Courses that couldn't mow their rough one week because of rain will be faced with longer mowing time when they can get out, plus scalping and large

quantities of clippings.

"And bottom line, the thicker, longer rough makes it more difficult for golfers," Hartwiger says.

Golf courses need to consider three things when approaching rough management: first, that

rough comprises 50 percent of the turf on most courses.

"That's staggering," Hartwiger says. "It's very time consuming to maintain. Often in the southeast, it will take the better part of a week to get it mowed once with

one rough mower."

The second consideration is, how are you going to prepare the rough for play? How difficult are you going to make it? Are you going to set it up for the bottom 25 percent of the handicappers

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and then run the risk of the top 25 percent thinking it's too hard and no fun? Or do you set it up for the median handicappers and get comments from the better players that there's no advantage to being in the fairway?

The third thing is, how good do you want to make the rough?

"If it's half your turf and there is no significant amount of resources going in there, how important is weed control and twice-a-week mowing considering it's a place you ideally don't want your ball to be in and there are areas on the golf course like greens, tees and fairways that should probably get preferential treatment?" says Hartwiger. "What kind of commitment are you willing to make in light of the fact that there are probably more pressing needs on the course?"

Superintendents in the southeast who may have neglected their roughs last year for various reasons may get away with it due to Bermuda's low maintenance requirements. Cool-season rough, however, would have to be re-seeded and reestablished.

"Bermuda can be neglected and the plant will still be there," Hartwiger says. "It comes down to making sure it's fertilized adequately to handle traffic and sustain itself. Then, you have to decide what kind of commitment you want to make to weed control."

Given that the southeast receives plenty of rain and it's no problem growing grass under little irrigation and courses generally have significant acreage that never sees a golf ball, Hartwiger believes superintendents could segment the rough into "important" and "not-so-important" areas.

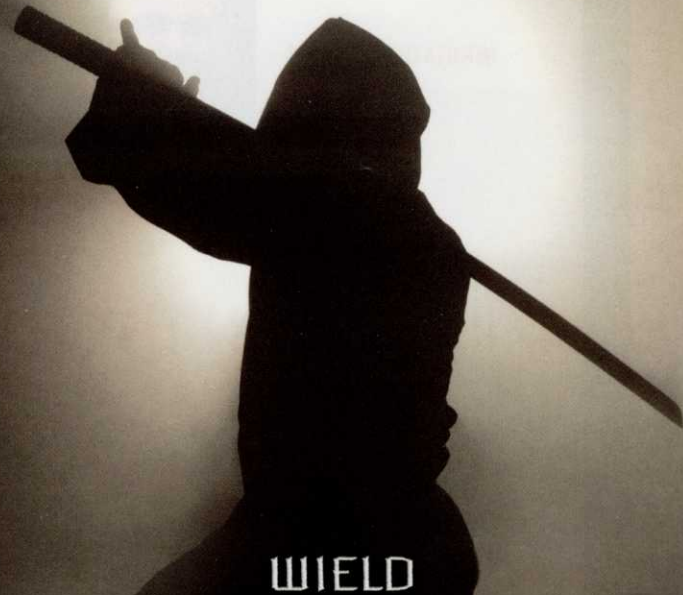
"The 'more important' would be adjacent to landing zones, and the 'less important' would be around the tee complexes," he says. "After all, if someone tops the ball, you want them to be able to walk over and find it."

Hartwiger also believes courses can consider using growth regulators on non-essential areas of rough so they don't have to mow them as often.

"Or maybe the better question is, are there grasses out there that would be better suited to sustaining themselves under very low inputs? If we don't have to add water and fertilizer and also don't have to control weeds, then how often would you have to mow that?"

"The economics of the game are driving people to the point where we can't do things under the old model. We have to be more intentional on where we want to be really good and find ways to cut back on non-essential parts of the course." GCI

Jason Stahl is a Cleveland-based writer and frequent GCI contributor.



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Brian Vinchesi, the 2009 EPA WaterSense Irrigation Partner of the Year, is president of Irrigation Consulting Inc., a golf course irrigation design and consulting firm headquartered in Pepperell, Mass., that designs irrigation systems throughout the world. He can be reached at bvinchesi@irrigationconsulting.com or 978/433-8972.

IRRIGATION THE HARD WAY

Last month I had the opportunity to travel down to South America to Bogota, Columbia, to teach a one day seminar on the basics of golf course irrigation systems. Each year the Columbia Federation of Golf (Federacion Colombiano de Golf) provides a two-day educational seminar on various aspects of golf course maintenance to the Columbian golf industry. There are about fifty golf courses in Columbia. The first day of the seminar was presented by Dr. Erik Ervin from Virginia Tech who discussed greens maintenance techniques. I had the second day. The seminar was well attended and very professional with instantaneous translation being provided through headphones, which made for an interesting way to teach.

Bogota is a large city with a population of around 6.7 million people. It is also high, at an elevation of

ing turf in Bogota is not too difficult as most of the grasses on the fairways and most of the tees is kikuyugrass and, as a result, does not necessarily need irrigation. Greens are *Poa annua* and bentgrass in Bogota and in other parts of the country where the climate is less mild, Bermuda is common.

As in the United States, golf is quite varied in Columbia, with some older and newer high end clubs, struggling private country clubs, public courses and newer resort courses. Dr. Ervin and I visited several courses while we were there. The first one was a very old course and had irrigation only on the greens, consisting of four Toro 2001 athletic field type sprinklers, a quick coupler, a 2-inch (50 mm) PVC ball valve and a filter all in a home-made valve box. The foreman for the course was complaining that the filters – one per green – clogged up within two or three minutes of use and hence he had stopped using the “system” and just hand watered the greens. The water source did not look too bad so we



300-micron (50-mesh) filter at the pump system would be more efficient than having one at each green, even if it had to be manually cleaned.

The second course was a mid-range private country club. Its irrigation system consisted of just a 1-inch (25-mm) ball or gate valve at each green and lots of hoses. At one time, the golf course had quick couplers in the fairways, but no one could remember when they had been used. During my visit the irrigation pump was out being serviced and had been gone for some time. The golf course looked great and had no real need for irrigation.

The third course visited was quite interesting. The course had been recently renovated and had a modern irrigation system. Greens were ins and outs and fairways were double and triple row valve-in-head on a 65-foot (20-meter) triangular spacing. The control system was decoder. To our surprise, the superintendent operated the entire system from his smart phone and iPad and was very proficient with them. Tee irrigation was an issue as they were all watered with residential type Rain Bird 5000 series sprinklers. The tees were sand

(VINCHESI continues on page 58)

The use of chemicals and drainage and irrigation systems are **rare due to availability and cost**, but the golf course superintendents and foreman are eager to learn.

about 8,660 feet (2,640 meters). The climate is very mild with average temperatures of 70-75 degrees Fahrenheit (21-24 Celsius), much like San Diego. As with most Latin American countries, there are lots of buses and diesel fumes and, like New York, what seems like thousands of taxis. Grow-

took apart the filter to see what kind of debris was in it. As it turned out, it was a 200-mesh (74-micron) disc filter, which is finer than even drip irrigation needs. There was a lot of debris as the filter was catching everything. Normally for golf you would use 300-micron or 50-mesh filtration. One

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Quackgrass



Nimblewill



Orchardgrass

Separated at birth

Sometimes it's hard to tell one weed from another. Five commonly misidentified weeds and the telltale signs to ID them right the first time. By Katie Tuttle

Depending on your geographical location, your golf course may see a different number of turf weeds throughout the season. Some of them may be easy to identify, while others can easily be mistaken for something else. Before you go ahead and misdiagnose your turf, it's important to take the time to properly identify what you may be dealing with.

"If you're going to employ something to control a certain weed or pest, the proper ID is obviously fundamental," says Laurence Mudgem, of Bayer Green Solutions Team. "You've got to know what you're trying to control so you use the right product. A big reason is a lot of our herbicides that we use, both pre-emergents as well as post-emergents, a lot of these products now are very specific. They control a certain weed very well, but other weeds not at all. You may think you have a certain weed listed on the product's label, you spray it and it doesn't work."

According to Ramon Leon, assistant professor of weed science at the University of Florida, there's more to worry about than a product not working on a misidentified weed.

"If we don't identify the plant correctly, we might end up using weed management practices, or weed control tools; such as herbicides, mowing or mulching; that will not only have limited impact on the management or control of that species, but could make things even worse."

An example of this would be if a superintendent saw a perennial weed and mistook it for an annual. That superintendent goes and

re-soils the area, thinking he's doing the right treatment.

"By chopping up all the rhizomes and re-soiling," Leon says, "you'll have a lot more weed problems in that newly established sod. You might even end up with a more difficult situation."

Mudgem also says a big problem with weed identification isn't just that people misidentify the weed, it's that they don't know what it is at all.

"I get emails and pictures sent to me all the time saying 'hey what is this weed?' he says. "Sometimes weed ID can get a little tricky."

Before you hit the send button on your confused email, take a look at this article, which highlights five of the most commonly misidentified weeds, what they are often misidentified as, and how you can go about identifying them correctly to get the most out of your turf.

ORCHARDGRASS. This turf weed is a large problem in cool season turf, however it is an annual plant that can be found anywhere in the country because of its ability to adapt to a wide range of locations. Seeds for Orchardgrass are often mixed in with grass seed, so if your course plants tall fescue, you may be sprinkling seeds for this weed in with your grass and not even know it.

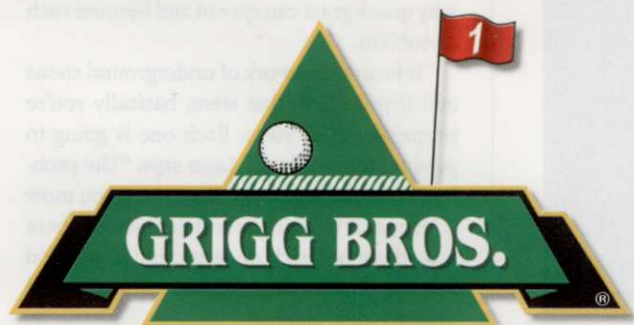
When the weed grows, it has distinctly folded leaves, and the base of the leaf is similar to a V-shape, something relatively unique to this plant. It also has a flat stem and a very distinct, long memberless ligule, which Leon says might be the best way to identify it.

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David Gardner, associate professor, turf-grass science at The Ohio State University, agrees.

“Most of the time when you pull the leaf sheath away, you can see it’s overlapping on the two sides,” he says. “[It’s] closed to form a hollow tube. When you pull it apart, you physically pull tissue.”

Depending on where your course is in

the country plays a large role on what weeds orchardgrass may be confused as. Leon suggests that some superintendents may confuse orchardgrass for reed canarygrass. The difference between the two is that reed canarygrass has wider leaf blades.

Because of the leaf blades and light color of the plant, orchardgrass can also be misidentified as quack grass or tall fescue. Because it’s



The oracle around the stem of a quack grass plant.

an annual, it won’t have the rhizomes similar to the other two.

QUACK GRASS. Quack grass is a perennial weed which is found more in the northern part of the U.S., although it can be found all over the country. The main problem with quack grass is that even though it’s propagated by seeds, it also produces an extensive rhizome system underground. This is also the easiest way to identify quack grass.

“When you dig out the plant, you can see that where the stems and leaves are coming out, you’re going to have a wide stem that basically grows horizontally under the whole surface,” says Leon.

However, that wide stem is also the reason why quack grass can spread and become such a problem.

“It forms a network of underground stems and if you break that stem, basically you’re propagating the stem. Each one is going to produce a new plant,” Leon says. “The problem with quack grass is that even if you mow it, or even if you spray it with herbicides, there is a whole network underground. Once you kill some of those parts, the rhizomes will produce new plants.”

Most often, quack grass is mistaken for orchardgrass, brown grass, or perennial ryegrass. There are other ways to distinguish the quack grass, such as the oracle around the stem at the collar, but the quickest way to identify it is by pulling up a clump and examining the rhizomes beneath.

NIMBLEWILL. Nimblewill is a grass weed that people seem to be noticing more and more in their turf, mostly because they’re just starting to take note of it.

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