Turfgrass Questions Answered

By FRED V. GRAU

Q—We are planning to rebuild some greens. We have thought about planting polycross creeping bent. Would this be a good grass for us, and where can we obtain seed? (Texas)

A—Polycross creeping bent, officially known as Penncross, was developed by Prof. Musser at Pennsylvania State University. It is, however, adapted to other regions. Supt. Otis Owen has had wonderful success with Penncross at Dallas CC. There is no seed available at present.

If you are fortunate enough to locate someone with Penncross in the nursery, we suggest you try the following planting method: Run an Aerifier with ½ in. thatch spoons over the nursery to remove little plugs of sod. Gather up these little plugs for planting material. Scatter them over the prepared surface of the green, topdress, roll and water.

Q—We are planting several new greens. What grass would you recommend for our area? (Okla.)

A—Cohansey (C-7) bent consistently has given good results in Oklahoma. The yellowish-green color is attractive and the putting surface is as good as one can find anywhere. Cohansey has heat-resistance which enabled it to come through daily temperatures of 110 degrees-118 degrees F. during the summer of 1954. If you are near Tulsa, you can see an excellent example, the No. 7 green at Tulsa CC, where Alex Repin is supt.

Cohansey was discovered by Supt. E. R. Steiniger at Pine Valley GC in New Jersey. It has demonstrated its aggressiveness at St. Louis, Kansas City, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Richmond and other places.

The planting method described in the previous Q and A also could be used with Cohansey.

Q—We have heard about Pennlu bent. Do you recommend it for greens? Is there any planting material available? (Del.)

A—There is a limited amount of Pennlu available. Ask your Agricultural Experiment Station for the nearest source of supply. Pennlu produces a dense, dark green putting surface of high quality. It has good disease resistance. In trials at Penn State, Pennlu consistently scored above other bents. It is one of the parents of Penncross.

Pennlu was discovered at Lulu CC, Phila., and the original area is still there and still beautiful, under the care of Supt. Harold Price.

Q—We wish to aerify greens this fall. Would it be best to do the work late in the season after most play has stopped? (Mass.)

A—No. Aerifying should be done while grass is growing actively. Otherwise, openings will not heal and poa annua invasion is apt to occur.

Time of aerifying is an important factor. There is a considerable variation in the growing period of different bents. Bents that grow late in the fall, such as Congressional, Cohansey, Toronto, Pennlu and Penncross, can be aerified later than a grass like Washington bent, which stops growing when cool weather approaches.

Aerifying is a practice that overcomes compaction which occurs constantly throughout the playing season (also the growing season). For this reason aerifying should be done regularly (preferably once a month) throughout the growing season.

Q—Can you tell me the best grass and the right management for open tees in the Cincinnati area? (Ohio)

A—On sunny tees U-3 Bermuda is doing a splendid job, and some of the other improved strains show great promise. Many Bermuda tees are being cut too high which gives the golfer a spongy, insecure stance. Briefly, the best management is to cut closely, about ⅜ in., and cut frequently, three to four times a week. Aerify frequently, at least once a month, and fertilize generously, at least two pounds actual nitrogen to 1000 sq. ft. each month. Water rarely is needed on Bermuda tees.

Q—We have a partially shaded tee where we cannot grow Bermuda. We were thinking of using Merion. Would you recommend this? (Michigan)

A—Merion bluegrass, properly managed, ought to give you satisfactory results.