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Grau's Answers

(Continued from page 90)

prior to presentation and would have to prepare the quiz in advance. The quiz would be rapid-fire and penetrating. It would minimize the confused mutterings in the aisles and the halls such as, "What did he say?"; "What did he mean?". *Pre-conference editing of papers is as important as pre-publication editing.*

Chairmen of committees traditionally receive honors on behalf of all the members. For the educational conference, we name Don Figurella and John Spodnik to receive the "Grau Award" for imagination and vision in developing and executing a first rate conference. The pattern set at Cleveland has provided guidelines for future successes, and for the continued elevation of the professional standing of all GCSA members.

Which Is Best?

Q. Toronto (C-15) bent stolons have been recommended for the greens on our new course. We thought that there was only one Toronto bent. Now it seems that there are at least four

or five types of Toronto. How will we know if we get the right one (the good one?) (Illinois)

A. Diligent search has failed to reveal a satisfactory answer to your question. After talking to representatives of two large firms that grow and sell Toronto (and other) stolons, it seems that both have the "good Toronto." Maybe they do. Both are sincere and both are sensitive to the image they have built in the turfgrass industry through honest dealings and careful nursery stolon management.

My advice is to avoid any Toronto stolons that have been grown under indifferent management that has permitted seed to ripen. Purchase from reputable growers (nurseries) whose interest is in selling "the best".

Apparently some of the "poor Toronto" came from golf course nurseries where seedheads formed and caused contamination. This is a "live" issue and you may be sure we will keep searching until we are satisfied that we have located the "good Toronto."

Non-Creepers Creep

Q. We planted our fairways to Colonial bentgrass seed several years ago. We have been sparing with water to discourage poa annua. Now we have a high percentage of creeping bents which require different management. We thought that Colonial bents were non-creepers. Can you explain this to us?

A. Studies at Penn State and elsewhere show that domestic-grown Colonial bents (Astoria

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and Highland) contain small percentages of creeping types which tend to spread and dominate. Unfortunately, most of the creepers do not form firm fairway turf but tend to be matted or fluffy. It seems to be logical that, if you are going to get creeping bent no matter what you plant, why not go directly to a good creeper? The best creeping bent from seed today is Penncross. This grass seed must carry the Certified Blue Tag, otherwise, it may not be Penncross but an inferior seed.

Some contend that Penncross in fairways will cause nothing but trouble through thatch formation. With the excellent thatch-destroying equipment and know-how that we have today, this should be the least of your worries.

Seaside creeping bent seed is being included in many new bent fairways. It is inferior to Blue Tag Certified Penncross but is a strong creeper. It, too, can be managed thatched.

Many tests and practical applications show Arlington (C-1) creeping bent stolons to be outstanding on fairways.

In general, creeping bents seem to be more resistant to poa annua than the colonial bents. This whole subject deserves further exploration and discussion.

Bluegrass-Fescue Future

Q. On "QUIZ THE EXPERTS," a panel at Cleveland, you used the word, "dubious" in answer to the question, "What is the future of bluegrass and fescue on irrigated fairways in the Northeast?" Would you enlarge a bit on your one-word answer? (Connecticut)

A. All too often, when a club spends \$100,000 or so for a modern irrigation system, the members feel that they aren't getting their money's worth unless they can see the water flying through the air. Many supts. tell me that they had good bluegrass-fescue fairways until they were forced to water far more than they knew they should. The first signs of overwatering are clover and poa. Supts. also tell me that once poa comes in, they *must* manage to hold the poa. When this program is started it is the beginning of the end — with the end result solid poa.

If members and green committees would let supts. do their jobs without agronomic direction, I'm sure that we would use less water and could hold bluegrass-fescue fairways more satisfactorily.

Irrigation, when needed, is wonderful. Irrigation, when not needed, is an expensive and damaging plaything.

Smooth Green Surfaces

Q. We would like to plant our greens in such a way that we can get started with smooth surfaces that are not full of wheel tracks and footprints that are so expensive to topdress out. What do you suggest? (Virginia)

A. The first step is to firm the greens to avoid uneven settling. This is done by harrowing, dragging, heavy watering — anything to achieve settling. Oldtimers used to "tread" the soil firm, using many men who shuffled sideways,