

Overseeding Fairways, Tees And Greens To Control Poa Annua Problems

More and more golf courses are following the trend toward lower mowing heights and allowing more play. This trend, while bringing in more revenues, seems to be allowing more and more Poa Annua encroachment in our fairways, greens and tees.

With this encroachment, are you running into more modeling effects, disease susceptibility, less drought tolerance and more mid summer dye back?

If so, overseeding on a regular basis can be your salvation.

With current studies now showing that in five-year programs of overseeding, shoot density increased every year of the study. We have also found that it is desirable to use higher seeding rates with lower cutting heights. This is because lower cutting heights require more plants per square foot to maintain one hundred percent cover. The one pound of bluegrass seeding rate per one thousand square feet, listed in most text books, works well when grasses are mowed at three inches. Research now indicates that seeding rates should be doubled for every halving of the cutting height. For instance, while a one-pound overseeding rate might be acceptable for a three-inch cut, a two pound rate will be better for a one and one-half inch cut and a four-pound rate for a three-quarter inch mowing height. This provides the desired shoot density of the stand without the usual "Equilibration" period.

Also, effects of Kentucky Bluegrass, Ryegrass and Bentgrass seeding rates on encroachment of Annual Bluegrass is quite pro-

found. Using a low seeding rate or a weak cultivar will open the door for invasion of Annual Bluegrass. This invasion can occur simultaneously with emergence of blues, ryes and bents anytime within the first six months to a year after planting, due to a thin stand. Heavier seeding rates along with use of proper grass varieties and species in heavy Annual Bluegrass areas showed significant advances in reducing Annual Bluegrass problems.

Ideal seeding rates to control the previous problems are:

Kentucky Bluegrass: 2-3 lbs. per 1000 sq. ft.

Perennial Ryegrass: 4-8 lbs. per 1000 sq. ft.

Creeping Bentgrass: 1-2 lbs. per 1000 sq. ft.

High perennial seed counts in your soils can counteract Poa Annua problems of the future.

The days of midsummer turf loss can be over with annual overseeding programs integrated into your annual maintenance programs.

—Mark G. Grundman
NK Medalist

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