

Grass Seeds in a Nutshell

By CHARLES C. CHANDERLIN

Manager, Golf Grass Department, Philadelphia Seed Company

(Continued from August Issue)

THE bulk of Canada Bluegrass is produced in the Province of Ontario, Canada, and can easily be distinguished from the Kentucky variety. Canada Bluegrass produces a rather coarse growth of a pale green color. It differs from Kentucky in the shape of the stem which is flat or compressed.

The plant is a hardy perennial with creeping rootstocks which enables it to form a tough sod. Where the soil is rather thin and gravelly, it has done exceptionally well. Satisfactory results have not been obtained with this grass on sandy soils. It has no place on putting greens or fairways, but is excellent as a grass for the rough, especially when the southern limits of Sheeps Fescue are approached. One of its most important uses is as a soil binder on clay banks where there is danger of washouts.

On richer soil, Kentucky Bluegrass or Redtop are to be preferred as either of these grasses will produce better results than Canada Bluegrass.

Red Fescue (Festuca Rubra Genuina)

This grass is a native of Northern Europe, Germany being the principal source of production. Frequently, Red Fescue is misrepresented, Sheeps Fescue sometimes being substituted by unscrupulous shippers. Other Fescues, such as Sheeps, are grown in the same territory, and it is this fact which is partly responsible for the misrepresentation by shippers. The seed of Red Fescue bears a striking similarity to that of Sheeps Fescue and the difference can only be detected by expert analysis.

Red Fescue is without a doubt a very desirable grass for fairways and roughs. On putting greens it produces a fine, even, thick growth, but at times the close cutting to which a putting green is subjected kills this grass. In New Jersey however, and in sections where the soil is composed of sandy loams it is known to be quite permanent on a putting green if reasonably well cared for. The turf is tough and once it becomes established it can withstand considerable hard usage. On the fairway, bunker edges and approaches where there is less frequent mowing, it can be used with assurance of good results. It is a partly creeping, partly tuft-forming grass, with narrow blades and forms a thickly covered turf, making it difficult for weeds to come through. As a grass for shaded and wooded sections it can be sown with *Poa Trivialis*. For best results in the shade sow 50 per cent Red Fescue with 50 per cent *Poa Trivialis*.

Rough Stalked Meadow Grass (Poa Trivialis)

This is a grass which has not been fully appreciated for golf course construction, but will grow in favor as its merits become known. It is grown to a large extent in Germany and the Scandinavian countries. It is a perennial, creeping by stolons, the blades being one eighth inch in size, tapering to a point, shooting off creeping stems above the ground. It is a very hardy grass of rich green color, and is very desirable for mixing with other seed for putting greens and fairways as it produces a dwarf compact growth. The fact is that it grows more abundantly and produces a much thicker turf when sown with other grasses.

Rough Stalked Meadow Grass by all means should be used more frequently in this country. As a lawn grass for the shade, there is no seed which can take its place. It has been known to thrive where no sunlight filters through. The best grass for shaded or wooded sections on the golf course is a mixture of Rough Stalked Meadow Grass and Red or New Zealand Fescue.

Wood Meadow Grass (Poa Nemoralis)

Wood Meadow Grass is a European grass grown principally in Germany. Usually the crop is not very large and prices are high. It is a very hardy grass of rich green color with thin stalks and fine narrow blades. It is very desirable with other seeds for putting greens and fairways as it produces a dwarf, compact growth. It has been used quite extensively in this country for a number of years as a constituent in shady lawn grass mixtures.

Chewings New Zealand Fescue (Festuca Rubra Falaz)

Originally a European grass, it was introduced in New Zealand in 1880 and was first sold as a pasture plant by a farmer named Chewings. This is another grass which is used extensively on putting greens and fairways. Generally speaking, Chewings Fescue does not do well south of Washington, D. C., except at high altitudes. With the exception of the Northeastern part of the United States, it does not produce as durable a turf as the Bent grasses. Chewings Fescue turf in the Northwestern part of the United States may be said to be quite permanent if reasonably well cared for. It does not seem to have the ability to recover from injury as quickly as South German Bent, but the turf is tough and will stand considerable hard usage.

It is a well established fact that the germination of this seed deteriorates rapidly. When the seed is shipped

from New Zealand, it encounters on its voyage a period of approximately twelve to fifteen days in the torrid zone, where the hot humid condition is destructive to the germinating qualities of the seed. After the seed arrives in this country, it sometimes germinates as high as 80 per cent, but often after remaining in storage a short time, some of its germinating qualities are lost.

Unlike the Bent grasses, Chewings Fescue does not have creeping roots, but the plants have a tendency to branch out and sometimes spread a foot from the original tap-root. The turf is of a beautiful dark green color. Chewings Fescue does well on practically all soils, including sandy and gravelly soils, and also thrives in shady places. Owing to the conditions affecting its germination, it is necessary to seed heavily.

Sheeps Fescue (Festuca Ovina)

Sheeps Fescue is a native of Northern Europe, principally Germany and is the cheapest of the fescues. Unlike any of the other fescues, excepting Hard Fescue, it grows in tufts or bunches, usually six inches apart. This of course makes it undesirable for putting greens.

It is however, well adapted for the rough, especially on thin rocky ground, also on small embankments where there is danger of a washout. It is also preferable for the rough on account of the obstruction it offers. A

player who is obliged to play from a rough where Sheeps Fescue prevails cannot so easily get his ball out with a wooden club.

Sheeps Fescue may be distinguished from other grasses by its stiff bristle-like leaves and pale green color, which grow in tufts.

Hard Fescue (Festuca Duriuscula)

Hard Fescue is a sub-variety of Sheeps Fescue. It is a small even tufted forming grass with narrow blades and still finer bottom leaves of a deep green color.

Like Sheeps Fescue it should be used in the rough as the tufts or bunches make it very desirable for this purpose. It should never be sown on a putting green or fairway. On account of its growing characteristics, it should be sown with other grasses for best results. A mixture of Hard Fescue and Canada Bluegrass is considered an excellent formula for the rough as the Canada Bluegrass will fill in between the tufts.

Ryegrasses

There are several varieties of Ryegrass, the best known of which are Italian and Perennial. Italian Ryegrass has long been used in Europe for hay production and to a certain extent in the United States. It

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Relaxation

By JOHN MORLEY

President, The National Association of Greenkeepers of America

THE manager of a large industrial organization is reconciled to the fact that some of the most important officials under his charge, will if not allowed at various times to have a vacation, soon crack under the continuous strain upon the nerve system.

While it may be true that a greenkeeper gets a lot of time to relax during the winter months, yet he often gets so much that it becomes monotonous. He is ever looking forward to the time when the robins will again appear, and the noise from the motors is like sweet music in his ears. When this time comes he is jubilant that the season is at hand to get the course in shape for the players.

But it is a long time from March 15 to November 15, and around the middle of the season the appearance and disposition of the greenkeeper often rapidly changes. The continual grind day after day; the many petty grievances he has to hear and bear; the anxiety for rain during a dry spell; some of his most important employees sick or away on vacation; his desire every time his club stages an important tournament to make it a success.

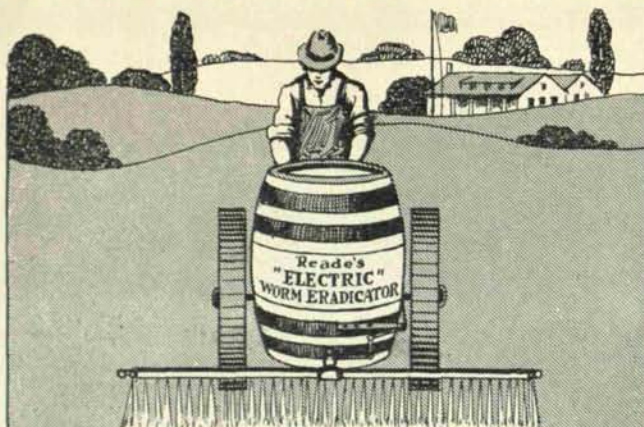
With all these facts in view, golf officials should insist that the greenkeeper take a few days off now and again away from his course. He should be given enough time for the relaxation of his body and mind.

On a large number of our up-to-date courses, the officials follow this policy, and in any such case the chairman of the Green committee will tell you that it pays.

But the fault is not always with the club officials. There is something about the profession of greenkeeping that often causes the greenkeeper to take his work too seriously. He often imagines that if he is absent for more than an hour or two at a time the golf course will immediately go to ruin. When a greenkeeper gets into this frame of mind, he should take stock of himself.

At the close of a busy season, tired and often cross, though he may be very sorry afterward, he is quite likely to give a surly reply which will offend an official or a member of his club.

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Grass Seeds

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grows very rapidly and for this reason is usually used in lawn mixtures.

Ryegrasses really have no place on golf courses in the North, but are useful in making good fairway and putting greens on courses located in the South, especially in the fall and winter months. It helps to keep the Bermuda turf which has a tendency to become brown at this season of the year.

What has been said about Italian Ryegrass above, applies to Perennial, with the exception that Perennial Ryegrass will live several years. Practically all Ryegrasses produce broad leaves which are not especially desirable on golf courses, with the exception of the rough where it makes a comparatively cheap and good filler with Sheeps Fescue which grows in tufts. In the south where the climatic conditions are severe to the majority of grasses, Ryegrasses can be sown on the putting green and fairway during the winter months.

Paceys Ryegrass is merely a short seeded Perennial. It is more objectionable than either of the two varieties mentioned above because the bottom part of the stalks have a reddish color, which when cut, makes lawns or fairways appear reddish in color.

Bermuda Grass (*Cynodon Plectylon*)

Bermuda Grass is the most popular turf builder on Southern golf courses. It was introduced into the United States over a century ago. This seed has been grown in Arizona and Texas to a large extent, and the American strain is producing much better results than the seed formerly imported. In some parts of the country, it is considered a weed because of the difficulty in eradicating it once it has become established. The most distinctive characteristic of Bermuda Grass is its creeping nature, growing along the ground in a stoloniferous manner. Like Ryegrass, it thrives on almost any kind of soil, but has a slight preference for well drained clay.

South of Virginia, it is used during the summer months on putting greens and fairways as it produces a

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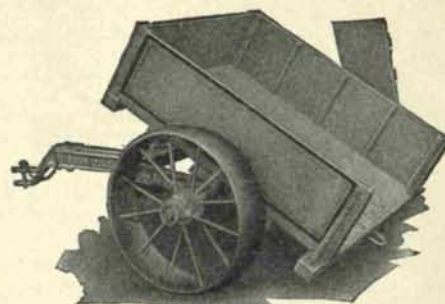
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thick compact turf. During the growing season it should be top dressed frequently with a clay-like compost. Bermuda Grass turns brown with the first frost. When this happens, Italian Ryegrass or Redtop may be sown on top of the Bermuda Grass. This will produce a beautiful green turf over the winter. Late in the spring or early summer, the Ryegrass will gradually disappear and Bermuda Grass will take its place.



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Faithful Work and Common Sense

(Continued from page 24)

them measuring about 2200 square feet and we are trying out blue grass in competition with the Washington strain of creeping bent. We have not had sufficient experience to warrant a definite conclusion, but, so far, we are by no means certain that creeping bent is as satisfactory as blue grass for this purpose, where the play is heavy. Our course has no "rest periods" and the tees receive exceptionally severe usage. I would be very glad to know the experience of other Greenkeepers with creeping bent for tees where the usage is severe.

Weeding

The article in the last issue of the Green Section Committee Bulletin on weeding by Mr. Sherrill Sherman is, I think, very fine. We are spending a little more than \$50.00 per green per year for weeding and we start early in the Spring and keep it up until late in the Fall and in our Washington strain we treat clover as a weed. Eventually we will have nothing but the Washington strain.

Co-operation of Green Committee Chairman

In closing, I want to pay a tribute to our Chairman, who most certainly knows his creeping bent and is always willing to co-operate. In my opinion, the sincere and hearty co-operation of the Chairman of the Green committee is the best and greatest help the greenkeeper can have.