

Fylking and Highland bentgrass planted side by side and both mowed at one-half inch heights. At this close clipping the 0217 Brand Fylking looks almost as good as the Highland.

Promising for Close-Mowed Luxury Lawns

Fylking and Tifdwarf Bermuda

By Dr. Robert Schery, The Lawn Institute

IN THE UNITED States there are no more esteemed lawn-grasses than the Kentucky bluegrasses and bermudagrasses. Both species seem to have "nearly everything" — attractive texture, beautiful color, ability to spread abundantly and recover quickly. But no species is entirely perfect. The Kentucky bluegrasses have not adapted too well to close-mowing; though the grass persists, weeds invade at a low clipping height. Many varieties are also susceptible seasonally to such prevalent diseases as leafspot and stripe smut. Bermudagrasses require a lot of attention to look their best, and are not tolerant of shade. Most selections grow so rapidly that frequent mowing and thatch removal are required;

it becomes expensive to keep ahead of the grass in an era of costly labor.

But breakthroughs seem to have been made on both fronts recently, — development of Fylking Kentucky bluegrass for much of the North and upper South, Tifdwarf bermudagrass for the deeper South. Both are too new to be thoroughly tested in all climates, under various modes of care; but they promise to correct the deficiencies just cited. Fylking thrives mowed an inch or less, and reports indicate it to be quite resistant to disease, especially to stripe smut, a terror for Merion and Windsor. Tifdwarf bermudagrass was discovered around 1963 at several locations, as a mutant or "sport" out of Tifgreen (the most wide-

ly used golf green variety in the South). Quickly accepted for golf greens, it is now being investigated as a lawn possibility which can endure light shade and which may need mowing as little as monthly.

Fylking from Sweden

Perhaps more is known about Fylking for lawns than about Tifdwarf. Fylking was discovered in Sweden a number of years ago, and widely proved there before being licensed for production in America as the 0217 strain. Hogg and Lytle in Canada, and Jacklin Seed Company in the United States, are the North American licensees. Their North American escotype has been widely distributed to research centers for observation

during the last three years, while seed supplies were being built up. Substantial information has been accumulated on Tifdwarf for golf greens, too, by the Coastal Plain Experiment Station (where Tifgreen originated) and Southern Turfgrass Nurseries at Tifton, Georgia, and elsewhere in the Southeast. Only recently has Tifdwarf been suggested for lawn and fairway rather than solely as a greens grass, uses that are still largely experimental. A fine review of Tifdwarf was given by J. B. Moncrief of the USGA Green Section at the 8th Annual Turfgrass Short Course at Auburn University. Moncrief's presentation appears in the Proceedings of that conference, issued in the spring of 1968. Those interested in Tifdwarf possibilities might want to review this summary.

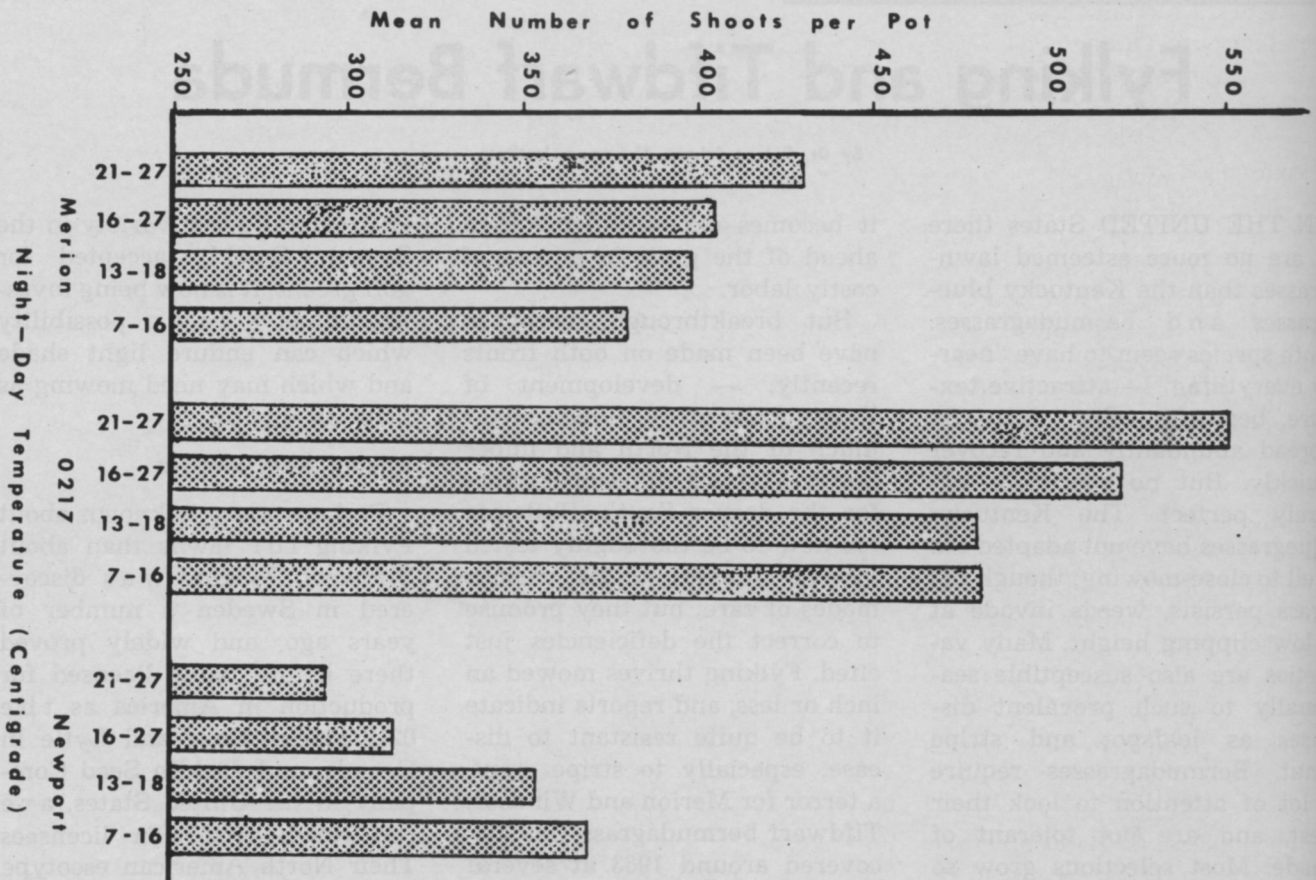
Only this year is Fylking seed being offered to the public, al-

though many sod growers received supplies from which to start sod in 1967. Fylking has been grown at the Lawn Institute for about two years. Some universities have had it under test for several years, and performance reports are beginning to be released. One of the most comprehensive is from Rutgers University in New Jersey, part of the annual "Report on Turfgrass Research" for 1967 (Bulletin 818). With perhaps the most advanced bluegrass breeding program in the United States and with bluegrass selections from all over the world to compare, Rutgers rates Fylking neck and neck with the best of Dr. Funk's own bluegrass hybrids. In one test Fylking rated second, in another fourth, comparing about 60 of the best bluegrass finds Rutgers has assembled. Fylking led all present commercial varieties in summer survival.

Compared to most bluegrasses Fylking seed is a "heavyweight." Perhaps because of this husky seed Fylking sprouts and establishes quickly. In our experience Fylking reaches a growth plateau after several weeks, and for good future performance should be well fertilized. Its leaf blades are narrower than with most varieties (viz. Merion), curve or twist in a graceful arch. Thus more than most bluegrasses Fylking produces a felted surface of interlacing blades. This is accentuated by abundant tillers, an unusually large number of shoots from the crown. Under low mowing many of the tillers lie nearly prostrate. Even under higher mowing the leaf base is reasonably short and the blade strongly bent back, thus tending to escape the mower.

No Serious Disease

So far we have experienced no serious diseases during the grow-



Test data in graph is from Dr. Victor Youngner at the University of California, Riverside. This research compares three different bluegrasses. Note that the average number of shoots per pot is greatest with Fylking, and that compared with Newport it is much more active in the higher temperature ranges.

ing-season on Fylking, in keeping with reported observations around the country. Fylking has not been so competitive in winter as the native bluegrass, although with extra fertilization winter growth may have been more evident. Some snowmold or similar winter discoloration has been noted, perhaps accounting for the fact that Fylking raves mostly focus upon performance during the growing-season under reasonably temperate conditions. How far southward Fylking can be used effectively as a permanent turf is still not known, although its low growth suggests excellent possibilities for winter-seeding Tifdwarf golf greens in the South. The grass has been planted to lawns so far south as Alabama, and is under test in bluegrass-bermudagrass borderland near Raleigh, North Carolina. It has performed well in southern California. Its low growth would seem to make it a "natural" for fairways in combination with other dwarf varieties such as Highland bentgrass.

The Jacklin Seed Company, patentor for the 0217 strain, recommends that it be provided at least 4 lbs. of nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft. annually, divided more or less evenly through the growing season. New seedings should be watered frequently until established, after which watering may await signs of wilting. A seeding rate of 2 lbs. to the 1,000 sq. ft. is recommended for Fylking sowed alone. August and September are the best time to start new lawns. Because tillers and spreading rhizomes are produced so abundantly, in time Fylking seeded alone. August and September are the best times mechanically in early spring or autumn, marring lawn appearance for a few days only. The low growth of Fylking may permit somewhat less frequent mowings than with taller bluegrasses, but, as with any grass, it is well to mow often enough so that only

about one-third of the green leaf is removed at a clipping. Although Fylking endures very low mowing, it probably will be more attractive and with fewer weeds if kept an inch high or nearly so.

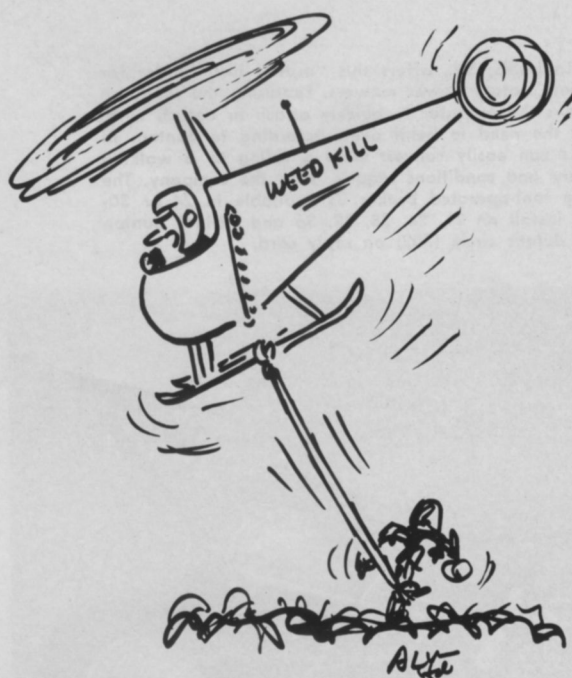
The lawnseed industry is bulging with many fine new varieties for numerous uses. In Fylking and Tifdwarf, turf managers already have at their call two promising possibilities for low-mowed luxury lawns in bluegrass and bermudagrass country. Fylking is available as seed, but Tifdwarf must be started vegetatively.

Fertilize Shade Trees Now, NAA Recommends

Fall is an excellent time of year to fertilize shade trees, according to a report by the National Arborist Association. Although results may not be obvious at this time, next spring

will see your trees leaf out earlier in greater abundance, wearing a glossy, green look of health, says NAA.

Distinct advantages of fall fertilization of shade trees, according to the group, are as follows: (1) Work can be done around trees without damage to turf from trampling, as soil is moist but not saturated; (2) Soil moisture hastens fertilizer breakdown for root absorption; (3) As root growth continues well into winter, an abundance of nutrients in the soil during this period assures development of an extensive root system with increased capability of furnishing moisture and food to trees; (4) Nutritional elements not absorbed in autumn are immediately available to trees when new growth starts in spring; (5) Orders placed with tree service companies are given prompt attention, as autumn brings a decrease of demands for insect control or other work of emergency nature.



"WE'VE GOT A STUBBORN WEED THAT WON'T DIE."