

Turf Clippings

AUTUMN/WINTER 2016

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WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN/WINTER EDITION

With cooler temperatures taking hold throughout the country and many renovation programmes having already taken place, many Turf Managers are now in the thick end of preparing for winter and taking stock after a very busy summer period. Summer always throws up a unique set of challenges and this year was no different. Strong El Nino conditions have led to storms in some places and droughts in others. We should be seeing these conditions easing soon, however this leaves plenty of time for those wishing to continue late autumn work where they can continue to rely on our winter active seed cultivars.

Speaking of seed cultivars, this year we are very proud to be able to celebrate the 25th birthday of our Duraturf® seed range. Going back as far as the early 1990's, the Duraturf® seed range, containing certified seed cultivars, has been at the forefront of our industry and continues to set the bar giving the right result every time. Watch out for further information to help us celebrate this event.

For those that have not undertaken soil or tissue testing, now is the time to work with one of our experienced Territory Managers to look over your nutritional needs and put a concrete plan in place ready to hit the ground running in spring. Our team will partner with you to provide comprehensive nutritional management plans for all turf surfaces and budgets which can include the initial soil or tissue testing, detailed test result interpretation and also turf specific fertiliser plans. We can also incorporate other programmes into the plan to include certified seed for renovations, wetting agents and also tournament/event preparation programmes.

In this issue you will be able to read about how our plant breeders have spent some time foraging the country lately, get to know more of our team, some projects going on around the country and also about the recent retirement of an industry great. Enjoy the read.

Finally we are very proud to continue our sponsorship of a number of industry conferences and this year is no different as we are again Platinum sponsors of the NZ Racecourse Managers conference which was recently held in Wellington and we are a major sponsor of the NZ Turf Conference and Expo in June. Be sure to come past to see us during the Turf Conference as we not only launch some exciting new products but also take the time to celebrate some significant milestones in our business that have shaped our turf landscape for over 25 years.

Jason Weller
Sales and Marketing Manager



NZ TURFGRASS CONFERENCE

AUCKLAND 27-29 JUNE 2016

We are looking forward to attending the New Zealand Turfgrass Conference in Auckland this year. Come and visit our booth, we have some exciting things happening and we want you to be part of it! Registrations are now open and can be made at www.turfconferenceandexpo.co.nz.

TARANAKI HOSTS PGG WRIGHTSON TURF



Keith Saulsbury, Karen Crake and Louise Carpenter looking for 'patches of perfection'



Selected samples planted as space plants at Kimihia

In October last year, small holes began appearing in some golf greens around Taranaki. Was this a new pest we have to contend with, or some wanton vandalism?

No, it was just part of the nationwide search by the PGG Wrightson turf breeders to improve the quality of New Zealand bred browntop cultivars. Keith Saulsbury and Louise Carpenter, our Turf Grass Breeders based at Kimihia Research Centre near Christchurch, spent several days looking closely at some very different courses around the 'Naki'. After a complete circuit of the mountain stopping at 6 golf courses, they carried away some 80 plugs of the 'best browntop' these courses had to offer.

Why do we do this? We are fortunate in New Zealand in having a fantastic resource of genetic material in the golf courses up and down the country. On many greens there are patches of browntop that stand out from the crowd. We're sure we have all seen them and thought how great it would be if the whole green was like that! From Southland to Northland we have

enlisted the help of many generous superintendents to help us collect these 'patches of perfection'.

Every golf course is unique, and the grasses we collect mirror all those differences. The climate, soil type, management and playing pressure will all influence what plants will survive and prosper. It is a wonderful natural experiment going on across the country selecting the plants best suited to a range of environments.

How do we do this? Firstly, Keith and Louise talk with the Superintendents at each course to use their intimate knowledge of the course to define those greens that offer the best sites for selection. Close inspection of the selected greens follows and small plugs, 20mm in diameter are taken from those 'patches of perfection'. All of these plugs are taken back to Kimihia Research Centre for detailed observation.

From these small 20mm plugs we grow them and split them up to give 3 replicates of each plant. When these have grown to about 80mm

in size, which takes several months to achieve, they are planted out into 3 separate areas:

- 1 – An area close to our browntop trials which is kept mown at 4-5mm, our greens scenario.
- 2 – Another site which we treat to a fairway style of management
- 3 – In the last area we let the grasses grow and go to seed, so that we can assess their seed production potential.

This way we are able to ascertain how each plant performs under these different managements. The ideal grass will perform well under a variety of cutting regimes and have good seed production. A great greens or fairway grass that doesn't produce much seed is of very little use.

These trials are run for at least 2 years to get good year round observations on each plant.

When we have enough information we chose those plants which have both great turf qualities, either for greens or fairways – preferably both, and good seed potential. Usually we create a mixture of

plants from different sources, be they golf courses or crosses we have created at Kimihia.

We then select the best plants that have very similar characteristics, they are then grown together in isolation to allow them to inter pollinate. Unfortunately, it doesn't matter how good an individual plant may look, it is how it combines genetically with the other chosen parents that is crucial. So before we can think of releasing our selection there is extensive testing of this new genetic combination.

This involves at least 2 or 3 trials in different environments if possible. We currently run trials at Kimihia and another in Auckland, the later thanks to the generosity of a superintendent giving us space in his nursery area.

We are lucky in New Zealand to have a breeding programme of this scale for our local market. This is only possible because we are able to sell our New Zealand bred cultivars into the UK & Europe. These are very important markets to us but do take a lot of time to get a cultivar

registered for sale over there.

To gain access we apply for listing in the UK, and the level of scrutiny required is intense and this process takes at least 4+ years.

Not only does it have to perform under turf trial conditions, we have our material sown into trials with the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI), it must also pass tests of uniformity, distinctness and stability before it can be listed.

So from the time we collect the 'patches of perfection' from a golf course to releasing a commercial product, it can take at least 12 years.

Just as well browntop breeders are a patient group of individuals!

So the browntop cultivar you specify for your golf course has had a long history:

- Probably several decades of natural selection across different golf courses
- The observations of many dedicated superintendents

- In excess of another decade of work from the plant breeders

It's not just seed! It is the result of years of selection by passionate individuals, whose aim is to create the best possible playing surface, wherever you are!

All this is only possible because of the generosity of so many golf course superintendents up and down the country. So a big thank you to all of you who have allowed us to select from your greens, and a few fairways.

If you have some of those patches of perfection which we haven't seen yet, tell your local PGG Wrightson Turf Territory Manager about them. We will be continuing our search for many years to come and would love for you to be part of our programme striving for perfection on the golf course.

P.S. The holes we mentioned at the start..... don't worry, Keith and Louise will make sure you can hardly tell they have been there!

BOB BRADLEY RETIREMENT

Bob Bradley has finally retired from turf maintenance at Kimihia Research Centre in February, marking the end of a long and respected career in the turf industry.

Bob was brought up in Christchurch and spent time as a boy looking for golf balls at Waitikiri Golf Club where he developed an interest in golf. He began his golf course management career in 1966 at Amberley Beach Golf Club, then Russley and Waitikiri Golf Clubs before moving to Mirimar Golf Club in 1975. The proposed course relocation never eventuated and in 1981 he joined Guthrey Harvin as a sales engineer and consultant selling and installing Rain Bird irrigation products. After the company was split up he spent a couple of years with Rankin and Associates working on large sports field irrigation projects in Wellington.

A new golf course was about to be constructed at Millbrook and Bob moved to Arrowtown in 1990 where he became the construction manager building the resort golf course and becoming its first Superintendent. Here he worked with Sir Bob Charles and John Darby. After a short stint as an Irrigation Consultant in the Queenstown area he was appointed the Golf Course Superintendent at Queenstown Golf Club in 1997 to resume the greens development programme. In 2000 he was lured back to



Christchurch to construct the Clearwater Golf Course where he was its first Superintendent. This was the first golf course to be constructed using GPS technology. Unfortunately in July 2003 he suffered a stroke and was forced to retire for health reasons.

After a period of time he had made a recovery and in 2004 he agreed to take on a part time position at the PGG Ceres Research Centre as the turf maintenance technician. The merger with Wrightsons saw another move to the Kimihia Research Centre. Here he took on his third (and little known) golf course reconstruction where he redesigned and reshaped the demonstration golf hole.

As well as an active interest in playing and administering the game of golf, Bob has been active in promoting the interests of fellow practitioners. He served 7 years as Secretary of the Canterbury Greenkeepers Association and 10 years as a member of the NZGCSA Executive with 3 years as President. He served for a number of years as a board member of the NZ Turf Culture Institute.

Bob was honored in 1998 to receive the award for outstanding service to the turf industry and in 2009 was made a life member of the NZGCSA.

Bob has been very generous with the help he has offered golf clubs and individuals with advice on anything to do with golf courses or turf management. In retirement Bob is hardly likely to be sitting still. He is still active on the committee of the Kaiapoi Golf Club where he is full of ideas on improving the course. A few weeks ago he was seen helping renovate a putting green at a local driving range.

Looking back on his career, there are few that can say that they have built and been the inaugural Superintendent of two golf courses that have held a New Zealand Open. Well done Bob!

AUCKLAND GRAMMAR SCHOOL SPORTS FIELD REINSTATEMENT



600m² of growing medium imported



Laser levelling underway



ProGanics™ Biotic Soil Media™ application



End result

In November last year Turftech worked with Auckland Grammar School to reinstate an area that was a building demolition site to one that would be utilised as a new sports training area and field for lunchtime use. PGG Wrightson Turf Territory Manager Bevan Houghton had a chat to them about the process and challenges of this project.

What have the challenges been in this project?

- Turning a demolition site into a safe playing area, i.e. covering up irremovable objects that have the potential to cause injury like old concrete piles etc.

- The sheer volume of material required to fill and level the area.
- Establishing turf in a sand profile with no option for irrigation.

What has been the best thing about this project?

- The clients response to the finished product.

What is the process you used to get to this point?

- Clearing as much debris from the demolition site as possible.
- Import 600m³ of sand / soil growing medium.

- Laser level with dual axis machine and compact surface.
- Applied ProGanics™ Biotic Soil Media™ @ 40kgs/100m² with a seed blend of Ryegrass, Fescue, Browntop and Regal Staygreen kikuyu and also D.A.P @ 300kgs/Ha.

How is this going to improve your grounds?

In a school with over 3000 students, any extra area for training and lunch time use is an absolute asset, it helps to spread the wear across a very limited acreage.

WHANGAPARAOA GOLF COURSE BUNKER HYDROSEEDING



The newly shaped 17th greenside bunker.



The 7th fairway bunker with fescue faces which help with maintenance and aesthetics of the hole.

PGG Wrightson Turf Territory Manager Brian Griffiths spoke to Blair Pearson from the Whangaparaoa Golf Course about reducing maintenance inputs and hydroseeding his bunkers.

Blair decided it was time the golf course bunkers needed attention. He felt too much time was being spent on pushing up bunker faces after heavy down pours and also felt they were losing a lot of sand to wind blow. He also felt this could be an opportunity to help with the aesthetics of the course and make it a little more challenging.

Blair and a number of his trusty volunteers went about manually reshaping the courses bunker faces. He then met with Brian to discuss seed

selection for the faces. It was decided the best way forward was to use the New Zealand bred Strong Creeping Red Fescue cultivar Governors. Blair liked the open 'wispieness' of the variety, the vibrant green colour and also the added benefit of the endophyte in the cultivar to help with insect control.

They decided the best way to seed the bunker faces was to hydroseed them. They worked closely with Auckland based hydroseeding company Thompsons Turf, who used a mixture of wood fibre mulch Conwed 1000 mixed with Andersons 19-11-4 starter fertiliser and the Governors seed. The seed was applied at 25gram per m².

After 10 days most of the faces had germinated and after 8 weeks 95% of the faces had great swards of fescue.

Blair says "I am really pleased with the outcome of the project. I definitely feel we have a lot less maintenance now on the bunkers, which is a major benefit when you have such a small crew, and it has also helped with the erosion and sand blow. The other major benefit is obviously the added definition and character it brings and it also adds a bit more challenge to the course. I will definitely be looking at other areas of the course where I can also utilise fine fescue, to help with aesthetics, playability and also cut down on mowing regimes".

GET TO KNOW THE TEAM

This issue we profile members of the team perhaps not so familiar to you. Louise Carpenter is our Junior Turf Breeder based at our research facility Kimihia. We also profile Martín Alvarez Nosedá who does a great job looking after the turf business in South America, we hope you enjoy getting to know our team better!

LOUISE CARPENTER, JUNIOR TURF BREEDER PGG WRIGHTSON TURF



- **How long have you been in the turf industry?**
Where have you worked? 12 years or so. Originally at Ceres farm, now based at Kimihia Research Centre.
- **What led you to work in the turf industry?**
It's all thanks to my folks who were both working for PGG Ltd. They encouraged me to take on some casual work over the summer. From there I found out just how interesting it is watching grass grow. Before I know it I'm in a permanent role working with a great bunch of people and learning from them all.
- **A turf ground you would most like to visit?**
Wimbledon - turf and tennis are two of my favourite things.
- **What's your favourite turf ground?**
AMI Stadium, it's home.
- **Who's your turf idol?** Bob Bradley, he is the man!! Not only a walking encyclopedia, but such a good bloke. He's been an excellent mentor to me.
- **Something interesting about you...** It's not all about the turf. Beach combing is fun too. Spending time with my family and friends is important to me. Music is a must. I just love being blown away by mama nature.

A recent highlight was being involved in an Outward Bound course, a 20 day hikoi from Anakiwa to Aoraki. It was an amazing experience which tested endurance, team work and gave me an insight into Kai Tahu language and culture. Sailing, hiking, soaking in sun rises and finding out in a challenging environment there is always more in you.

MARTÍN ALVAREZ NOSEDÁ, COMMERCIAL MANAGER PGG WRIGHTSON TURF URUGUAY



- **How long have you been in the turf industry?**
Where have you worked? This is my third year in the turf industry, always for PGG Wrightson Turf.
- **What led you to work in the turf industry?** The many opportunities. The Uruguayan market was very undeveloped and this was the big challenge to start working on this business. This, added to my love for sports in general, made the turf business the perfect job for me.
- **A turf ground you would most like to visit?**
Any of the most famous football grounds on the world England, Spain (especially Wembley), Camp Nou, Santiago Bernabeu. And talking with the people that work on them would be a great experience.
- **What's your favourite turf ground?** All turf grounds which I have worked at are great places to visit and keep looking after, but one of the greatest places for me is the 2 hectare ground in the main farm show in Uruguay where I work every year and is visited by more than 10,000 people every year.
- **Who's your turf idol?** Here in Uruguay we have two Agronomists specialising in turf and both of them are really kind to work with us and they teach me a lot. I wouldn't call them idols, but they have been really important in my development in the turf industry.
- **Something interesting about you...** 32 years old, fanatic of: CNF (national football club), travelling to New Zealand, Invercargill, Maori tattoos, Luis Suarez and Whisky.

ACROSS THE DITCH

We are pleased to welcome Ashley Duncan to our turf team.

Ashley has joined our Australian turf team and is based in Melbourne; we will profile him in our next edition!

TE ANAU RUGBY CLUB GROUND UPGRADE



Te Anau rugby ground before



The ground three months post seed drilling



Existing vegetation sprayed off and then drilled seeded with Sports Oval

PGG Wrightson Turf Territory Manager Joe Johnson met with John Shanks, Club Secretary of the Te Anau Rugby Club, and also local Store Manager of PGG Wrightson Rural Supplies Te Anau regarding the upgrade of their playing surface for the coming rugby season with some fantastic results.

Q: What have the challenges been in this project?

A: Once the seed germinated in November 2015, we got hit with a relatively dry summer and irrigating the field during germination made the field slow to establish.

Q: What has been the best thing about this project?

A: Seeing how quickly we have turned the field around from a run out field to a nice lush

playing surface in a relatively short time and small budget.

Q: What is the process you used to get to this point?

A: A soil test was first carried out to see what nutrients would be required. The field was sprayed out with Roundup Ultra @ 4lt/ha with Versatill™ PowerFlo added @ 500ml/ha. It was drilled two ways with Duraturf® Sports Oval @ 300kg/ha followed by 50kg/ha broadcast then lightly harrowed over. 250kg/ha DAP was applied at sowing. Metarex slug bait was broadcast on at sowing 5kg/ha. 100kg/ha nitrogen fertiliser was applied mid-summer. By this stage we were getting some regular moisture and the grass really took off.

Q: How is this going to improve your grounds?

A: With Duraturf® Sports Oval being a winter active variety it will help us maintain a healthy playing surface throughout the winter and give the field the best chance to recover from wear.

Thanks to the right advice from Joe at PGG Wrightson Turf, the team at the Te Anau PGG Wrightson Rural Supplies store and a couple of local Ag contractors, Carran Scott Contracting for sowing and Fiordland Agservices for the spraying, we were able to establish a great new playing surface, at relatively low cost. After seeing the end result we will probably do the same to the other field in the spring.

PGG WRIGHTSON TURF WORD FIND

Hidden in the word find is one of our Territory Managers names, can you spot it? Email you answer to linglis@pggwrightsonseeds.co.nz.

All correct entries go in the draw to win a Swannndri High Rock Fleece pullover jacket.

Entries close 5pm, 30th June 2016. Please visit www.pggwrightsonsturf.co.nz for full terms and conditions.

N E W X M Z L H K O D C D J G N Y D F P T Y E E N
 I F P M Y A M G U H R I Z D Y T X R E R T Q J M I
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AGRISEA
 AQUAMAXX
 BROWNTOP
 CENTURION
 CURRAWONG

DURATURF
 EARLYBIRD
 EGMONT
 FIESTA
 FOLTEC

GREENARMOR
 MERLOT
 NITROPLAST
 PHARLAP
 PRIMOMAXX

PRINCESS
 SPORTSOVAL
 SYNGENTA
 TURGADE

CREEPING RYEGRASS FACT OR FALLACY?



Bill Walmsley
Turf Agronomist
PGG Wrightson Turf

For the last few years perennial ryegrass has been available in New Zealand which claims to be a spreading or creeping type. In order to test these claims we took 50mm diameter plugs of perennial ryegrass from

our plant breeding variety trials at Kimihia Research Centre, Christchurch and planted them as spaced plugs to allow them to spread. The plugs were mown regularly the same as other perennial ryegrass.

Plugs were taken from the 2013 and 2014 perennial ryegrass trials and the diameter of spread was measured twice at right angles to give the average diameter. The 2013 trial was measured after 1 and 1.5 years and the 2014 trial was measured after 0.5 and 1 year.

The results were evaluated statistically using the LSD all-pairwise comparisons test. There were no statistical differences between the above average cultivars in either trial.

In the 2013 trial the cultivar with the spreading claim, for the purpose of this trial we named Product A, had the 5th largest diameter of spread after 1 year (198.3mm) equal to one of our previous cultivars, Atlas Staygreen and very close to Centurion and Colosseum (193.3mm). These cultivars had a diameter of spread above the average of 180mm.

After 1.5 years Product A was still 5th and had spread 238 mm diameter, slightly ahead of Atlas Staygreen (230mm), Centurion (226mm), Colosseum (223mm), which were all above the average of 215mm.

In the 2014 trial after six months Colosseum AR95 (115.0mm) spread more than Product A (111.7mm)

but both were above average (106.0mm). After 1 year Colosseum still had greater spread than Product A but another marketed cultivar with the spreading claim, Product B had recovered well from a slow start (99.2mm) to have the same diameter to Colosseum AR95 (180.0mm).

In these trials a 50mm diameter plug of Colosseum AR95 spread to a diameter of 115mm after 6 months, 180 and 193mm after 1.5 years, and 223mm after 1.5 years. It was one of the better cultivars for spreading sideways by tillering but its rate of spread was not statistically different to the so called spreading ryegrasses, or other good performing perennial ryegrass cultivars.

There is no evidence from this trial of any greater rate of sideways spread from the so-called spreading or creeping ryegrass cultivars. In fact after a typical sports field turnaround time of six months Colosseum AR95 performed better.



Spaced perennial ryegrass plugs at Kimihia Research Centre.

GRANT AT HAGLEY OVAL



Territory Manager Grant Bunting had some time on the tools during the New Zealand vs. Australia test match held at Hagley Oval. It was a shame the outcome of the game wasn't different but we are sure this is in no way a reflection on the effort and enthusiasm Grant took to the job with!

DEWCURE™

Earlier this season, PGG Wrightson Turf were proud to bring DewCure™ exclusively to the NZ turf market. With some great results already being reported, Turf Managers can now manage their turf safe in knowing the days of morning dews are now over.

DewCure™ was developed to reduce excess leaf moisture caused by dew, guttation, rain, irrigation, and frost. Control is achieved by inhibiting moisture accumulation and by promoting faster drying following the introduction of moisture. This multi-use product helps to prevent or suppress turf grass diseases that are dependent on leaf moisture to grow, including dollar spot, and anthracnose.

DewCure™ is formulated to adhere directly to the leaf surface, providing long-lasting moisture inhibition. Once bonded, DewCure™ will not wash off as surfactants do, but instead will cover the

leaves with a water-resistant coating that is durable once dry. Product benefits include dew suppression, faster drying following rain or irrigation, moisture management to reduce disease pressure, drier conditions for renovations and tournament play, and also light frost control.

"During the preparation on the course for our Charles Tour event we were looking for a way to remove dew from the tees in the morning. In recent years dew sweeping had been used. It was suggested we give DewCure™ a go, we were pleased with the result with dew staying off the tees for the week even after 35mm of rain midweek". - Malcolm Wells, Manawatu Golf Club Superintendent.



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