IDM Golf

especialistas en greenkeeping

Centro Nacional de Golf: RFEG

Visit Report: JM Vargas Jr. (Turfgass Consultant)

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1. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

The reduction in staff on the golf course has resulted in a reduction in the appearance of National Federation Golf Course. Additional personal should be added so the quality of the National Federation Golf Course can be brought back to where it had in the past.

The reduction in staff has resulted in the rough only being mowed once a week and the fairways only twice a week. The rough should be mowed at least twice a week. The fairways should be mowed at least three times a week and the greens 6 times a week.

Mowing fairways and roughs less than this will leave unsightly piles of clippings. The clumps of clippings will also kill the turf under them once the warm weather arrives. Mowing the greens less than six times a week will cause the green to become scalped.

2. AGRONOMIC ISSUES

2.1. Localized dry spots

Localized dry spots are developing on the greens. These are primarily caused by fairy ring type fungi that live in the sand and thatch. They most commonly occur in high sand content root zones and less commonly in soil. These fungi produce organic acids as they grow.

The organic acids are fine in cool moist soils but as the soils become warmer and drier the organic acids lose their structure and cause the sand to become hydrophobic.

This is a naturally occurring phenomenon in high sand content root zones. To manage the localize dry spots the greens should be on a preventive wetting agent program. If you have a wetting agent you like fine if not Revolution is a good one for localize dry management.

2.2. Organic layer in greens

The greens do have a compacted organic layer in them that could lead to problems in the summer. Compacted organic layers like you have in the greens at Centro Nacional de Golf hold excessive moisture which inhibits root growth and leads to root diseases. They can become hydrophobic and are difficult to rewet without the use of wetting agents if allowed to dry out.

The aerification you have done has removed a small amount of the organic matter but more drastic means are necessary if the organic layer is to be reduced in a timely manner. Hollow tine aerification with 12 mm hollow tines on 5 cm spacing will only remove 5 % of the organic matter in the green. Even though you are aerifying 4 times a year, because of the time in between aerification you are just barely keep up with the new organic matter that is being produced throughout the season.

The Gradien, or similar vertically mowing machine should be used to help remove the organic layer. The Gradien will remove 20 % of the organic matter all at once. This can be substituted for one of your aerifications. However, this is a very disruptive process and it does take time for the

green to recover. The greens will not putt well for a couple of weeks, but it is better than losing turf due to the organic layer.

2.3. Fairways

The fairways have become a mixture of perennial ryegrass, Poa annua, Poa trivialis and white clover. I personally believe it is too late to try and convert the fairways to perennial ryegrass. It is impossible to successfully interseed perennial ryegrass or any other desirable species into Poa annua or Poa trivialis. I am afraid you are going to have to live with the mixture of grasses in the fairways. They will have to be on a good fungicide program like the one I sent you to prevent them from dying in the summer.

2.4. Poa annua control in the greens

The Poa annua is also beginning to invade the greens and this is where you should concentrate most of your effort. You should institute a paclobutazole program on the greens and antigreens. This will suppress the existing Poa annua patches and kill any new seedlings that may arise on the greens. You should begin the program in September and continue it through next June. This is the time of year when the exiting Poa annua will grow most vigorously and seeds in the greens will germinate to produce new plants.

You will have better luck controlling the existing Poa annua in the antigreens. The reason for the difference in control of the existing Poa annua is due to the mowing height. The paclobutazole selectively suppresses the Poa annua allowing the stolons of the creeping bentgrass to grow over stunted Poa annua. There is little stolon activity on a green because of the low mowing height and the frequency of mowing. However, even though the paclobutazole is having a minimal effect on the adult Poa annua plants in the green it is preventing any new seedling from becoming established in the greens. Just a reminder paclobutazole is root absorbed and should be watered in within 24 hours of application.

2.5. Interseeding Penn A-4

In conjunction with the paclobutazole program you should interseed the greens with Penn A-4 creeping bentgrass to try and increase the creeping bentgrass population in the greens. This should be done each time you aerify the greens. The aerifier holes should be filled close to the surface with sand and then the Penn A-4 seeds should be applied to the greens. Additional sand should then be applied and dragged into the holes along with the seed to fill the holes to the top with sand. This will allow the seed to be near the surface where it can germinate and become established.

You should discontinue the paclobutazole program one month before you are going to aerify and interseed. This is necessary because the paclobutazole is root absorbed and will interfere with the growth of the young creeping bentgrass seedlings. It will also delay the filling in of the aerifier holes.

You can substitute Primo for the paclobutazole to maintain green speed. It will also aid in the filling in of the aerifier holes. Since it is foliar absorbed, it will not interfere with the germination and development of the Penn A-4 seedlings.

2.6. Bermudagrass

Most of the bermudagrass in the low areas of the practice driving range facility has died. It appears to have died from ice damage. Some of the bermudagrass outside the back of the club house also died during the winter.

Bermudagrass is very susceptible to cold temperatures and to ice formation. In exposed areas like the patio low temperatures killed the bermudagrass and in low areas like the practice fairway facility ice killed it.

You should reseed the patio area outside the club house to Princes bermudagrass as only a small area is involved. The low areas of the practice collection fairway should be seeded to perennial ryegrass. I do not believe bermudagrass will survive the ice formation in the low areas of the practice facility during the winter.

The perennial ryegrass will give the practice fairway a much better appearance. The banks surrounding the practice area should remain as bermudagrass as it is doing well. They are being invaded with some cool season grasses and broad leaf weeds. They should be treated with rimsulfuron to keep them free of weeds.

3. FOLLOW UP

I recommend a follow up visit to be performed after de summer.

4. VISIT DETAILS

Date	May 8, 2008
Attendees	Real Federación Española de Golf ▪ Mr. David Gómez (Head Greenkeeper) ▪ Mr. Julián Zulueta (Manager) IDM Golf ▪ Dr. Joseph Vargas ▪ Félix Melgar (Technical Director) ▪ Daniel Basco (Project Coordinator)

Dr. JM Vargas Jr.:

Signature