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Press release

Erbavoglio System, the turf solution

The Miglianico Golf Club in Abruzzo, was the wonderful background on which the Mediterranean Games took place in 2009.

Despite the extremely hot and dry summer, the “unusually” green turf impressed much players and turf professionals. As many golfers know, the technical skill of the maintenance crew is often not enough to fight against heat and drought during the summer period in Italy.

The Miglianico Golf Club owes its renewed appeal to the new turf established in 2008 by a technique recently developed, called Erbavoglio, which is based on the use of plants well adapted to the Mediterranean climate: warm season turfgrasses.

Due to the know-how coming from northern Europe countries and to the great availability of seeds originating in the same countries, at present most of the turfs in Italy are cool season grasses

While suitable for those regions of Italy where cool-humid weather is predominant, cool season grasses are prone to water and heat stress in the so called “transition zone”. Here, namely Southern and Central Italy, their quality heavily relies on irrigation and chemicals thus making warm season turfgrasses a key tool for turf managers.

Water saving strategies and environmental friendly turfgrass management are two of the main topics on which the European Golf Association has carried on an educational activity in recent years and, where climatic conditions allow their use, warm season turfgrasses are indicated as species to be preferred.

Probably based on this recommendation, some golf courses in Italy decided to convert their turfs from cool to warm-season grasses by adopting the Erbavoglio system. The system, patented by the Pacini Co. after the development in cooperation with the CeRTES (Centre for Research on Turfgrass for Environment and Sports) of the University of Pisa, is based on the transplanting of single plants pre-cultivated in micro alveolus.

This technique is mainly suitable for medium to large areas and its main advantages are the mechanical transplanting, which allows establishing a hectare per day, the reduced amount of propagation material and the possibility of transplanting directly without tilling the soil. Costs are comparable to those of seeding or stolonizing and, as for stolonizing, high quality hybrid varieties can be propagated.

Olgiate Golf Club in Rome is among the oldest and most prestigious golf courses in Italy with its 1200 members and golf tourists from all over the world. The club decided in summer 2009 to convert the fairways from bentgrass to Bermudagrass. The Erbavoglio system was adopted and “Patriot” Bermudagrass was chosen. The variety, one of the best hybrid Bermudagrasses for sport surfaces, is patented and the Pacini Co. is the exclusive licensed producer for Europe and Mediterranean countries.

In the last weeks eighteen holes were transplanted in less than fifteen days with ground cover being completed in less than eight weeks. Next September 15, the course will host the first tournament.

It's noteworthy to point out that this result was mostly due to the Erbavoglio system which makes it possible to establish the new sod without soil tillage.

Several other golf courses, among which the Golf Club degli Ulivi (Sanremo, - Imperia) the

Cosmopolitan Golf and Country Club (Tirrenia – Pisa), the Garlenda Golf Club (Garlenda – Savona) and the Le Rovedine Golf Club (Milano) have started some preliminary trials to assess the Bermudagrass suitability with Patriot showing encouraging results.

Recently the Erbavoglio system has been exported abroad. In Spain the superintendents of the Spanish Golf Federation, upon specific recommendation of the European Golf Association, have decided to evaluate the Erbavoglio system to start converting some of the cool season grasses surfaces with the less “thirsty” warm season grasses.

The process has started from the Club de Golf Manises in Valencia and the extremely positive results recorded made the Spanish turf managers to envisage a rapid diffusion of the technique in that country too.

The Pacini Co. will attend the international conference that will be held in Madrid, supported by the Spanish Golf Federation, covering the topics of environmental sustainability and landscape impact of golf courses.

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