

Seeding Kentucky bluegrass/perennial ryegrass mixes in the spring for fairway/tee recovery April 9, 2014

Most of the fairway winterkill damage was on perennial ryegrass (Figs 1 and 2) and since Kentucky bluegrass has better winter recovery, including some Kentucky bluegrass in the reseeding mix makes sense. However, Kentucky bluegrass is slow to germinate and develop, and thus the perennial ryegrass will outcompete the Kentucky bluegrass. This is thought to be especially prevalent in spring seedings which is validated in a study from the Univ. of Wisconsin (Stier et al., 2005) where Kentucky bluegrass did not establish as well in a KBG:PRYE mix when seeded in April compared to seeding the previous August (Figure 1). However, Kentucky bluegrass did make up $\geq 40\%$ of the stand by August when seeded in late April. Though these data do not exactly validate what will happen in Nebraska under golf course conditions, they are enough for us to recommend including 50% or more Kentucky bluegrass in the mix when overseeding fairways to recover from winter damage. We currently have multiple studies looking at August seedings of KBG:PRYE and we are just establishing spring seeding evaluations of KBG:PRYE seed mixes in response to the winterkill damage. Stay tuned for more information.

Table 1. Percent Kentucky bluegrass rated in August in an athletic field setting after planting Kentucky bluegrass:perennial ryegrass seed mixes the prior August, November, or April (Adapted from Stier et al, 2005).

KBG:PRYE in seed mix (by weight)	Planting date		
	Aug 30	Nov 26	Apr 28
	% KBG cover in Aug following seeding		
95:5	70	79	62
80:20	63	74	42
70:30	62	73	40
0:100	0	0	0
LSD between mixes within a planting date		12	
LSD between planting dates within a seed mix		11	

Literature Cited:

Stier, J.C., E.J. Koeritz, and M. Garrison. 2008. Timing the establishment of Kentucky bluegrass:perennial ryegrass mixtures for football fields. *HortSci.* 43:240-244.

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Figure 1: September 2011 picture of perennial ryegrass overseeded to increase density and diversity in a primarily Kentucky bluegrass fairway.



Figure 2: Same fairway pictured in April 2014 after winter desiccation killed the perennial ryegrass strips.