

THE ULTRADWARFS ARE HERE TO STAY



When the ultradwarfs first came out in the late 90s, the conventional wisdom was that they would end with the same kind of problems as Tifdwarf. Everybody expected that in five to seven years they would have to renovate, even if purity wasn't an issue. Poor playability due to age and general decline had always plagued Tifdwarf, even though it was an industry standard, and most superintendents expected the same from TifEagle, Champion and MiniVerde. But here we are almost 20 years down the road and there are hundreds of clubs that still have superior ultradwarf greens.



During that same time span, the ultradwarfs also began to move onto courses with troubled bentgrass greens. As the summers got hotter, superintendents not only literally sweated more, but in a lot of cases they sweated bullets over lost greens. Switching to ultradwarf bermudagrass eliminated a lot of headaches during the summer months.

PERFECT FOR THE DEEP SOUTH AND TRANSITION ZONE

So guess what? If you're still struggling with Tifdwarf or bentgrass greens and your course is in the Deep South or even the transition zone, you're now officially in the minority. Here's why: Champion, MiniVerde and TifEagle all deliver the same high level of play as classic bentgrass greens, and they're far superior to Tifdwarf.



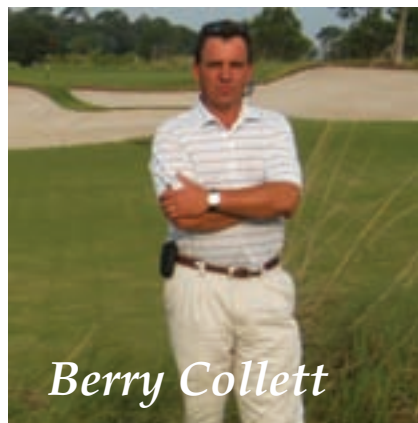
When you watch the Honda Classic on TV you're looking at TifEagle Bermudagrass greens. When you tune into the FedEx Championship at East Lake in Atlanta you're watching putts on MiniVerde bermudagrass. When you checked out the 2011 PGA Championship at the Atlanta Athletic Club's Highlands Course at Johns Creek, you had to be impressed with their Champion greens. Those overhead shots from the Met Life blimp of putts rolling in straight and true are not fantasy TV. These are all typical ultradwarf greens, and they all get high praise from top golfers from all over the world.

IS THERE TROUBLE IN ULTRADWARF PARADISE?

Maybe. There have been rumblings about problems with off-types and mutations in a growing number of ultradwarf greens for several years now. TeamUGA is a key player in the ultradwarf revolution, but we can only control what's happening with TifEagle. That's why we decided we'd better take a look at a selection of the TifEagle greens out there to see how they were holding up.

SEA ISLAND GOLF CLUB ST. SIMONS GA

TeamUGA kicked off this project with a visit to the three premier golf courses at the famous Sea Island Golf Club on St. Simons Island GA. The Rees Jones-designed Plantation Course, the Fazio-designed Seaside Course, and the Davis Love-designed Retreat Course all sport TifEagle greens. Berry Collett, Director of Golf Maintenance for the Sea Island Golf Club, is responsible for the day-to-day management and upkeep of these top-flight resort courses. In addition Berry oversees Ocean Forest, the company's private course on the north end of the island, which also has TifEagle greens. As Berry points out, "Our golfing guests have very high expectations. They're looking for speed, consistency and quality. TifEagle gives them all three."



Berry Collett

"I've got TifEagle greens here that are almost 15 years old with zero mutation and no contamination. It's going to be very interesting to me to see how the other new ultradwarfs do as they age."

*Berry Collett -Director of Golf Maintenance
Sea Island Golf Club, St. Simons Island GA*

PRESTWICK COUNTRY CLUB MYRTLE BEACH SC

We also checked out the greens at Prestwick Country Club in Myrtle Beach SC. This links-style gem was designed by Pete Dye and his son P.B. Dye and opened in 1989. Superintendent Paul Kaufman is responsible for the day-to-day management and upkeep of this top-flight course that features towering dune-like berms, stairway bunkers and bulkhead-protected greens. It was Paul along with his bosses who made the decision to go with TifEagle. "Our Tifdwarf was really beginning to show its age and was getting to be almost unmanageable. On top of that, the Myrtle Beach area is so competitive.



There are almost 100 courses here now in what's essentially a one-mile by 30-mile strip, and the majority of them have ultradwarf greens. From a competitive standpoint we were just lagging behind. So I put in a combination test green with TifEagle, MiniVerde and Champion and evaluated all three grasses for over two years. I also looked at a lot of other clubs and talked to a lot of other superintendents. We decided to no-till. We shut the course down last year on June 18th. Believe it or not, we were open for play on September 1 with our new TifEagle greens."



Paul Kaufman

"To be honest, Champion was on my mind early on, because it was the sexy, in-vogue pick. But I put in a test green with TifEagle, MiniVerde and Champion, and after 2 years of playing around with all three, I got to see the limitations and strong points of each grass. I also looked at a lot of TifEagle courses. In the end, my bosses and I agreed that TifEagle was the best ultradwarf for Prestwick."

*Paul Kaufman-Superintendent
Prestwick Country Club, Myrtle Beach SC*

IBIS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB - WEST PALM BEACH FL

TifEagle bermudagrass is on two of the three premier golf courses at the exclusive Ibis Golf and Country Club in West Palm Beach FL. The Legend Course, a signature Jack Nicklaus design, and the Heritage Course, designed by Jack Nicklaus II, were both converted to TifEagle in 2012. The Tradition Course, a Steve Nicklaus design, is scheduled for its TifEagle renovation this summer. Matt Masemore, Director of Golf Course Maintenance, is responsible for the management and upkeep of these three award-winning courses, and Matt was instrumental in the decision to go with TifEagle. "We were having



some mutation and off-type issues with our existing ultradwarf greens, and the newest was only 6 years old. It was beginning to affect ball roll on all three courses, so we knew playability would soon be a big problem. We looked at a lot of different properties, some with MiniVerde and some with TifEagle, but ultimately decided on the TifEagle. It's a genetically stable variety that's proven itself going on 20 years now, and we felt it was the best choice for us. We also needed a grass that could recover quickly after handling a lot of traffic. So far our members love it. My maintenance staff

does too, even though we're using a little more Primo and doing slightly more fertility."



Matt Masemore

"After two really dry, cold winters we started seeing some mutations in our existing bermudagrass greens. When it started to affect ball roll, we knew we had to do something. We tossed around MiniVerde and TifEagle and ultimately decided on TifEagle since it's such a genetically stable variety."

*Matt Masemore -Director of Golf Course Maintenance
Ibis Golf & Country Club, West Palm Beach FL*

THERE'S AN IMPRESSIVE TEAM BEHIND TIFEAGLE BERMUDAGRASS –TEAMUGA

It all starts with good breeding and good turfgrass breeders doing their homework. That's why TifEagle breeder Wayne Hanna set up TifEagle evaluations at 26 distinct golf course locations throughout the United States, South America and the Caribbean. He wanted reliable data from a wide range of climates, conditions and management regimes—in coastal, island and inland venues from Barbados and Memphis to the desert southwest. Looking at what was happening with Tifdwarf at the time, Dr. Hanna also developed a set of strict management and production protocols for his new ultradwarf. To become a TifEagle licensee you had to have three certification inspections every year and agree to plant new TifEagle material from foundation stock every 5 years. That's a considerable expense, but it's worth every penny if it keeps our TifEagle production fields genetically stable.

THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES (CAES)

The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES) offers robust research, teaching, and extension programs that are among the most respected in the country. Dr. Glen Burton pioneered turfgrass breeding and genetics at UGA over half a century ago. Today this internationally renowned program is thriving under the distinguished leadership of Dr. Brian Schwartz and Dr. Paul Raymer at our Tifton and Griffin campuses. Through teaching programs and Cooperative Extension Service activities, CAES shares its considerable experience and knowledge with turfgrass producers, turfgrass managers and consumers.

TURFGRASS LICENSING AND PROTECTION (UGARF)

The University of Georgia Research Foundation (UGARF) owns and manages new turfgrasses developed at the University of Georgia. UGARF secures patents, issues licenses to qualified growers, and requires stringent certification to protect grass purity. UGARF also funds the development of new cultivars, distributing over fifty percent of licensing revenues to UGA plant breeders and their research and development programs.

CERTIFICATION AND INSPECTIONS (GCIA)

The Georgia Crop Improvement Association (GCIA) coordinates all certified turfgrass inspections for Team UGA. Every field in every state with a patented UGA grass is inspected under that state's certification program for varietal purity and weed problems. Each shipment of turfgrass is required to have a 'Blue Tag' certificate. This certification ensures that each shipment of sod, sprigs or seed meets the state's published certification requirements and is vital to maintaining Team UGA's top priority – helping buyers protect their investment.

MARKETING AND COMPLIANCE (GSDC)

The Georgia Seed Development Commission (GSDC) is the agency responsible for all foundation plant material production, including vegetatively propagated turfgrasses, and is another important member of Team UGA. GSDC develops and implements appropriate turfgrass management and maintenance protocols, and collects royalties owed on turfgrass sales. GSDC also works closely with the UGA faculty to support and facilitate new research projects.

INTERNATIONAL TURF- GRASS GENETIC ASSUR- ANCE PROGRAM (ITGAP)

Very early on, TeamUGA developed a set of rules and inspection protocols for prospective international licensees and made it mandatory for our international producers to sign on as participants. We dubbed it the International Turfgrass Genetic Assurance Program, or ITGAP for short, and it serves as the international licensing agent for the UGA patented turfgrass varieties. ITGAP helps international producers grow and market quality turfgrasses all around the world. And doing business with an ITGAP-approved grower or purchasing certified material from a licensed US supplier are the ONLY ways international buyers can be sure of getting a genuine UGA variety.

CONCLUSION

This certainly isn't a study of all the ultradwarf greens out there, but rather a snapshot of one of the older TifEagle courses along with two new installations. Remember, early on when some of these courses started their conversions, no-till wasn't even a viable concept. Most of the newer TifEagle greens are true "no-till" plantings. In closing it would be fair to say that all three of the premier ultradwarf varieties are capable of producing beautiful, challenging and extremely fast putting surfaces. Success starts with proper management and genetically pure stock. In Team UGA's case it starts with a world-renowned breeding program, extensive University-backed research and our TeamUGA partners who oversee new cultivar licensing, certification and inspections.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
www.tifeagle.com