Impact of Simulated Golf Cart Traffic on Fine Fescue. (C05-stier122446-Poster)

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Abstract:

Fine fescues (Festuca spp.) are becoming more popular for U.S. golf course fairways due to their low maintenance requirements despite having historically poor tolerance to low mowing height and traffic. Our objective was to determine the best fine fescue cultivars for fairways. We applied simulated golf cart traffic for 4 years to 78 fine fescues in the 1998 NTEP trial maintained at 2 cm height. A concurrent trial was evaluated without traffic. Traffic reduced turf quality with ratings split into three categories: fair, poor, and very poor. Forty-two percent of the best cultivars were new or experimental lines. Under traffic, Chewings fescues (F. rubra ssp. commutata) had the best quality followed by strong creeping reds (F. rubra ssp. rubra). Hard fescues (F. longifolia) had the worst quality and most susceptibility to summer patch disease. Chewings and hard fescues resisted dollar spot while resistance was cultivar-dependent among red fescues. Turf color was cultivardependent. A weighted evaluation scale was used to develop a list of recommended cultivars based on various traits. Careful cultivar selection is necessary to develop acceptable fine fescue fairways.

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