

Welcome - to two new launches for landscapers

Innovations from leading grass seed agent **RIGBY TAYLOR** and dedicated seed breeder **TOP GREEN** sees the launch in Spring 2010 of two exciting new ranges. Sustainability issues together with changing climatic conditions have been top priorities in creating the new grass seed mixtures and urban flower range.

• **The Landscape and Environmental Range of grass seed is sure to score high with landscaping projects helping to solve key environmental and sustainability issues.**

Of particular interest to specifiers, landscape architects, local authorities and equestrian sports providers will be the introduction of this complete range of grass seed mixtures focused on their specific individual needs. Tried and tested over many years through



New low maintenance flower mixtures

extensive research and trials nationwide, this targeted range has now come to fruition. Brian Robinson, Director of Seed Research at Rigby Taylor, says: "Specific requirements of end-users encouraged our research and Top Green's breeding programme at Les Alleuds." Parks, landscapes, specialist sites within our treasured national parks, polo grounds, racecourses, coastal sites,

footpaths, airfields, highways and amenity sports areas can now all reap the benefits of this diligent work.

• **For those considering urban floral plantings the news is great! Rigby Taylor and Top Green introduce a completely new concept in flower planting which is extremely low maintenance.**

A wonderful solution to ever decreasing local authority budgets - colourful flowers

the public knows and loves can be grown in abundance in a far more cost-effective way. They are also sure to be a great hit with golf clubs and sports facilities as they provide a profusion of flowers – there are ten mixtures to choose from with a range of multi-coloured palettes. Individual mixtures to reinforce company livery or to cater for bespoke applications can also be created.

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Bentley Golf Club benefits from bent grasses



Results of seeding at Bentley Golf Club

FANTASTIC RESULTS have been achieved at Bentley Golf Club in Essex following a dedicated overseeding programme on the greens using bent grass seed from Rigby Taylor.

Course Manager Mark Stops has been delighted with results and says:

"The success rate from the overseeding and the speed of that success has been really tremendous.

"Members have benefitted from a more consistent sward

and are pleased with the speed of the greens."

By increasing the bent population, through overseeding with **Egmont and Manor** in the spring and autumn periods, turf quality has improved.

And increased disease resistance means the club does not have to depend on high levels of fungicides and fertilisers.

Importantly this has cost and environmental benefits.



Premier cricket mix for testing times

Top Green perennial ryegrasses scoring well in Mascot's R9 mixture ensure great grass cover as they feature:

- ✓ excellent recovery characteristics
- ✓ exceptional wear
- ✓ advantageous year-round colour
- ✓ good shoot density
- ✓ perform well even in the shade
- ✓ great sward uniformity
- ✓ tolerance to close mowing
- ✓ fineness of leaf



Did you know?

Asking cricket groundsmen what their biggest gripes were - answers included **people abusing the nets... matches and captains... lack of respect... communication problems... not enough preparation time between matches... the weather... more and more use of pitches... the players and... budgets.**

You can bank on overseeding for great dividends

REGULAR overseeding through an 'integrated seed management programme' ensures great grass growth for top presentation standards on natural turf surfaces.

Latest research carried out in New Zealand provides clear evidence that rather than overseeding in spring and autumn it is far better to overseed on a more regular basis. Over time this will help to build up a good seed bank and reduce the number of any worn or bare areas on turf surfaces.

Trials demonstrate that by overseeding two to three times in the spring and four times in autumn poa annua reduces significantly year-on-year.

Encouraging increased density, greater uniformity and a dramatic increase in the number of healthy plants within the playing surface this practice is not costing much more. The rate of sowing is significantly less, generally a half to two-thirds of the normal rate. **Now is a great time to put into practice and reap the benefits of this tried and tested programme of overseeding.**

How golf courses can flourish



ON THE GOLF COURSE the green features a wide variety of grasses that age differently over the years. So, to meet today's significant user demands and promote a healthier sward new grasses need to be developed by building more cultivars into the sward.

Brian Robinson of Rigby Taylor explains: "People expect to be able to play golf 365 days of the year.

"As a result stressed grass is a major problem but it is often not until the following spring this factor becomes apparent and it then takes the grass some time to recover."

As most golf courses are an 80/20 fescue/bent mixture by introducing a range of cultivars, including creeping fescue, there is a far wider uptake of grasses - helping to take the grass surface safely into and through the demanding winter period.

Good news from Mayday

MAYDAY R314 consists of three exceptional cultivars - creating a grass mix second to none for the colder winter period. Providing extended winter growth, excellent grass cover is achieved during this critical time when good wear and tear properties and a uniform appearance are critical. The 'three musketeers' in this mix are:

Axcella a new annual ryegrass providing rapid establishment and performing well in wet and shady situations.

Greenfair a high rated STRI perennial ryegrass which has been included for protection as it boasts rapid establishment, great wear characteristics and helps maintain vegetation through its extensive windchill properties.

Snowbird a fine leaved rough stalked meadow grass formulated for use in winter games areas. Giving good bottom growth at low temperatures it performs well in high shade and wet conditions.



Blooming beautifully



Trethorne trials prove a great hit with members

Expanding its range with a completely new concept Rigby Taylor now provides floral seed mixtures for

creating a true 'wow factor' in urban landscapes.

Offering a long flowering period and with low-

maintenance requirements these flower mixtures will improve landscaped areas in a truly beneficial way whilst maintaining the UK's love of all things bright and beautiful.

Trials include those carried out at Trethorne Golf Club in Cornwall where the response has been fantastic.

Overseeing the trials Sarah Austin says: "After the initial seed bed preparation and sowing, the maintenance requirements of the environmental flora mixes are very low. The mixes were quick to germinate taking 11 days and were flowering after only 6 weeks and carried on flowering well into the winter!"

"They generated a huge amount of interest, with enquiries coming from international companies to retired golf club members."

The team addressing key environmental issues:



BRIAN ROBINSON as Director of Seed Research for Rigby Taylor has spent years liaising with companies,

local authorities and golf clubs to produce a range of grass seed mixtures second to none. "Climate change and sustainability issues have been addressed through our dedicated grass seed mixtures."



STEPHEN ALDERTON is Marketing Manager for specialist seed breeder Top Green, working at its seed research base at Les Alleuds

in France.

"Exciting developments have taken place in relation to the development of cultivars which now bear little resemblance to their predecessors. We are keen that golf clubs, landscapers and sports providers are aware of all the cultivars now available to help ensure turf surfaces demonstrate year-round excellence."



STEPHEN DENTON as Grass Seed Development Manager at Rigby Taylor not only looks at specialist projects but also

oversees dedicated trial work in conjunction with Brian Robinson.

"By carrying out important trial work it helps us to understand the key issues facing the turf manager.

"Our intention is to ensure that our seeds and mixtures are the leaders in the field."

HERE TO HELP...

THE TEAM are extremely keen to help answer and solve queries from professionals who are providing natural turf surfaces. You ask the question... they will do all they can to provide a solution.

Simply contact **Brian Robinson** on 01204 677770 email: b.robinson@rigbytaylor.com, or

Stephen Denton on 07770 762819 email: s.denton@rigbytaylor.com

Anyone for tennis?



Frinton-on-Sea boasts set of 16 grass tennis courts

WORKING diligently for 25 years at the Frinton-on-Sea Lawn Tennis Club in Essex, Head Groundsman Matthew Crown is amazed at the development of grass seed cultivars during that period.

He says: "At one time you would need to allow a year for grass to establish.

"Now I am using the Mascot R9 mix which establishes very rapidly and importantly wears well."

Six years ago the decision was taken to Koro all 16 courts and completely re-seed following advice from

Eddie Seaward. This was to help address the considerable thatch problem on the courts.

Matthew adds: "Of key importance with tennis courts is the bounce and because this mix is 100 per cent rye it grows straight up which helps."

This beautiful 110 year-old club is steeped in tradition and justifiably proud of its grass courts he says:

"I always encourage the club to keep up with the latest technology to ensure we stay on top of the game and maintain the best surfaces."



Environmental matters...

...are a major concern for golf clubs, local authorities and national parks keen to reduce their carbon footprint.

Importantly when selecting grass cultivars their decisions can now be based on the amount of carbon dioxide they take out of the atmosphere.

Brian Robinson explains: "The carbon footprint is important and this is where we see our industry research continuing to go in the future. Ryegrasses and fescues store carbon in different ways and we have fed this information into the Top Green range of grass seed mixtures, indicating their carbon rating to help specifiers in their seed selection."



Pioneers of grass seed science

ESP (enhanced seed performance) liquid grass seed coating from Rigby Taylor scores top marks with users... encouraging more dense root development which helps to considerably alleviate the stress factor.

Following three years of research results demonstrate the new ESP seed coating technology improves the establishment and development of grass seedlings.

A special formulation of key ingredients is applied to the grass seed by using a liquid spray, not a granular or powder formulation. This means that each individual seed is evenly coated – and there are no Health and Safety issues either in the packaging process or in use by the turf manager.

Seed can germinate two days more quickly compared to untreated seed, but the real



benefit lies in the improved levels of establishment and overall plant health. Root mass is increased on average by over 20 per cent with a greater number of secondary and tertiary roots – a vital factor on golf greens, tees and approaches where

greenkeepers are looking for density and uniformity. This reinforces the foundation of the turf and increases its strength and stability by improving the plant's ability to capture and utilise water and nutrients.

With leaf colour, thickness and overall health increased, the plants' ability to withstand stressful situations during the establishment phase are improved. Sward density and ground coverage are also enhanced - reducing the time from renovation to use.

Brian Robinson says: "By using grasses with coated seed you can quickly achieve maximum growth potential."

Coating of the Mascot grass seed range continues apace with R117, R105, R9, R14, R311, and R314 already benefiting from the ESP coating – and proving so successful the whole range will follow.



Some like it hot – be water wise

PROTECTING our valuable water resources is vital.

As a result, grass plants that are more drought tolerant and stay green in hotter weather have a key role to play on our sports surfaces and landscaped areas.

Stephen Alderton, Marketing Manager for Top Green reports: "New varieties of slender creeping red fescue such as Helena, tall fescues and chewings have a higher drought tolerance. "Importantly these help to dramatically improve presentation standards during drier conditions."

Grande II is a new rhizomatous tall fescue featuring twice the number of rhizomes. This substantially improves density together with wear and recovery capabilities.

Adding to the tall fescue portfolio **Greenbrookes** is a new finer leaved cultivar exhibiting improved density. Demonstrating high wear levels during the summer and winter periods it also has exceptional drought tolerance capabilities.

A further benefit is the high endophyte count of Greenbrookes which offers improved disease tolerance.

Wearing well with Browntop Bents

TWO GREAT new Browntop Bents from New Zealand, **Greenspeed** and **Egmontwo** are now incorporated into the Mascot Fine Turf range of grass seed mixtures - increasing density, appearance and low temperature recovery.

With the addition of these cultivars grass seed mixtures can now be sown in spring right through to late autumn, thereby improving the chances of early winter recovery.

This is especially beneficial on golf greens and turf under heavy use conditions.

Getting to the root of the matter



Good development of root mass

A DEDICATED programme of field trials by leading grass seed breeder Top Green has revealed that increased root mass is a key to CO₂ capture and sequestration. Grasses contribute to carbon sequestration through

the development and decomposition of leaves but the root system is also vital. Grasses have fibrous root systems with an average dry root mass of 1.5kg per m², representing about 70 per cent of the total plant mass.

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