



Penn State Golf Turf Facts



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Pinehurst Renovates Classic Golf Course Using Penn State Turfgrass

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. -- Pinehurst Resort and Country Club will host the U.S. Open golf tournament, June 17-20. To prepare for this big event, Pinehurst has renovated its famous "Old Course" using turfgrass varieties developed specifically for golf courses by scientists in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

Designed by Donald Ross in separate nine-hole projects in 1901 and 1906, Pinehurst No. 2 recently reopened after a \$850,000 renovation that included resurfacing the course's famous greens with Penn G-2, a heat-resistant variety of bentgrass developed by Joe Duich, professor emeritus of turfgrass science. The Pinehurst, N.C., course previously resurfaced its greens in 1987 using Penncross, another Penn State turfgrass product developed by Duich.

Penn State turfgrass varieties are used on 90 percent of all golf courses around the world, according to Thomas Watschke, professor of turfgrass science. "The new Penn G2 putting surface at Pinehurst's Old Course will perform better in the warmer climate of the Southeast," Watschke says. "It also grows straight up, which will give a putt a truer roll."

A Sample of Prominent Golf Courses Using Penn State Turfgrass Varieties

Pinehurst Resort and Country Club, Pinehurst, N.C. (Penn G-2) Augusta National Golf Club, Augusta, Ga. (Penn A-1, Pennlinks, Penncross) Butler National Golf Club, Oakbrook, Ill. (Penneagle) Cypress Point Club, Pebble

Beach, Calif. (Seaside 2) Hazeltine National Golf Club, Chaska, Minn. (Penncross) Troon North, Scottsdale, Ariz., (Penncross) Oakmont Country Club, Oakmont, Pa., (Penneagle, Penn G-2, G-6) Cherry Hills Country Club, Denver, Colo. (Penneagle, Penncross) Inverness Golf Course, Chicago, Ill. (Penncross, Seaside)

Penn State's Turfgrass History

Golf and Penn State's turfgrass program have a history longer than a Tiger Woods tee shot. The program began when Joseph Valentine, superintendent of the Merion Golf Club, convinced Pennsylvania legislators to fund a turfgrass research program at what was then known as the Pennsylvania State College. In 1924, H. Burton Musser was hired as the first Penn State turfgrass researcher. Charles Hallowell, Penn State Cooperative Extension agent in Philadelphia County, was the first county agent in the United States to specialize in turfgrass.

Musser was a pioneer in grass breeding, which involves developing new turfgrass varieties by crossing them with other grasses or by developing existing varieties into commercial products. In the 1950s, Musser and Duich developed Penncross, a bentgrass seeded variety still used today on golf greens. Other golf grasses developed by Penn State include Pennlinks, Penneagle and Seaside.

Turfgrass research continues today at Penn State. The Joseph Valentine Turfgrass Research Center, a 10-acre facility adjacent to Penn State's Beaver Stadium, is a living laboratory for testing fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides, as well as evaluating new turfgrass varieties for density, color and disease resistance.

Golf Course Superintendents Who Are Penn State Graduates

Of the top 100 golf courses in the United States, 21 are overseen by Penn State graduates. Here is a partial listing of golf superintendents who have taken their Penn State education to new heights:

William "Marsh" Benson, Augusta National Golf Club, Augusta, Ga. Paul Latshaw, Congressional Country Club (site of 1997 U.S. Open), Bethesda, Md. Paul Latshaw (son), Oak Hill Country Club, Rochester, N.Y. Greg Armstrong, Merion Golf Club, Ardmore, Pa. Mark Kuhns, Oakmont Country Club, Oakmont, Pa. Girard Thomas Hilperts, Broadmoor Golf Club, Seattle, Wash. Michael

Sauls, Butler National Golf Club, Oakbrook, Ill. Mike Burke, Cherry Hills Country Club, Denver, Colo. Jeffrey Markow, Cypress Point Club, Pebble Beach, Calif. James Nicol, Hazeltine National Golf Club, Chaska, Minn. Michael Bavier, Inverness Golf Course, Chicago, Ill. Brad Hines, Troon Golf and Country Club, Scottsdale, Ariz. Gene Palrud, The Royal Hong Kong Golf Course

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