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bluegrasses with the lowest water applications were also ranked among those with the highest visual quality (Fig. 6; there were no statistical differences among cultivars with average visual quality greater than 5.5). The amount of water applied to these 15 cultivars with superior turf quality was also below the mean water applied to all 30 bluegrasses (32.8 cm). Similarly, visual quality in 12 of the 15 bluegrasses that received the least water was greater than the mean of all 30 bluegrasses (5.78), although all 15 were statistically similar.

In contrast to the 15 top performers, six cultivars were ranked within the group that received the most water and had the lowest visual quality (Fig. 6). Those six cultivars, which included Kenblue, Wellington, Midnight II, Baron, Diva, and Shamrock, had

neither the high visual quality nor low water requirement traits we were screening for in this study.

CONCLUSIONS

Cultivar selection in KBG had significant impacts on water requirements and visual quality ratings. Among cultivars, differences in seasonal water applications were as great as 21.6 cm and differences in days to 50% wilt between irrigations were as great as 6.7 days, nearly 1 week). Based on statistical range tests, only 15 of the 30 cultivars were in the group that both received the least water and had the greatest visual quality. Results indicated that, under conditions similar to those in our study, KBG in the Compact America and Mid-Atlantic phenotypic groups can be selected

for their lower irrigation requirements without sacrificing visual quality, and types from those two groups may represent the best selections for breeding efforts to achieve such goals. ■

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