John Mascaro’s Photo Quiz

Can you identify this sports turf problem?

**Problem:** Snow cover on field on left and not on field on right  
**Turfgrass area:** Sports Complex  
**Location:** Columbia, Tennessee  
**Grass Variety:** 419 bermudagrass base

John Mascaro is President of Turf-Tec International

Answer to John Mascaro’s Photo Quiz on Page 33

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The reason why this sports complex has snow cover on the field on top and not on the field on the bottom is actually not an easy question to answer. The 419 bermudagrass field on the right was overseeded with a specific perennial ryegrass/chewings fescue blend. The field was then topdressed with USGA sand. The remaining 11 fields of the baseball/softball/football complex were not overseeded or topdressed. In addition, all of the complex fields were constructed of the same materials. The sports turf manager thought it odd that the snow melted on the overseeded field some 2 hours earlier than the non overseeded fields. Due to the harsh winter in the Southeast, the turf color on the overseeded field did not come into play. I consulted with Dr. Tom Samples from the University of Tennessee and he suspects that the soil temperature of the overseeded bermudagrass field was higher than that of the dormant bermudagrass field alone (since the perennial ryegrass had probably been transpiring water from the soil before the snow, and the soil was drier). He also continued on that a second consideration would be the greater insulation value due to the increased stand density of the bermudagrass and perennial ryegrass mixture versus that of the dormant bermudagrass alone, causing the quicker snow melt on the overseeded field.

Photo submitted by Bryan M. Farris, Parks & Recreation Supervisor at Ridley Park, Columbia, TN. Dr. Tom Samples, University of Tennessee in Knoxville, TN also contributed to the answer.

If you would like to submit a photograph for John Mascaro’s Photo Quiz please send it to John Mascaro, 1471 Capital Circle NW, Ste # 13, Tallahassee, FL 32303 call (850) 580-4026 or email to john@turf-tec.com. If your photograph is selected, you will receive full credit. All photos submitted will become property of SportsTurf magazine and the Sports Turf Managers Association.

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