

INDUSTRY NEWS

Zeon Zoysia Chosen for 2016 Olympic Fairways

After more than a century's absence, when golf returns as an Olympic sport at the 2016 Games in Rio, the grass in the fairways, roughs and tees of the new golf course built especially for the games will be Zeon Zoysia, it was confirmed at the Golf Industry Show in San Diego by Dr. Frank Rossi, associate professor in the Department of Horticulture at Cornell University who is a consulting agronomist on the project.

"Everything approaching the greens, 88 percent of the grassed area, will be Zeon Zoysia," Rossi says.

The greens grass selection has been delayed, Rossi says, because the salinity and quality of the water to be used for irrigation is still unknown.

"The decision on the greens and green surrounds hinges on the quality of the water," Rossi said.

"If the water is good, the greens will be an ultradwarf bermudagrass. The surrounds will be another type of bermudagrass. If the water is not good, the greens and surrounds will be some type of paspalum because the bermudagrass may not hold up to poor quality water."

"As it marks the return of golf to the Olympic Games after over a century of absence, this course represents the beginning of a new chapter in the history of the sport. It will enable Rio to host important events in the international calendar and it will be an example of sustainability and preservation of an environmentally protected area," said the President of Rio 2016, Carlos Arthur Nuzman.

The choice of Zeon Zoysia as the grass for the majority of the acreage on the golf course, approximately 88 acres of fairways and roughs, reinforces the organizing committee's desire to create a sustainable golf course. Zeon Zoysia has very low requirements for maintenance and inputs, according to David Doguet, president of Bladerunner Farms, the company that bred Zeon Zoysia.

"Zeon Zoysia is very environmentally friendly. The grass needs very little water, and very low amounts of nitrogen fertilizer, while still looking and playing great. The grass will create a world-class play-

ing surface for the Olympics, and for many years to come," Doguet said.

Zeon Zoysia was developed in Texas by Bladerunner Farms, the largest privately held zoysiagrass breeding facility in the world. Zeon is licensed by The Turfgrass Group and Doguet Ventures. The grass will be grown in Rio for use on the Golf Course by Green Grass Brazil, a licensed sod producer of Zeon Zoysia.

Golf has not been a sport at the Olympics since 1904. To accommodate the Olympic-sized galleries and international attention sure to follow the event, a new golf course is being built just five kilometers from the Olympic Athletes Village.

The Rio 2016 organizing Committee announced last year the selection of Hanse Golf Course Design, based in Malvern, PA, as the golf course architect.

About Bladerunner Farms

Bladerunner Farms is the largest privately held zoysiagrass and buffalograss research and development facility. Current releases include Zeon Zoysia, L1F Zoysia, Lowrider Zoysia, Y2 Zoysia, JaMur Zoysia, Density Buffalograss and Eco Buffalograss.

Bladerunner works in conjunction with the University of Georgia to conduct research. Grasses are licensed west of the Mississippi by Doguet Ventures, East of the Mississippi by The Turfgrass Group. Bladerunner Farms is headquartered in Poteet, Texas, just south of San Antonio.

About Zeon Zoysia

Zeon Zoysia is a fine-textured, highly dense turf ideal for use on golf courses and home lawns. Zeon Zoysia offers golfers a firm, fast, quality playing surface without high inputs. Zeon Zoysia has very low water and low fertilizer requirements. The grass stands up to heat, drought, insects and disease. Zeon Zoysia is The Environmental Turfgrass.

RESOURCES: www.bladerunnerfarms.com;
www.theturfgrassgroup.com

