



01 Mar 2019  
Sustainability

# EUROPEAN TURFGRASS SOCIETY FIELD DAY



**By Alessandro De Luca**

With the introduction of the EU Directive 2009/128/EC, it is forbidden in Italy to use pesticide on golf courses and sport facilities. Furthermore, the management of turfgrasses is facing weather extremes due to climate change and various environmental challenges. This means it's even more difficult to maintain turf quality.

In order to verify the consequences of a minimum-input maintenance, the Green Section of the Italian Golf Federation and major Italian environmental organizations (Legambiente, Federparchi and Fondazione Univerde), in collaboration with Golf della Montecchia, and several Universities, developed the “Biogolf Case Study” project.

The aim of the Biogolf Case Study is to manage the third nine holes of Golf della Montecchia, called the “Green Course”, according to organic farming principles: maximum application of correct agronomic practices, use of organic fertilizers only, no pesticides and identification of tolerance thresholds, the study of new products to minimise pesticide activities and the adoption of alternative maintenance techniques.

The Green Section of the IGF was born in 1989 with the aim of optimizing the maintenance and improving construction and the sustainability of Italian golf courses.

After the organisation of the Didactic activities, starting from 1992, the Green Section developed the technical and research sectors, strengthening several activities in relation to the environment.

Golf della Montecchia, a golf site bordering the “Parco Colli Euganei” protected area, was always oriented towards sustainable environmental management, as confirmed by several practices and by national and international awards: the national prize Impegnati nel verde (2007, 2012), the environmental certification GEO (2013,2016), the nomination to the IAGTO Environmental Award (2014) and the IAGTO Environmental Award-Community Value (2017), the inclusion in the CETS project by Europarc (2019) and the GEO Tournament Certification for the international Venice Open management (2019).

The Biogolf Case Study project was launched in January 2015 and after four years of experience, important observations have already been made.

In September 2017, in the framework of an important trade fair, a seminar was organised with the purpose of sharing the first results. During the seminar, many observations and suggestions were forwarded from over 100 superintendents, greenkeepers and other experts.

With the same objective, Golf della Montecchia, in collaboration with the Green Section of the Italian Golf Federation and Padua University, have decided to host the European Turfgrass Society (ETF) Field Day, which will be held on 27 and 28 May 2019.

More than 120 scientists, experts, greenkeepers, superintendents and turf enthusiasts are expected to attend the meeting.

Some of the studies included in the project are listed below:

1. Establishment and adaptability of Miniverde ultradwarf bermudagrass at northern Italy climatic conditions
2. Winter kill protection of Miniverde ultradwarf bermudagrass using a vegetable barrier
3. Winter management of ultradwarf bermudagrass
4. Golf course management strategies for improving biodiversity in naturalised rough
5. The role of *Rhinantus alectolorophus* on increasing the biodiversity in naturalised rough

6. CO2 balance on Bermuda fairways versus cool-season fairways
7. Car path weeds control without chemical herbicide use
8. Ornithological censuses and studies
9. Optimization of bunkers management using different construction technologies
10. Data collections: comparison of different tools - TurfGard, drones, PogoTurfPro, satellite
11. Broad leafe control using harrow and verticutter
12. Entomological study in order to increase the pollinators population
13. Soil pH control injecting phosphoric acid on the irrigation system
14. Evaluation of organic products for SDS control on Bermuda greens and fairways and Dollar spots on bentgrass greens.

For more information on the European Turfgrass Society Field Day, please visit: [www.turfgrasssociety.eu/ETSFD\\_2019/](http://www.turfgrasssociety.eu/ETSFD_2019/)



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