Summer Establishment of Tall Fescue Athletic Fields
Turfgrass Species on Athletic Fields

- Turfgrass Selection
  - Perennial Ryegrass
  - K. Bluegrass
  - Tall Fescue
    - Forms clumps
    - Unaesthetic
  - Turf-type tall fescue??
Tall Fescue

- **Advantages**
  - ↑ Drought tolerance
  - ↑ Heat tolerance
  - ↓ Fertilization
Summer Establishment

- Obstacles
  - Short time period
  - Limited irrigation
  - \(\uparrow\) disease pressure with irrigation and fertility
Can turf-type tall fescue be planted in late spring / early summer and be ready for fall play?

Is perennial ryegrass still a better option?
Penn State Research Study

- Scenario:
  - Seed in late May or early June
  - Field ready for play by late August
  - Access to irrigation
Research Findings – Wear Tolerance

- Establishment time matters!
  - 10 weeks – P. ryegrass is better option
  - 14 weeks – turf-type tall fescue is equal or better option
Turf-Type Tall Fescue Cultivars

- **8 tall fescue cultivars in study**
  - **Most Traffic Tolerant**
    - Turbo, Rembrandt, Falcon V, Rebel IV
  - **Moderate Traffic Tolerant**
    - Faith, Shenandoah III, Firecracker LS
  - **Least Traffic Tolerant**
    - Justice
Tall Fescue Seeding Rates

- **Seeding Rates**
  - 6, 10, 14, and 18 lbs / 1000 ft²
  - No difference in wear tolerance between seeding rates
  - 6 lbs / 1000 ft² is adequate
Fertilization

- Nitrogen Rates
  - 2.0, 4.5, and 7.0 lbs N / 1000 ft²
  - Most traffic tolerant: 2.0 lbs N / 1000 ft² applied at seeding
    - Slow release (30% WIN)
Penn State Research Results

• 14-week establishment time needed for turf-type tall fescue to compete with P. rye

• Most wear resistant cultivars: Turbo, Rembrandt, Falcon V, Rebel IV

• Seeding rate over 6 lbs / 1000 ft$^2$ not needed

• 2 lbs. of N / 1000 ft$^2$ at time of seeding
Things To Think About

- 14 weeks of no use?
- Access to irrigation?
- Treat for disease (brown patch)?
- Crabgrass pressure?
Overseeding

- During the season
  - Perennial ryegrass

- Spring / Summer
  - Turf-Type tall fescue
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