

# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE OLYMPIC GOLF COURSE

## FACT SHEET - OLYMPIC GOLF COURSE

### INTRO

Golf returns as an Olympic sport in 2016 at the Rio Games after a 112-year absence. An 18-hole golf course, the Olympic Golf Course, was constructed specifically for the event. Grassing of the course was completed in 2014, but, as with all golf courses, the grass needed time to grow-in and mature before it was ready for play. The Olympic Committee's goal of hosting a sustainable, environmentally friendly 2016 Games extends to the design and construction of the golf course. The grass selection for the course had to meet those sustainability goals, as well as produce a highly-playable, professional-level golf course. Zeon Zoysia grass was planted on the fairways, tees and rough. SeaDwarf Seashore Paspalum was planted on the greens.

### LOCATION

Olympic Golf Course, Barra da Tijuca, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

### DATES OF OLYMPIC GOLF COMPETITION

August 5 – 21, 2016

Men's: August 11 – 14

Women's: August 17 – 20

### GOLF COURSE YARDAGE

7,350 yards, par 71

### GRASSES



**Fairways, tees, rough:**

Zeon Zoysia

**Greens:**

SeaDwarf Seashore Paspalum



## GRASSES

FAIRWAYS, TEES, ROUGH:

### Zeon Zoysia

Pronunciation: (ZEE-ahn, Zoi-SHAH)

Zeon Zoysia is a fine-bladed variety of zoysiagrass turf (*zoysia japonica*). It was vegetatively grown from sprigs, not seed. Zeon Zoysia is an extremely environmentally friendly grass—requires less nitrogen fertilizer, less water, infrequent mowing, and is fairly salt tolerant. Zeon Zoysia was selected for the Olympic Golf Course for its environmentally friendly qualities, playability and beauty. A tight-knit turf, it forms a dense playing surface with an upright nature that makes the ball sit up in the fairway as if on a tee. Zeon Zoysia was developed in Texas at Bladerunner Farms by Turfgrass Breeder David Doguet, and grown in Brazil by Green Grass Brasil. Zeon is the variety name. Zoysia is the family of grass.

Playability:

- Upright nature, ball sits up as if on a tee
- Dense, tight turf for extended ball roll

Maintenance:

- Less water: savings of 30 – 50% in water use over bermudagrass
- Less fertilizer: savings of at least half in fertilizer over bermudagrass
- Fewer, infrequent mowing: mowing frequency reduced by 25 – 50%
- Fairly salt tolerant: no loss of turf quality up to 15,000 ppm
- NO herbicide used on course: Fewer weeds, dense turf canopy chokes out most weeds. Any weeds pulled by hand.

Visual:

- Deep green color
- Prominent striping/contrast
- Lush surface

GREENS:

### SeaDwarf Seashore Paspalum

Pronunciation: (SEE-Dwarf Pass-pah-luhm)

SeaDwarf is highly salt-tolerant variety of seashore paspalum turf (*paspalum vaginatum*). It was vegetatively grown from sprigs, not seed. Can withstand poor water quality approaching brackish or seawater, which was one of the main reasons it was selected for the Olympic Golf Courses' location, surrounded by salt water, in the event that salt-spray or if low water quality for irrigation might be an issue. SeaDwarf was developed in Florida and grown in Brazil by Green Grass Brasil. SeaDwarf is the variety name. Seashore Paspalum is the family of grass.

Playability:

- Fine-textured dwarf grass
- Virtually no grain on the putting surface

Maintenance:

- Low water use
- Salt tolerant
- Low nitrogen fertilizer requirements

Visual:

- Bright green color



### GRASSES GROWN IN BRAZIL

Both Zeon Zoysia and SeaDwarf Seashore Paspalum were grown in-country, within trucking distance of the Olympic Golf Course, by Green Grass Brasil, owned by Marcelo Matte. Green Grass Brasil is a licensed producer of SeaDwarf Seashore Paspalum & Zeon Zoysia.

## OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

**Date architect & course design selected:**

March 7, 2012

**Date grass selection announced:**

February 2013

**Date grassing began:**

May 2014

**Date grassing complete:**

November 27, 2014

**First official tournament:**

March 8, 2016, Olympic Test Event

**Olympic Golf Competition:**

August 5 – 21, 2016

## FUN AND RANDOM STATS AND FACTS

### 112 Years:

Golf returns to the Games as an Olympic Sport for the first time since the 1904 Summer Olympics at Glen Echo Country Club in Normandy, Missouri, a suburb of St. Louis.

### 4 Years:

Planning and construction began on the Olympic Golf Course 4 years before the 2016 Games.

### 18:

Number of holes on the Olympic Golf Course.

### South America:

The 2016 Rio Olympic Games marks the first-ever Olympics hosted in South America.

## OLYMPIC GOLF COURSE TEAM

### Golf Course Superintendent Neil Cleverly

A native of London, England, who served in the British military, Neil Cleverly has been a golf course superintendent for more than 25 years. Cleverly has managed golf courses in Europe, Egypt, Mexico, the United States & the Caribbean. He was hired as the golf course superintendent for the Olympic Golf Course in May 2013, and has been on-site since the beginning of the project, overseeing the planting and grow-in of every blade of grass.

### Golf Course Architect Gil Hanse

Gil Hanse is the founder, president and lead designer of Hanse Golf Course Design, based in Malvern, PA. As a student at Cornell University, Hanse interned at Hawtree in Great Britain, the longest continuously practicing golf course architectural firm in the world. While there, he formed his philosophy for golf design based on historic courses. Since founding his boutique firm in 1993, Hanse has worked on projects ranging from Castle Stuart Golf Links in Inverness, Scotland, and the Tokyo Golf Club to renovating the Blue Monster at Doral Golf Resort & Spa. In 2012, Hanse won the highly competitive selection process to design the 2016 Olympic golf course in Rio de Janeiro.

### Grass Grown by Green Grass Brasil, Sod Farm Owner/Manager Marcelo Matte

Marcelo Matte is the owner/manager of Green Grass Brasil, a sod farm company with several farm locations within Brazil. His company is a licensed producer of both Zeon Zoysia and SeaDwarf Seashore Paspalum.

### Turfgrass Breeder David Doguet, Bladerunner Farms

David Doguet, owner of Bladerunner Farms, leads the world's largest independently owned zoysiagrass research center, located in Poteet, Texas, just south of San Antonio. Named to Golf Digest's list of Golf's Top Innovators & Influencers of 2016, Doguet has a more than 30-year history in breeding and promotion of zoysiagrass as a low maintenance grass. Doguet was instrumental in assisting Cleverly and Matte, traveling multiple times to Brazil, for the installation and grow-in of the Olympic Golf Course.

## MEDIA CONTACT:

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