

# These Men Knew All Along Sports Turf Would Have Its Day

By Bruce Shank

Athletic field managers have been defending public and private turf from a remote outpost for many years, while golf course superintendents and lawn care operators have received most of the attention. They have been provided with low budgets, outdated weaponry, and little consideration by the rest of the industry.

Now that the world has discovered the importance of their outpost, we have also discovered a few agronomists who never forgot them, never stopped developing new weapons for them, and helped these legionnaires make do with technology designed for other types of war.

Six of these wise men sit on the editorial advisory board of **sportsTURF** magazine.

**Fred Grau** is the dean of the advisory board. He was the first extension turf specialist in the U. S. in 1938 serving golf course greenskeepers, park superintendents, and sod growers in Pennsylvania. Fred worked with Burton Musser, a research agronomist at Pennsylvania State University, whose work in turf breeding and maintenance would put him in a turf hall of fame if there was such an honor.

Fred's accomplishments would fill three pages single-spaced if we had room. They include the development of Penngift crown vetch for highway erosion control, the codevelopment of the turf aerifier for West Point Products (later purchased by Hahn), directorship of the United States Golf Association Green Section from 1948 to 1953, early promotion of ureaformaldehyde nitrogen for turf, and most recently the development of the Sports Turf Research and Education Committee of the Musser International Turfgrass Foundation, a nonprofit organization for turf. In his eighties, Fred never let's up.

I'll never forget **Bill Daniel's** retirement dinner at the Midwest Turf Conference last March at Purdue University. In one room sat the Who's Who of turf, all former students of Bill during his 30 plus years of teaching agronomy.

If his name sounds familiar, it may be because he is the codeveloper of the Prescription Athletic Turf (PAT) system, probably the best known natural turf design on the market. It would be hard to find a sod grower, golf superintendent, or athletic field manager in the Midwest who is not aware of Bill Daniel. He helped start the Midwest Turf Foundation, the Midwest Sod Producers Association, and the Sports Turf Managers Association. His turf curricula at Purdue was copied by many other state universities.

**Henry Indyk**, professor of soils and crops at Rutgers University, has also developed a national reputation for his work in sports turf and sod production. He is part of the Rutgers turf brain trust which includes turf breeder Dr. Reed Funk and weed scientist Dr. Ralph Engle.

Henry is a person who doesn't stand for sloppy construction or maintenance. His attention to detail made him the best candidate for executive director of the American Sod Producers Association when it was new and the New Jersey Turfgrass Foundation for more than 20 years. That same trait propels him energetically into the area of safer sports turf.

He will outline his views of basic field requirements in the November issue of **sportsTURF**.

**Roy Goss**, extension agronomist for Washington State University in Puyallup, has been helping natural turf survive overuse and too much rain since 1958.

Roy has authored some of the best extension publications available on sports field construction and maintenance. He has also been the architect for more than 15 golf courses in Washington and Vancouver, Canada. One of the courses he designed is listed as one of the top 75 public courses in the U.S. by Golf Digest.

Another leader in writing publications for sports turf is **Bill Knoop** from Texas A&M University's Dallas campus. He joins the **sportsTURF** board to represent southern sports turf.

Bill works closely with the Texas Rangers baseball club and will host a sports turf conference at Ranger Stadium this coming spring with the help of field manager Jim Anglea. **sportsTURF** magazine is proud to sponsor this important event.

Finally, everyone in California knows him as Vic...Gibeault, that is. **Vic Gibeault** too is part of a brain trust. The California extension service has been blessed with the likes of John Madisen, Bill Davis, Vic Youngner, Kent Kurtz, and Gibeault.

Vic is closely involved with some major developments in sports turf. He is a close observer of sod grown on sand for resodding sand-based sports fields, combinations of warm and cool season grasses, and fertigation. Vic is a leader in educating sports turf managers in Southern California on proper field construction and care. His research emphasis is important to sports turf technology as it enters a new growth phase.

These six innovative veterans of sports turf provide a strong foundation of guidance for this magazine. ▶

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