

THE FRONT OFFICE

OPINION PAGE

A TEAM EFFORT



It's hard to believe that **sportsTURF** begins its fourth year of publication next month. With your help, we have charted new waters, raised new issues and spread the word on tools and techniques previously known by just a few inventive turf managers. By creating a vehicle to carry this information, we have hopefully provided ideas and tips that you have been able to apply directly to your work.

None of this would have been possible without your help. You have generously shared your expertise so that others can benefit from your experience. You have spent hours on the phone

with me going over your life stories, your innermost concerns, your reasons for doing things the way you do and your hopes for the future.

Together, we have shared extremely valuable methods to help large turf areas stand up to the tremendous pressure placed upon them today. Each sports turf manager and golf course superintendent who has undergone my interrogation has helped nearly 20,000 fellow turf managers increase their effectiveness on the job. By acting as a team, we are making a difference. Now that we have cracked open the door to a wealth of useful information, we have to work even harder to achieve greater levels of professionalism.

All of us have worked very hard these past few years to improve our jobs. But we still have a long way to go. We must face the challenges even during the toughest times. We can't falter and accept compromises that provide only partial solutions to the problems we face every day. We have to fight to get others to understand the importance of finding and implementing these solutions.

We must share our experiences with each other. Only part of our education takes place in school, the rest has to come from trial and error and on-the-job experience. The sports turf industry can grow one person at a time, or it can grow as a whole, a team of players learning from one another. It was largely for this reason that many sports turf managers and educators asked us to start **sportsTURF** in the first place.

You won't find stories in this magazine about people who think they only have to work 40 hours each week. I look for those "driven" individuals who happily get up early in the morning, work late at night and give everything they can muster to their jobs. They are the ones to lead the sports turf market today and in the future. When they aren't working at their jobs, they are volunteering their own time to help others.

Finally, it takes the support and understanding of our families to let us work these hours to help others, as well as ourselves. Employers must permit and encourage us to involve our families in our careers. We not only have to carefully schedule our time spent at work, we must also unfailingly schedule time for our families. Our families are on the team too. Neglecting our work or our families will only slow us down and prevent us from growing as we must to solve the problems facing us.

No team wins acting as an uncooperative bunch of individuals. The key to any victory is teamwork. The purpose of this magazine is to develop cooperation among all the players in the sports turf industry. To do this we need your help in every issue. Please make it a New Year's resolution to call and write me regularly. I am here to help you and to help others. This is your magazine. Use it for all it's worth. We have a huge task before us. There is little time to waste.

I wish you and your family a relaxing and pleasant holiday. May your family give you the time to watch at least part of each "bowl game." Not all teams have the luxury of playing on fields as good as the bowl game fields. Until they do, we have plenty left to do.

Bruce Shank

EVENTS

CALENDAR

JANUARY

4-6 Maryland Turfgrass '88, Baltimore Festival Hall, Baltimore, MD. Contact: Maryland Turfgrass Council, Inc., Box 223, White Marsh, MD 21162.

6-8 North Carolina Turfgrass Conference and Exhibit, Winston-Salem, NC. Contact: J.M. DiPaola, Box 7620, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC, 27695, (919) 737-2657.

11-15 Cornell Turfgrass Short Course, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. Contact Sharon Green, 20 Plant Science Bldg., Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853.

13-15 Eastern Pennsylvania Turf Conference & Trade Show, Valley Forge Convention and Exhibit Center, King of Prussia, PA. Contact: Dr. Thomas Watschke, Dept. of Agronomy, 16 Tyson Building, University Park, PA 16802, (814) 863-1613.

19-21 28th Virginia Turfgrass Conference, Richmond Centre, Richmond, VA. Contact: J.R. Hall, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061, (703) 961-5797.

FEBRUARY

9-10 Southern Grounds & Turf Maintenance Exposition, Myrtle Beach Convention Center, Myrtle Beach, SC. Contact: South Carolina State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education, 111 Executive Center Dr., Columbia, SC, 29210, 803-686-3737.

21-26 Pacific Northwest Maintenance Management School, Fort Worden State Park, Port Townsend, WA. Contact: National Recreation and Park Association Pacific Region Office, 1600 Sacramento Inn Way, Suite 217, Sacramento, CA 95815, (916) 646-9050.