

FROM THE PUBLISHER



For the past few years we've been saying that the sports turf market is developing at a much more rapid pace than it has in the past. We weren't guessing. We were reporting what we saw and heard in the industry. It was for this reason that we believed a publication geared to your special segment of the turf market was in order. It takes a lot of courage and nerve to put your money where your mouth is and start up a brand-new magazine in a field that's never been properly addressed before. However, both Bruce and I shared a gut instinct that the time was ripe. Everyone we talked to, including turf extension agents, consultants, manufacturers, and sports turf managers themselves, encouraged us to go forward with *sportsTURF*. Where other publishers would not tread, we aimed to go—because

we felt you were deserving of your own publication. As the turfgrass industry grew, I felt that the time to zero in on your highly specialized segment of the market was indeed opportune. Only the future will tell if we were right or wrong, yet I can't help but feel the momentum. It takes guts to be on the cutting edge. The need was there for a publication that directs all its editorial to the needs of managers of large, high-traffic turf areas. As an avid reader of trade magazines, I know personally that it becomes very difficult to maintain my interest in a publication that talks about subjects outside my primary concern.

Similarly, professionals in charge of large turf areas must find it very difficult to browse through a trade publication that also talks about small landscape contractors and the jobs they do. What does someone whose business is installing or maintaining a landscape on a quarter-acre homesite have to do with the sports turf manager's concern about constant traffic on tens of acres? It must be hard to relate one to the other.

However, when it comes to high-traffic turf areas, *sportsTURF* Magazine covers it all—from golf courses to sports complexes, to universities and their campus grounds and stadiums, to parks and recreational areas and acres of heavily used turf. The demand to play on well-groomed courses increases daily. Some courses are even having to impose time limits for play to handle the crowds. To combat this traffic, golf course superintendents have developed and implemented certain maintenance techniques, ones that can be utilized by other turf managers. These methods are not as expensive as many people think. Instead of lamenting, "We don't have the money to do what golf course superintendents and stadium field managers do," more and more sports turf managers at colleges, parks and schools are starting to say to their management, "I can provide safe and durable fields if you give me the tools and the support I need to make it happen." They are developing the skills and the confidence to ask for the help they need. Their positive dynamic attitude is the driving force behind the new momentum in the sports turf industry.

Turf managers at high schools and city and county parks have something special in common. They work with small-to-modest budgets, their fields are constantly in play, yet they have to keep them in condition. They learn how to make their fields even better by talking to their fellow turf managers at major universities, golf courses and stadiums, and at training facilities used for professional sports. They can make great strides at parks and schools with some of the affordable techniques used by these other facilities.

I think *sportsTURF* covers the market well. There is no doubt that we strive in each issue to make it the best magazine for your specialized needs. Beginning with the new year, we will expand our coverage even further, but always within your particular area of interest.

There is an old saying—"Keep your eye on the ball!" It is something we are constantly aware of. If we can help upgrade the industry by disseminating timely, useful information and feature stories, we believe we will contribute to the exciting new momentum in the market and give sports turf managers support they didn't have before.

As I reflect back, I sense that the professional, be he a golf course superintendent, a sports complex manager, or a groundskeeper at a university or park, has generated more respect, but more attention to the sports turf professional's needs. After all, it takes special skills to be able to work magic with a playing field or a golf course. It comes with years of training and experience.

To reinforce the importance of sports to our country, recently there has been a rash of newsletters and magazines that will cater to the sports manager. Although this material will be directed to the executives of sports teams, etc., surely it will filter down to the playing field. Hopefully even more executives will begin to appreciate the herculean task you all face daily, and give you the tools to do it even better in the future.

To this end—the greater success and prestige of the sports turf professional—we dedicate ourselves.