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 specialized 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, but I can 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 do 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 professional sports stadiums. These varied endeavors all have a common thread—the maintenance of acres and acres of heavily used turf areas.

Golf is surely one of the largest participant sports today. The demand to play on quality courses increases daily. Some courses are even having to impose limits on tee times and maintain certain techniques, ones that can be utilized by other turf managers. These methods are not as effective as many people think, but they work.

For example, at the University of Florida's stadium, fields and schools are starting to say to their managers, "I can't provide safe and durable playing surfaces 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 attitude is the driving force behind the new momentum in the sports turf industry. Turf managers at high schools and universities, golf courses and stadiums, and parks and recreation facilities are in a position to do things that they never could before. They are talking to their fellow managers at major universities, golf courses and stadiums, and training facilities used by 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 will grow as the market grows. 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, 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 from his boss recently. We have to keep the focus on gaining not only 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 turf 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.