

FROM THE PUBLISHER



With this issue of *sportsTURF* we begin our third year. As I look back it's hard to believe that two years have gone by so quickly. It wasn't easy, but both Bruce and I felt we had an idea whose time had come.

The turf and landscape markets generate 25 billion dollars annually into the economy of this country. Although everybody is still trying to figure out what portion of this is comprised of the sports and institutional markets, it is safe to say that it is at least one third of the \$25 billion. That's one enormous market. Yet, until *sportsTURF* magazine appeared, no one publication devoted itself exclusively to this market. It was a gutsy move on our part, but we had the courage of our convictions. In this short span of just two years, time

has proven that we were on the right track. To be sure, the broad-based publications then and now are still trying to convince the advertisers that they cover this area in their editorials—but the truth is, this segment of the market is large enough to support a publication of its own. This is the niche *sportsTURF* is filling.

When we started publishing *sportsTURF* we knew that we would be charting new waters. We knew there would be some who would take pot shots at us. They were heavy guns and could have blown us out of the water, but our little boat was able to zig and zag with enough speed that it was hard for them to zero in on us. It is interesting to note how many advertisers are now creating ads for the sports and institutional turf market.

As we travel throughout the country and talk with many of you, we are delighted that we have been able to impact the market as well as we do. It means that we are hitting the target. We are recognized because we have our finger on the pulse of the industry. Not only can we relate to you, we report the happenings in the field, the new innovations, we report what you are doing in the field. You deserve all the credit.

I don't mean to sound like we have achieved our objectives. We have merely established a beachhead, and we still have a long way to go. Professional grounds managers, be they on sports complexes, golf courses or parks and recreational areas, do a herculean job with limited resources—more importantly, with little recognition from their higher-ups. Yet the challenge they undertook is one they willingly face, not just because of the money, but the desire, the ego and the sense of pride. It has to be very gratifying to know that your golf course has been chosen to be on national TV, and you work your butt off to make sure your course is not only in the best playable condition but that it shows off well. All managers of sports turf, especially those of major league football and baseball fields, know that each week, as their fields are televised, they are under scrutiny. Pressure job—you bet it is!

But you too, are traveling new roads. You too are going where no one went before. New techniques and new technology, combined with your creative ability, have put sports turf in the forefront. I like to feel that we at *sportsTURF* have helped give the proper recognition to you who toil and agonize to get those acres and acres of turf in good condition and keep it there.

There is a saying, 'We've come a long way, baby.' Lest we forget, we still have a long way to go.