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MAIN EVENTS

14 TOPDRESSING SMOOTHES THE WAY FOR SPORTS

The ultimate goal of sports turf managers is to provide both dense turf cover and a smooth surface for sports. But when you consider injuries and disruptions in play caused by irregular sports surfaces, turf cover may actually be secondary to field smoothness in many instances. By managing only the turf, and not the soil surface below, sports turf managers are playing with explosives. The solution is periodic topdressing with a carefully selected soil mix.

22 THE BATTLE FOR NATURAL TURF AT CHICAGO'S SOLDIER FIELD

For 16 years, the Chicago Bears played their home games on the artificial turf at Soldier Field. Owner Michael McCaskey made it clear two years ago that the team wanted natural turf or it would build its own stadium. The Chicago Park District responded this spring and agreed to convert the field to a sand-based PAT system. Drought, record temperatures and a myriad of delays challenged the project but the field was ready to go August 6, for the Bear's first exhibition game.

29 PARK PLANTS WILDFLOWERS TO CONTROL MAINTENANCE COSTS

In 1983, the Howard County Park Department was faced with tremendous growth but a limited budget. Wildflowers were considered as a way to reduce the amount of maintained turf area but little was known about wildflowers for the Mid-Atlantic region. Park Bureau Chief Jeffrey Bourne initiated a series of tests to evaluate wildflowers and maintenance costs. After five years, his findings reveal that with patience, the right seed mix and proper planting methods, wildflowers can cut maintenance costs significantly.

32 TIPS FOR SUCCESS WITH WILDFLOWERS

Crystal Rose-Fricke lends her expertise with wildflower selection and management. Success can hinge on mixing annuals and perennials, selecting varieties appropriate to your region and combining wildflowers with nonaggressive bunch grasses.

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COVER: Topdresser applies sandy soil mix to golf course green. Photo courtesy: Green Care International.