

THE EXTRA POINT

STMA NEWS

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In June, I had the privilege of speaking at the First Annual Athletic Field Day of the Sports Turf Association (STA) of Canada. The event was held in Centennial Park near Toronto.

The STA was conceived in 1987 by a group of Canadian sports turf managers and the University of Guelph to minimize and avoid injury to those using athletic facilities in the

Province of Ontario. However, enthusiasm has spread throughout Canada and membership has grown to 150. Mike Bladon, coordinator of grounds at the University of Guelph, is president of the now-national organization. Annette Anderson, turf extension specialist for Ontario, helps STA with conferences and the new field day. In many respects, the STA is a mirror image of the STMA and has similar goals and philosophies.

There were more than 140 sports turf managers and commercial affiliates at the field day. STMA member Ken Mrock, grounds supervisor for the Chicago Bears, also addressed the group on "Maintenance Practices and Preparation for Special Events." My topic was "Drainage: Good, Better, and Best Options for Athletic Fields." It seemed inappropriate since the current drought extends into Ontario. The only sports turf that was green in the Toronto area were facilities with irrigation. Some cities had water bans and drinking water was hauled into cities that were out of water.

The entire field day program was well-planned, executed and attended. The STA has arrived and STMA is pleased and very proud to assist this new group with their goals and objectives.

Kent Kurtz, Executive Director

WATER CONSERVATION UNDER DROUGHT CONDITIONS

By David Frey, Cleveland Stadium

Cleveland, like most of the Midwest, is suffering from a severe lack of rain, high heat and dropping water tables. It is a reminder to sports turf managers in most of the country of the importance of water and its impact on our jobs.

These conditions are affecting Cleveland Stadium as well as our two training centers. Several things can be done to conserve water and save the grass.

Maintain good potassium and phosphorus levels to help the turf get the most out of the water you apply. However, fertilization during these periods will cause physiological drought by raising the salt index. High salt will cause turf stress.

Irrigate at night to reduce the loss of applied water to evaporation. Check irrigation rates constantly to eliminate overwatering. Wetting agents can be applied to increase infiltration and prevent dry spots. While aeration can improve infiltration, it will also increase soil dryness during the heat of the day.

Overwatering and irrigating at night can increase fungus problems. A good fungicide program with Pythium con-

trol is essential for good turf under these conditions.

Raise the cutting height of mowers and mow less frequently to reduce the stress on the turf. Sharp blades give a cleaner cut and eliminate ragged grass blades which wick water from leaves.

MIDWEST INSTITUTE SUCCESS DESPITE HEAT

Despite temperatures hovering near 100 degrees F., more than 200 sports turf managers attended the recent Third Annual Midwest Sports Turf Institute at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, IL.

Two concurrent sessions provided a full range of quality information on many phases of construction and maintenance. Dr. William Daniel reported on the status of the new natural turf field at Chicago's Soldiers Field. The PAT System installation, which began in April, was completed the day of the Institute. Daniel said the temperature at Soldier Field was over 100 degrees as the sod was laid. The Bears host the Miami Dolphins on the new field August 6.

In addition to six sessions each on basic and advanced sports turf management techniques, afternoon on-site demonstrations were met with enthusiasm. Steve Wightman, turf manager at Denver Mile High Stadium, demonstrated proper techniques in laying out and painting logos and end zone designs. Demonstrations were also given on baseball field maintenance, renovation techniques and reel mower backlapping.

MERRITT IS FIRST FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE

Melissa Merritt has been appointed operations assistant for STMA, its first full-time employee. She brings eight years of experience in various grounds maintenance positions to the association, including grounds supervisor at Penn Valley Community College in Kansas City, MO, and crewmember in the golf course division for the City of Anaheim, CA.

Merritt gained a broad knowledge of association operations while serving on the STMA Board from 1984-1986.

CATCH THE ACTION

Mark your calendar

January 13-15, 1989 - STMA Annual Meeting.

Dodgertown, Vero Beach, FL

STMA's Annual Meeting, Conference, Awards Banquet, Trade Show and On-Site Demonstrations. An exciting experience at one of the premier spring training sites - 27 holes of golf, conference center, guest rooms. A once in a lifetime experience. Plan now! Contact: Melissa Merritt, STMA, (714) 981-9199.

