

# DOC'S DUGOUT

## BACK IN PLAY

*Editor's Note: Beginning in February, 1993, sportsTURF will feature a monthly column called "Doc's Dugout." Authored by Dr. Kent Kurtz, professor of turfgrass management at California Polytechnic University, Pomona, and former executive director of the Sports Turf Managers Association, the column will tackle real-world sports turf management problems and offer practical solutions.*

*We could not be more pleased that Dr. Kurtz has volunteered for this monthly mission. His experience, knowledge, and wisdom—not too mention his good humor—will certainly enhance this magazine, as well as the profession itself.*

It is a real pleasure to resurrect "Doc's Dugout," a column I enjoyed writing for the STMA newsletter when the organization was headquartered in California.

My life and involvement with the sports turf industry during the past four years might well be compared to the winter dormancy of warm season grasses. In these grasses, dormancy is initiated under high light intensity and when temperatures fall below 55 degrees F for consecutive days or nights. The green pigment in the leaves, known as chloroplast, is metabolically disrupted by the interaction of light and temperature. The plant turns brown, thus subjecting the turf surface to excessive wear because there is no growth or recovery potential.

As environmental conditions improve in the spring, this quiescent period ends and a transition period is initiated. The result is rejuvenation, green-up, and new life for warm season turf.

In effect, I have been "dormant" since stepping down in early 1989 as STMA's executive director, due to the illness and eventual death of my wife, Patricia. However, I have worked through my own transition period and presently am ready and willing to once again give the sports turf industry the impetus and nudge it onward and upward.

Viewed from a distance, the sports turf industry appears to have lost some of the momentum and enthusiasm so apparent in the late 1980s. This may be due in part to the weak economy, but possibly also because of the loss or retirement of several dedicated and tireless leaders such as Dr. Fred Grau, Harry Gill, Jack Murray, and Eliot Roberts. I am very con-

cerned for the future of this industry and, for this reason, will work closely with my long-time friend, Bruce Shank, and sportsTURF editor, Matt Trulio, to help turn things around and rejuvenate the dream we all once had of achieving recognition, professionalism, and a quality product.

My goal is to help each and every sports turf manager out there in need of guidance and support provide safe, high-quality fields for today's athletes. It is a pleasure to be back and once again share my knowledge, experience, and friendship. □  
Kent Kurtz

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