

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By Gil Landry

Any professional would have to be proud of the achievement of George Toma and his crew at San Francisco's Candlestick Park for the NFL championship game between the Dallas Cowboys and the San Francisco 49ers on January 17. Such national exposure is invaluable to our industry, giving us a more professional image.



*Webster's Dictionary* defines the word *professional* as "of, engaged in, or worthy of the high standards of, a profession." And *profession* is defined as "a vocation or occupation requiring advanced education and training, and involving intellectual skills, as medicine, engineering, teaching, law, etc." In San Francisco, Toma and his crew defined professionalism for the sports turf industry. They engineered an extensive surgical procedure on that field and certainly added tremendous insight into our profession.

## TOMA NAMED TO ALL-MADDEN TEAM

The Sports Turf Managers Association's (STMA) Groundskeeper of the Year, George Toma, was named to CBS sports commentator John Madden's "All-Madden Team" January 24.

The "All-Madden Team" consists of players and personnel who personify Madden's football philosophy of hard work and a "what it takes attitude." Madden cited Toma's heroic work in preparing the football field at Candlestick Park for the NFC Championship Game January 17. Toma is the first groundskeeper to be named in the nine-year history of the program.

## *In San Francisco, Toma and his crew defined professionalism for the sports turf industry.*

### **Developing A Professional Edge**

It is up to each of us to build on professional accomplishments; to recognize national fields with state-of-the-art equipment, along with local success stories where well-trained crews supported by adequate budgets produce safe, high-quality fields. Developing professionalism is one of our biggest challenges and toughest obstacles.

If you want to be considered a professional, you have to act, dress, and speak accordingly. Professionals may not always have all the answers, so they rely on other professionals such as colleagues, suppliers, consultants, reference books or associations for assistance.

### **Improving Our Image**

The visibility our sports facilities receive offers our industry the opportunity to enhance its image. We need to be prepared, to handle the expect-

tations that comes with better staff and more dollars.

There is no reason the sports turf industry can't have an association such as the golf course industry has. The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's (GCSAA) 64th Annual Conference and Trade Show drew more than 16,000 industry professionals and 600 manufacturers and distributors exhibiting more than 175,000 square feet.

In less than half that time—30 years—the STMA will be hosting an event of similar size, importance and value. Like Toma and his crew at Candlestick Park, the GCSAA is the model for success, a professional association fostering professionalism in industry and membership. Like the GCSAA, STMA must walk before it can run. Just watch, or better yet, join the team. After all, half the fun is getting there. □

A co-founder of STMA, Toma has spent more than 40 years working in the sports turf industry. He has dazzled prominent figures with his baseball, football and soccer expertise. Toma has worked every Super Bowl since the first game at the Los Angeles Coliseum in 1967, and in 1972 he became the NFL's playing field consultant.

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## **STMA Chapter News**

**The New England Chapter: STMA**—Future plans of the New England Chapter STMA include an all-day meeting to be during August in the

mid-New England area. Further details will be announced soon.

For information on the meeting or other chapter activities, contact Mary Owen, University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension System at (508) 831-1225.

**Midwest Chapter: STMA**—The Chapter, in cooperation with Wheaton College, is sponsoring the National Midwest Regional Sports Turf Institute, which will be June 30. The Institute offers the opportunity to take part in education sessions, gain up-to-date information from suppliers at the trade show and share ideas with other sports turf professionals.