STMA Conference Called a Success

By all accounts, the STMA’s Sixth Annual Conference and Exhibition in Bradenton, FL, was a tremendous success. Cochairs Mike Schiller (Schaumburg Park District), Dr. Henry Indyk (Turfcon) and Eugene Mayer (O.M. Scott) put together a program that drew attendees and exhibitors from all walks.

In terms of attendance, the 1995 conference was the best ever. Attendance has tripled in the past three years. We intend to build on this success with the 1996 Conference, which will be held in Anaheim, CA, January 24-28.

The week began with a Saturday bus tour of local municipal, college and professional sports turf facilities. On Sunday, we were greeted by Bradenton Mayor William A. Evers and international sports turf experts Dr. James Beard (Sports Turf Institute) and John Souter (Souter of Sterling). Tom Jadin of Winnebago Mental Health Institute ended the day with some excellent guidance on stress management.

On Monday, we had a full day of education with breakouts on regional agronomics, equipment maintenance, sod installation, rebuilding and grooming infields, irrigation and a session highlighting several technological advances. The STMA Annual Awards Banquet was the highlight of Monday evening. Larry Barnett, American League senior umpire, capped off the banquet with a look inside baseball.

STMA Award Winners: (front row, left to right) Ed Birch; Jim Puhalla, project manager, Dave Dravecky Field, Boardman (OH) High School; Mike Williams, head groundskeeper, Binghamton (NY) Municipal Stadium; Timothy Moore, Chesapeake Chapter STMA; (back row, left to right) Joe Maruskin, Dave Dravecky Field; Steve Roser, SportScore Soccer Complex; Dan Bergstrom, Iowa State University; Chris Bunnell, Southern California Chapter STMA; Bob Curry, Covermaster; and Dr. David Minner, Iowa State University.

Awards of Distinction were given in the following categories: Harry Gill Memorial Award — Dr. Henry Indyk (Turfcon); Football Field of the Year — Don Wirick (Merriville High School, Merriville, IN); Soccer Field of the Year — Steve Roser (Sportscore); Research — Dr. David Minner (Iowa State University); Baseball Diamond of the Year (School, Municipal or Park) — Dave Dravecky Field, Boardman High School, Boardman, OH; Baseball Diamond of the Year (College) — E.M. Stevens Baseball Field, Trinity University, San Antonio, TX; Baseball Diamond of the Year (Professional) — Binghamton Municipal Stadium, Binghamton, NY; and 1995 Scholarship — Daniel Bergstrom, Iowa State University.

The results of the election for the two open board of director positions were also announced at the banquet. Mary Owen, University of Massachusetts extension agent, and L. Murray Cook, stadium superintendent of the city of West Palm Beach, will each serve a two-year term. Other director positions remain unchanged through 1995.

On Tuesday, more than 60 exhibitors showcased their products and services on a full day of outdoor exhibits, hands-on demonstrations and education. The conference ended Wednesday with the seats still full for a half day of educational sessions. As the hotel emptied following adjournment, one attendee remarked, “That was like four years of education in four days.”

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