

STMA MESSAGE



By Mike Schiller

The weather is warming, and our sports fields are under attack. With spring in full swing, eager athletes of all ages and skill levels are swarming upon all available playing surfaces to get on with the game.

It's during such periods that all the skills of the sports turf manager are put to the test. Rapidly fluctuating weather conditions, alternating between hot and cold, wet and dry, windy and still, make turf care and basic field pre-practice and pre-game preparations a constant challenge.

Field user groups, faced with ever more players, seek additional practice and game time.

With increased field use come increased numbers of spectators, stressing already limited facility amenities such as parking areas, stands, rest rooms and concessions.

Often the sports turf manager becomes the official or unofficial "communications center," coordinating field and facility use to protect the physical condition and safety levels of the fields, while still allowing players to make the most of their athletic abilities. Player safety and a facility's exposure to liability are constant considerations. There's a fine line between repairable stress to the field and damage. The final call should be made by the sports turf manager.

Besides all that, this is a time for sports turf managers to showcase their expertise. There's nothing better to enhance the experience of the game — for the players and the spectators — than a well-maintained field.



The Grass is "Riz"

In this issue, we'll read about doing just that. We'll see how Coach Will Flowers maintains an award-winning field at Fike High School in spite of a limited budget. We'll learn about one of the major sports turf projects connected with the Summer Olympic Games: STMA member Aaron McWhorter's development and renovation of some of the Games' softball venues.

As spring rapidly draws to a close and summer moves in, we, as members of the sports turf industry, can watch with pride as athletes everywhere perform on venues prepared by some of our own.

I have renewed interest in the Olympics now, knowing that STMA members have

had a part in preparing these fine, world-class facilities, and I hope the general press will give credit to Aaron, his staff, and the rest of our Olympic-involved STMA members for the results of their hard work.

One of the benefits of STMA membership is meeting such people, not only from this country, but around the world, both in person and through our membership roster. By phone, these people become "instant" information resources; in person, they often serve as area and facility "guides." Either way, they frequently become your friends.

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