



The Orange Bowl enhanced Florida Chapter #1's meeting with its beauty and history.

Florida STMA Goes to the Orange Bowl

The warm sunny weather that attracts so many tourists to Miami was in full force on August 6 as nearly 50 Florida STMA Chapter #1 members and guests gathered at the Orange Bowl. President Tom Curran and Treasurer John Mascaro welcomed attendants, gave state of the chapter reports and outlined the events of the day.

National STMA's executive director, Steve Trusty, followed with a presentation on the benefits of national membership and details on what National provides to the chapter affiliates. These chapter visits are funded by chapter sponsors John Deere and The Scotts Company to encourage an ongoing dialogue between National and local chapters that will strengthen the effectiveness of both.

Dale Sandin, facilities grounds and turf manager for the Orange Bowl, spoke on "Managing the Orange Bowl." That beautiful facility, often the highlight of college football bowl games and the playoff for the number one ranking, seldom gets a rest. The full schedule of multiple uses — along with Florida's heat, humidity, and alternating periods of too wet or too dry conditions — makes sports turf management a constant challenge.

Sandin has invested 20 years in the Orange Bowl, bringing to the job solid turf experience from his previous position as a golf course superintendent.

Sandin explained that regrading the Orange Bowl for Olympic soccer matches began in the summer of 1995 when a wall was moved back ten feet. The field was sodded with 42-inch rolls of 419 bermudagrass in early 1996, right after the football season. Sandin noted that they got some bad sod, and the rolls used for replacement were a darker green than the original. The supplier said that extra fertilizer applied in the growing fields made the difference and the color would even out, but as of the meeting date, that hadn't happened. Sandin also had problems getting good rooting on the sod, though he followed his standard procedures. So far, there's no explanation for the rooting problem. He explained the adjustments he had to make in irrigation to compensate.

Security for the Olympics was intense. Sandin said that all fertilizer had to be removed from the premises because it was viewed as a possible ingredient for bombs.

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STMA in ACTION

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All shipments had to be checked by security and marked. Anything found without the proper marking stamp was dealt with as if it was a bomb. Bomb squads scoured the stadium daily.

Flexibility was the key. Sandin and crews fit field repair, mowing, irrigation and other maintenance into the intervals between games. Sandin needed to be on the field at all times during the games to be at the beck and call of the officials. For example, the officials changed their idea on how the players' benches were to be placed, which meant Sandin was repainting lines during the opening ceremony.

He noted that he didn't have any real hassles because he followed his regular practice of trying to anticipate problems and keep them from occurring.

Attendants then moved down to the field. Sandin described maintenance practices in greater detail and encouraged input and suggestions on his program. The flow of comments back and forth among attendants provided useful tips to all.



John Mascaro demonstrates the Turf-Tec Soil Sampler. Photos courtesy: Steve and Suz Trusty.

John Mascaro demonstrated the Turf-Tec Soil Profile Sampler, pulling "slices" for examination. This not only showed the proper sampling technique, but also allowed the group to examine the Orange Bowl soil profile and turf development.

With so much history surrounding them, attendants couldn't resist discussing past games and their favorite great plays.

The meeting wrapped up with Sandin conducting a behind-the-scenes tour of the rest of the stadium, including the press boxes, dressing rooms, and equipment storage area.

Iowa Chapter: The Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association is planning a meeting on football and baseball post-season repairs October 15 at Upper Iowa University, Fayette, IA.

A meeting on football and soccer post-season repairs will be held November 5 at Iowa State University and Ames High School in Ames, IA.

Both meetings will include sessions on the following: field inventory and prioritizing; seeding and overseeding practices; aeration and topdressing; irrigation alternatives; and soil sampling and turning test results into a fertilization program. Vendor displays will be included at each meeting site, and time will be allocated for meeting with the vendors.

For more information, contact Lori Westrum at The Turf Office: (515) 232-8222 (phone) or (515) 232-8228 (fax).

Minnesota Chapter: The Minnesota Chapter annual meeting will be held in conjunction with the Minnesota Turf and Grounds Foundation (MTGF) Conference, December 11-13 at the

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Minneapolis Convention Center. For more information on the MTGF Conference, contact Executive Director Scott Turtinen at (612) 473-8169.

For information on the annual meeting, the Minnesota Chapter or other upcoming activities, contact Brian Deyak at (320) 255-7223.

Florida Chapter #1: The Florida Chapter will meet from 7:45 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. on October 24 in conjunction with the Dade County Extension Office educational program. CEUs will be issued. The meeting will be held at Miami-Dade Community College in Kendall, FL. For further details on this meeting, contact Alan Fehrman at (305) 248-3311, extension 227.

A meeting is being planned for December 3 at Homestead Stadium in Homestead, FL. Baseball field maintenance and preparation will be the focus of this meeting.

For more information, contact John Mascaro, (305) 938-7477.

Southern California Chapter: The Southern California Chapter will "do it again," adopting for their 1996 field renovation project the combination field-hockey/soccer/football field of Rancho Buena Vista High School in Buena Vista, CA, on October 25 and 26. The chapter will meet at the school on October 25. The group will finalize the renovation plan, then move outdoors for hands-on demonstrations of the tasks that will be involved. On October 26, the volunteers will converge on the field for the renovation work day. Plan now to join in this hands-on experience of learning and giving.

For more information, contact Chris Bunnell at (619) 432-2421.

Colorado Chapter: For information on the Colorado Chapter or upcoming events, call the 24-Hour CSTMA Chapter Hotline/FAX: (303) 438-9645 and leave a message. Or contact Troy Smith, Denver Broncos, at (303) 649-9000.

Midwest Chapter: For information on the Midwest Chapter or upcoming events, call the Chapter Hotline: (847) 439-4727.

STMA Chapters on the Grow

Great Plains: The Great Plains Sports Turf Managers Association will hold its next meeting on Wednesday, October 30. For information on the chapter or pending events, contact Mark Schimming, of Wichita Baseball Inc., at (316) 292-2907, extension 205.

Arizona: The Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona has scheduled a Floyd Perry-conducted Sports Turf and Grounds Maintenance Workshop for Tuesday, October 1, in Scottsdale, AZ. Morning sessions include football, softball and baseball topics. Afternoon sessions will focus on hands-on demonstrations covering both turfed and skinned areas of a ball field.

For more details, contact Bill Murphy, City of Scottsdale Parks and Recreation Department, at (602) 994-7954. □

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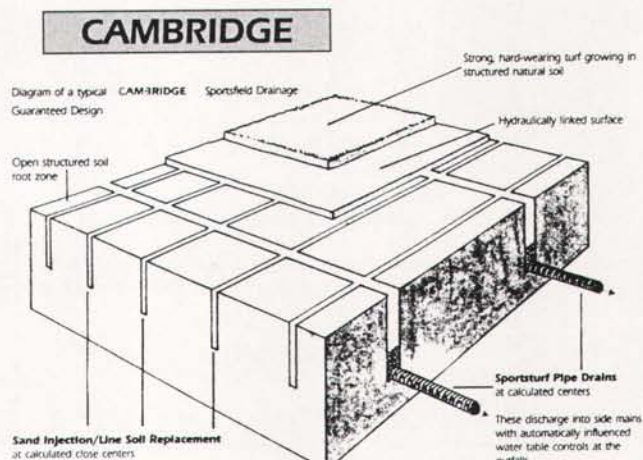
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