

STMA in Action

Southern Cal's Enviable Opportunity

Sunny California skies and mild temperatures greeted the 40 participants at 7 a.m. on Friday, October 25, at Rancho Buena Vista High School. Anticipation was high during the meet, mingle and munch registration hour. This two day meeting was to mark another Southern California Chapter tradition — the community service project — and this year's target was the high school's baseball field.

Friday morning's seminar sessions started at 8 a.m. with a short presentation by STMA Executive Director Steve Trusty. This headquarters-chapter connection provides a forum to answer questions and exchange ideas and is made possible through the chapter sponsorship of John Deere and The Scotts Company.

Next, John Donhauser of Enviable Greens discussed the forms, methods and importance of aeration and compared the effects of deep aeration to other methods. He outlined the devel-



Southern California Chapter members look on as the sodding crew starts laying the infield turf. Photos courtesy: Steve and Suz Trusty.



After the sod is laid, the cut-out is made for the pitchers mound.



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opment of a good cultural aeration program, the issues to consider and the benefits of a comprehensive program.

Then, John Foster of West Coast Turf discussed the basics of big roll sod installation, explaining the long rolls can be harvested in thicknesses up to two inches. Since these rolls are so heavy, laying them accurately the first time is crucial. He covered selection, soil preparation, installation and irrigation techniques.

After a short break, seminar sessions started again at 10 a.m. as Bill Murphy — parks recreation manager for the City of Scottsdale, AZ, the spring training home of the San Francisco Giants — covered infield maintenance. He discussed the tools, materials, and maintenance levels involved, then moved into step-by-step procedures for daily field preparation and game day preparation.

Then Steve Wightman, stadium turf manager for San Diego's Jack Murphy Stadium, discussed the basics of pitching mound construction and maintenance as a lead-in to the afternoon's hands-on demonstrations. He noted that it's the most concentrated wear area on a baseball field and must receive constant maintenance to provide a safe, firm and consistent platform for pitchers to deliver their pitches.

After a break for lunch and time in the trade show area, the group observed field demonstrations of deep-tine aeration, baseball outfield maintenance, big roll sod installation, and the construction and maintenance of infield skirts, mounds and bullpens.

West Coast Turf provided 8,000 square feet of hybrid bermudagrass sod overseeded with perennial ryegrass — and the equipment and a full crew to install it.

Stabilizer Inc. provided 48 tons of Stabilizer Infield Mix, delivered on site.

Enviably Greens provided deep-tine aeration of the outfield.

A-1 Soils Company provided five tons of mound mix.

The Men's Senior Baseball League supplied three professional pitching rubbers.

Dave Ashman of Ashman & Associates provided a field maintenance handbook.

And, AR Vertebrate provided pest control for pocket gophers.

Steve Wightman switched to his "show and tell" mode to demonstrate when and how to measure a field and

the intricacies of mound construction. He also supervised the sod cutting around the mound and at the basepaths, and did a hundred other things.

Besides these donations, the other seminar presenters and the seminar attendees pitched in with their own hands-on labor.

Wightman even put Executive Director Trusty to work, teaching him the ropes of mound building. Says Trusty, "Wow! You can't top learning from a master. It was a super experience for me!"

The infield was completely redone, with the group building the pitching mound and batter's box, reworking the skinned area and resodding the infield turf. The mounds in both bullpens were rebuilt.

Dennis Snell, who is the softball coach and in charge of maintenance for all the school's athletic fields, took part. Baseball head coach Steve Hargrave, who helps maintain the field and build the mounds, and assistant baseball coach Steve Riehle also joined in these sessions.

Snell called the two day program a great opportunity for him to reinforce things he was already doing and to learn, hands on, techniques to keep a field in top condition.

Although the Saturday follow-up work crew was smaller, Steve Wightman kept them hopping until the infield reached premium condition.

School principal "AJ" Allan Johnson notes, "This terrific project was a once in a lifetime opportunity for the school." The field is also used by an adult league. Those school personnel see a topnotch field as a source of community, as well as school, pride.

Special thanks go to So-Cal Chapter's president, Chris Bunnell, who spearheaded and coordinated this project — and pitched in to help as well.

STMA Chapter News

Iowa STMA: The Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association's Annual Membership Meeting begins at 3 p.m. on January 28 at the Des Moines Convention Center. The meeting and special sports turf sessions are held in conjunction with the 63rd Annual Iowa Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show, January 27-29, 1997.

A Sports Turf Workshop will be held on Monday, January 27, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. January 28th's general sessions begin at 8 a.m. The afternoon sports turf sessions begin at 1:30 p.m.

On January 29, general sessions begin at 8 a.m. with sports turf sessions starting at 10 a.m. Continuing pesticide instructional courses, providing credits necessary for the commercial pesticide applicators license, start at 1:30 p.m.

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

Florida Chapter #1: The Florida Chapter of the STMA will participate in the Florida Turfgrass Association Southern Turf Conference on January 17. The conference will be held at the Lake Worth Polish American Club in Lake Worth, FL. Educational sessions are scheduled from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. CEUs will be issued.

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

Southern California Chapter: Ballots for the 1997 election of officers and board members have been sent to all chapter members. If you have not yet received your ballot, please contact Chris Bunnell.

For information about the Southern California Chapter, contact: Chris Bunnell at (619) 432-2421.

Minnesota Chapter: The Minnesota Chapter is in the process of planning the event schedule for 1997.

For information, contact: Brian Deyak at (320) 255-7223.

Midwest Chapter: The Midwest Chapter of STMA is putting together the 1997 schedule of events.

For information, call: The Chapter Hotline (847) 439-4727.

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

STMA Chapters on the Grow

Great Plains STMA: For information on The Great Plains Sports Turf Managers Association or pending events, contact: Mark Schimming of Wichita Baseball Inc. at (316) 292-2907, extension 205.

Arizona: For information on the Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona or upcoming events, contact: Bill Murphy, City of Scottsdale Parks and Recreation Department, at (602) 994-7954. □