



More and More Recognition

In last month's article about 1996-97 Beam Clay College Baseball Diamond of the Year award winner Mark Light Stadium (University of Miami), we neglected to mention that Head Groundskeeper Kevin C. Hardy and his crew provide maintenance for the university through Unico Service Company, a multi-service provider that deserves to be recognized for its support of Hardy's efforts.

While on the subject of recognition, we'd like to note that the *one* problem with the Beam Clay Baseball Diamond of the Year awards, now a decade old, is that there just aren't enough of them to go around. So many sports turf managers are doing so much with so little that three awards just don't seem enough to recognize all the hard work and dedication going into baseball diamonds. For this reason, we're glad that the American Baseball Coaches Association (ABCA) and Turface Sports Field Products began sponsoring the Outstanding Field Maintenance Awards three years ago, and we are pleased to announce the results.

During ABCA's annual banquet last winter, the Outstanding Field Maintenance Award at the college level was given to Baylor University, Waco, Texas. At the high school level, Deerfield Beach High School, Deerfield Beach, Florida, won the award.

The awards were presented by Joe Betulius, Turface product manager. Each winner received \$400, a plaque and one ton of Turface sports field conditioner.

Two other awards, the Field Maintenance Scholarships, were presented to Franklin College, Franklin, Indiana, and Camelback High School, Phoenix, Arizona. The scholarships are awarded "to coaches and teams that best demonstrated a need and a strong desire to improve their fields for maximum athletic performance and safety for their athletes."

Additional recognition for the work sports turf managers are doing comes from the NFL Players Association (NFLPA), which announced the results of its latest league-wide player survey concerning NFL clubs' playing surfaces.

The written survey was conducted by NFLPA staff members at team meetings during the 1996 NFL season, as a follow-up to a similar survey conducted during the 1994 NFL season. The 1996 survey revealed that 86.7% of the 1,034 players who answered preferred to play on natural grass (up from 85.1% in 1994), while only 6.3% preferred artificial turf (down from 7% in 1994), and 7% had no preference (8% in 1994). Almost three-quarters (74%) of NFL players in this survey also indicated that playing on a natural grass surface was either very important or somewhat important in selecting the teams they would consider signing with as free agents (up from 70% in 1994).

The players also chose the five "best" NFL playing fields, all of which are natural grass surfaces. In order of preference, they are Tampa Stadium, Miami's Pro Player Park (formerly Joe Robbie Stadium), Jacksonville Stadium, Arizona's Sun Devil Stadium and Kansas City's Arrowhead Stadium.

Does it surprise you that, at the bottom of the list, the five "worst" stadiums all had artificial turf? We refrain from mentioning the stadiums' names, but if you'd like to know who they are or want a copy of the survey, call the NFLPA at (202) 463-2200.

May

28 Pesticide Applicators Professional Association's (PAPA's) *Hands-On* Pesticide Applicators Seminar. Two locations: Santa Rosa and Davis, California. Contact: PAPA. Phone: (408) 442-3536.

June

18 Landscape Entomology Symposium, sponsored by UC Cooperative Extension. Fee: \$50 (includes lunch and proceedings). Rancho Del Rey Conference Center, Oak View, California. Eight ISA and 9 PCA CEUs approved. Contact: Jim Downer, UC Farm Advisor. Phone: (805) 645-1458. Fax: (805) 645-1474.

19 PAPA Pesticide Applicators Seminar. Eureka, California. Contact: PAPA. Phone: (408) 442-3536.

July

17-19 Turfgrass Producers International Summer Convention and Field Days. Minneapolis, Minnesota. Contact: Tom Ford. Phone: (847) 705-9898. Fax: (847) 705-8347.

23 PAPA Pesticide Applicators Seminar. San Jose, California. Contact: PAPA. Phone: (408) 442-3536.

26-28 International Lawn, Garden and Power Equipment Expo 1997. Louisville, Kentucky. Contact: Sellers Expositions. Phone: (800) 558-8767 or (502) 562-1962.

29 Midwest Regional Turf Foundation's Turf Field Day. West Lafayette, Indiana. Contact: Bev Bratton. Phone: (765) 494-8039 or (317) 494-8039.

August

5 PAPA Pesticide Applicators Seminar. Fresno, California. Contact: PAPA. Phone: (408) 442-3536.

18 Golf Course Seminar at SUNY-Delhi. Delhi, New York. Contact: Dominic Morales at (607) 746-4413; or NYSTA at (800) 873-8873, (518) 783-1229.

Send announcements of your events two months in advance to: Editor, *sportsTURF*, 68-860 Perez Road, Suite J, Cathedral City, CA 92234. Fax: (619) 770-8019.