



## New Deal

**S**portsTURF has enjoyed a long and productive relationship with the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA). We look forward to continuing this partnership into the new millennium.

A recent STMA Board decision to extend the Association's contract with Adams Business Media reaffirms *sportsTURF*'s exclusive claim to the title, *Official Publication of the Sports Turf Managers Association*. We intend to honor this endorsement by working even harder to bring you the most important and current news the industry has to offer.

As STMA leads the industry into the 21st century with new standards of quality and professionalism, *sportsTURF* will continue to bring you the play by play you've come to expect. In upcoming issues, look for expanded STMA coverage, as we highlight the Association's recent strides and future outlook.

The upcoming December issue will present an "STMA Year In Review," to round up the events of an action-packed 1999. Our special STMA Conference theme issue will arrive in January, in time for the Association's Annual Conference & Exhibition, January 12-16, 2000 in St. Louis, MO.

The Conference is already shaping up to be the best yet. STMA has announced that Keynote Speaker Mike Veeck, son of Hall of Famer Bill Veeck, will share the wealth of experience he's earned during the years he's devoted to the baseball industry. Dr. Tom Jadin, Program Development Coordinator for the Winnebago Mental Health Institute in Wisconsin, will also be on hand to give advice on how to stay motivated — and *sane* — on the job.

Our Conference theme issue will tap into some of the major points facing STMA as the Association prepares for the future. Featured topics will include "STMA 2000: Looking Forward," "Building Professionalism: Certification Update," and our annual profile of the "*sportsTURF* Manager of the Year."

Timely theme issues are just one way *sportsTURF* will be improving coverage next year. Our 2000 schedule includes a special baseball/softball issue in the spring, in addition to issues dedicated to root zones and winter readiness in the fall.

Also new next year, *sportsTURF* will provide expanded coverage of some of the most important issues you face in your program through series articles. We'll delve deeper into specific aspects of topics such as irrigation, drainage, and seed selection by devoting multiple articles to each subject in consecutive issues of the magazine.

In addition to these improvements, we will continue to deliver cutting-edge feature articles from the most knowledgeable professionals in the industry. Our monthly columns will still bring you expert advice from industry leaders that you've come to trust.

I encourage you to take an active interest in the magazine as we continue to grow and improve in 2000. *SportsTURF* is your source of industry news and information. Let us know your thoughts, so we can bring you the stories you want to read.

One final change to look for next year will be a new picture at the top of this column and a new signature at the bottom. You'll soon meet your new editor, as I prepare to make some major changes of my own in 2000.

I'd like to express my gratitude for your support over the past two years. It's been a privilege to bring you the magazine each month. I wish you all the best in 2000.

**Steve Berens, Editor**  
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## Tip of the Month

### Turf Blankets

by Bob Curry



Turf blankets help speed turf green-up in spring. Courtesy: Covermaster Inc.

**T**urf blankets, also called turf growth blankets, create a greenhouse effect over covered turf. Properly constructed blankets allow turf to breathe, while trapping optimum amounts of heat, light, and moisture to develop an ideal environment for growth. The effect encourages deep root growth for strong, healthy plants.

Originally developed to protect natural turf against winter wind and desiccation damage, turf blankets have proven to be useful tools in all seasons. They can hasten spring green-up, especially in cold climates. In some cases, field use can begin two to three weeks sooner than normal on covered fields. Blankets can also delay dormancy of bermuda in autumn to provide green fields late into the season.

Blankets can help expedite recovery of heavy-wear areas. They can also speed new seed germination. As an added benefit, blankets reduce seed loss, since they guard against both wind and birds.

Turf growth blankets are even

*Continued on pg. 28*





A turf blanket protects turf in winter at Denver's Mile High Stadium.  
Courtesy: Covermaster Inc.



Dunn Tire Park, Buffalo, NY. Courtesy: Covermaster Inc.

*Continued from pg. 6*

used to protect against morning frost. Covering areas where frost is forecast at night can minimize or eliminate the effect.

#### **Construction**

Blankets should be treated to withstand damaging ultra-violet sun effects. They must be highly rot and

mildew resistant to hold up to the elements. Properly treated blankets should not show significant wear, even after years of use.

Turf blankets should have smooth surfaces to prevent dirt and debris accumulation. They should feature lightweight construction for quick and easy installation and removal.

Whenever possible, use a one-piece

cover. Avoid overlapping sections to prevent quality and color variation of covered turf.



*Bob Curry is president of Covermaster Inc. He also serves as STMA's commercial vice president. To contact the company, call: (800) 387-5808, or visit: [www.covermaster.com](http://www.covermaster.com).*

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