



## Roots on Parade

**H**appy summer! This month's *sportsTURF* is our third theme issue of the year, dedicated to roots. As with our two previous theme issues, concerning the STMA Conference and baseball, this issue is completely dedicated to its subject, offering a broad range of articles on one common theme.

I received a terrific batch of features from a wide variety of writers from such locations as Colorado, Michigan, Massachusetts and the UK. No matter what type of turf you manage, no matter whether you are a novice or an expert, I guarantee you will find plenty of useful and relevant information in this issue.

Interested in the science behind healthy roots? Read Mary Owen's insightful piece on the physiology of plant growth. Looking for data backed up by research trials? Then Steven Baker's feature on rootzone material will be of interest to you. Think deep, healthy roots are essential to quality turf? Tony Koski will tell you otherwise in his article.

I hope this issue is as instructional, entertaining and informative to you as it has been for me. Thanks to all the writers for doing such a fantastic job.

### **New location**

Speaking of roots, we here at Adams Business Media have lifted ours and planted them in a new location. We have left our suburban-Chicago office in favor of an office downtown. Here is our new contact information:

250 S. Wacker, Suite #1150  
Chicago, IL 60606  
Tel: 847-882-1942  
Fax: 847-882-6842

I actually remain in the suburbs, working from my home office. My desk is near the window overlooking my backyard, so I can spend plenty of time doing the job I do best—watching the grass grow. My wife calls it day dreaming, I call it research.

### **Calendar update**

We have made a slight change to our editorial calendar for the end of the year. Our November issue, which was originally slated to be a theme issue geared toward winter readiness, will now be dedicated to the 2001 STMA National Conference in Tampa, Fla. This should be a great help for all the conference's guests, as it will highlight vendors, speakers, workshop schedules and everything else attendees will need to successfully navigate and get the most out of the show.

### **Certification update**

As of August 1, there are two new additions to the Certified Sports Field Manager group: Boyd Montgomery, facilities and maintenance director of Sylvania Recreation, and Mike Andresen, athletic turf manager for Iowa State University, passed all the requirements and exams necessary to earn CSFM status, joining the five others who have already done so. Andresen is having quite a year, having also been elected in January as the Category II Board Member for the STMA.

Congratulations, Rob and Mike, and good luck to all the others who are going through the certification process.

**Michael SanFilippo**  
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## Tip of the Month

### Your Athletic Field and Your Child

#### Part II

by *Floyd Perry*

*This column is presented in two parts. Part One was published in the July issue of sportsTurf.*

**Q**uestion: What can be frozen, baked, trampled, starved, dehydrated, saturated, compacted, cut too short, not cut at all, overfed, underfed, sliced, probed, smothered, painted and kicked, and still survive?

**Answer:** Quality athletic turf grass

For the lawn maintenance company that crosses over and handles quality athletic turf on a contract basis, remember to treat your new baby (sports turf) just like your family lawn with time tested methods.

#### **Mowing and grooming**

For best results according to the turf you're working with, the type of mower you're using, the mowing schedule you're trying to keep and the playing schedule you're trying to work around, it's best to not remove more than 1/3 of the leaf stem at any one time. It's also desirable not to have excess clippings or waste remaining on the turf surface. The most important segment of the mowing program is working with sharp blades to create a clean finished appearance.

Attempt during the playing times of the year to stripe or pattern the turf for the professional

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game day appearance. It's the little things that create a lasting impression, especially in front of large community audiences.

### Tender loving care

Walk your property daily/weekly to stay ahead of seasonal problems. Go the extra mile to have quality athletic turf. Mothers and fathers are constantly checking the child for any sign of abnormal behavior to catch any illness early. Do the same with your turf. Irrigation, if present, must be checked and monitored during the year and tell-tale signs observed daily/weekly.

### Disease, weeds and pests

This is an area where the family will take the child to a doctor for specialized treatment. It's nearly the same for your turf. Unless your knowledge is extensive, many turf problems can arise quickly in disguised forms. It's easy to misdiagnose. Here's where the extension agent enters your picture. Become good friends with quality turf professionals so problems may be discussed by phone and diagnosis and treatment handled immediately, before extensive damage occurs.

### Old age

Turf, if abused, mistreated and stressed, may need to be changed out and replaced, no different from any other old piece of equipment. Make quality recommendations and suggestions. Create a lasting impression with professional advice without being overbearing.

You can extend the life of your turf by attempting to handle some of the concerns that cut its life short, such as excessive traffic, inadequate water, playing when the subsoil is holding water and insufficient oxygen for root life. Often coaches and athletic directors want to play at all costs, regardless of abuse, so your suggestions may fall on deaf ears. Don't give up.

There's more demand for contract labor on board of education properties than ever before. Their primary concern should be on the root strength and root zone looseness, not external appearance. If the lawn care company can keep its child healthy by looking below the grass surface you'll make more money and

pick up more referrals because the turf will look great on the surface.

Remember, turf grows by the inch and is killed by the foot, not the contractor.

Floyd Perry is the author of three books: *The Pictorial Guides to Quality Groundskeeping: I--Covering the Bases; II--There Ain't No Rules; and III--Maintain it Easy, Keep It Safe.* He has also produced three

videos: *The ABC's of Grounds Maintenance: Vol. 1, Softball; Vol. 2, Baseball; and Vol. 3, Soccer/Football Field Refurbishment.* He travels throughout the United States conducting workshops for men and women who maintain athletic fields. For more information about Perry's tips or other field maintenance questions, call: (800) 227-9381, or e-mail: grounds@digital.net



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