STMA in Action

South Texas Chapter growing

BY LARRY RIDER

The South Texas Chapter had their October meeting at the campus of Texas A&M University. The morning sessions were held at the Turfgrass Field Lab and the afternoon sessions were conducted by Leo Goertz, head sports turf manager for the A&M campus, and Craig Potts, the assistant turf manager.

Dusty Robinson is a graduate student seeking his M.S in Agronomy—Turfgrass Management as well as being the research technician for the turfgrass field lab. He began the morning sessions explaining his research project. Dusty is working with seeded bermudagrasses, hybrid bermudagrasses, and a few zoysiagrasses. His project is comparing wear tolerances, fertility regimes, and cutting heights of the grasses as they pertain to athletic field use. His presentation gave an overview of his research and some of the more interesting observations to date on his project.

Dr. Dave Zuberer, professor of soil microbiology at Texas A&M, gave an excellent talk about microbiology as it applies to athletic field managers. His presentation included an overview about the microbiology of soil systems, the ways that athletic field managers can increase soil microbial populations, and frequently asked questions concerning soil microbes and their importance in turfgrass management.

Mark Hall, research associate and director of the Field Lab, provided information about the NTEP trials that are being conducted as they relate to athletic field managers. He shared results about an overseeding study with perennial ryegrasses and Poa trivialis. Hall also went over the ongoing NTEP trial with seeded and hybrid bermudagrasses. The South Texas group was able to see, feel, and walk on the research plots, which provided a wonderful opportunity to compare the merits of the various grasses.

Lunch was a 3-Bar-Q meal provided by two commercial members. The afternoon sessions were on the athletic fields managed by Leo Goertz and Craig Potts. Leo provided a tour of the football practice field, baseball field, and Kyle Field. He explained the annual maintenance procedures and some of the practices that are unique to Texas A&M.

Craig went over the annual maintenance practices of the soccer field (which has recently received the Soccer Field of the Year award from STMA) and the girls softball field. Craig talked about routine maintenance as well as the procedures to solve the soil and drainage problems due to the sodic water supply and native soil used for construction.

The event was well attended by a Chapter that is less than 1 year old and considered a success by all. Many thanks to Dusty Robinson, Dr. Zuberer, Mark Hall, Leo Goertz, and Craig Potts for sharing so much information. The members were able to take back helpful information that will improve their own facilities.

Going! Going! Gone to SAFE!

THE 2002 SAFE RAFFLE AND LIVE AND SILENT AUCTIONS will take place at the STMA 13th Annual Conference & Exhibition in Las Vegas, January 16-20, 2002.

Join in as the Live Auction takes center stage on Thursday evening in the Cashman Theater, and check out the Silent Auction items displayed at the Trade Show. Bid closing is Friday afternoon.

Participate in the Raffle throughout the Conference.

Great items in the auction include team gear and logo items such as shirts, hats, and jackets, and memorabilia such as autographed baseballs and footballs.

Thanks to the ongoing support of STMA Commercial Members, here's just a sample of vendor products already on the docket: From The Toro Company, a blower #51587, an electric trimmer, and mower; from The John Deere Company: a 1200A field rake, string trimmer, and a John Deere Landscapes product voucher.

Check the STMA Website: www.sportsturfmanager.com and the January Sportsturf for more great items.

Donate today!

It's not too late to send in your donations for the SAFE Raffle and Live and Silent Auctions. Your donations may be fully tax deductible so check with your accountant. Proceeds of the auctions will continue to fund the SAFE Scholarships Program.

Just contact SAFE Headquarters at 800/323-3875. Please send all donations to Jaci Pettie, SAFE Headquarters, 1375 Rolling Hills Loop, Council Bluffs, IA 51503-8552, or bring your donations to the STMA Conference.