

president's message

Greetings from STMA Headquarters

As we are now into February, some of you are already seeing traffic on your fields. The rest of you are in the final stages of preparation for the spring traffic that will soon take place.

We've heard from so many of you that 2002 was your most challenging year ever. Much of the US was under attack by weather extremes ranging from record-breaking drought conditions to extensive flooding. Long range forecasts indicate that many parts of the country will face continuing weather challenges throughout 2003. It doesn't take a long-range forecast to predict that your challenges in other areas also will continue.

Media scrutiny also intensified during 2002. Media personnel arbitrarily judged many high-profile fields deficient on television and radio and in print. In many of these situations, the commentators had made little or no effort to research the background leading to less than ideal field situations. Few seemed to consider seeking information from the sports turf manager a necessity, or even something to be considered, before publicly expressing their opinions about the fields. We've heard from some sports turf managers that similar situations occurred regionally and locally, with arbitrary judgments made about high school, sports complex, and parks and recreation fields.

STMA Headquarters greatly appreciates your reports on media coverage—the good, the bad, and the ugly. Please do send us emails, mail us clippings, and give us a call to keep us in the loop on coverage.

While we all understand the role of media commentators is to comment, it's unfortunate when viewers and readers aren't offered all the facts contributing to a specific situation. We all greatly appreciate the time and effort media personnel do put into addressing field issues, especially those related to natural turf fields, with those who have the knowledge and experience to provide the facts—you, the sports turf managers.

We, as an association, want and need to help spread the word that you often deal with issues over which you have no control, such as variable and unpredictable weather conditions and multiple on-field events, often scheduled back to back. We want to make it known that you deal with precisely defined field layouts which means goal posts, goal mouths, and bases can't be shifted to spread the wear as easily as the cup placement on a golf green. And, as everyone must, sports turf managers deal with limited resources and budgets.

We, as an association, want and need to spread the word to the media and the public that no one is more aware of field conditions, and more displeased with less than ideal results, than sports turf managers. They need to know that you see problems coming and pull out all the science, technology, and tricks of the trade to prevent them. They

need to know that when all your efforts can't make great conditions happen, you acknowledge it, work to make the best of the conditions you do have, and immediately begin developing a strategy to make it better next time.

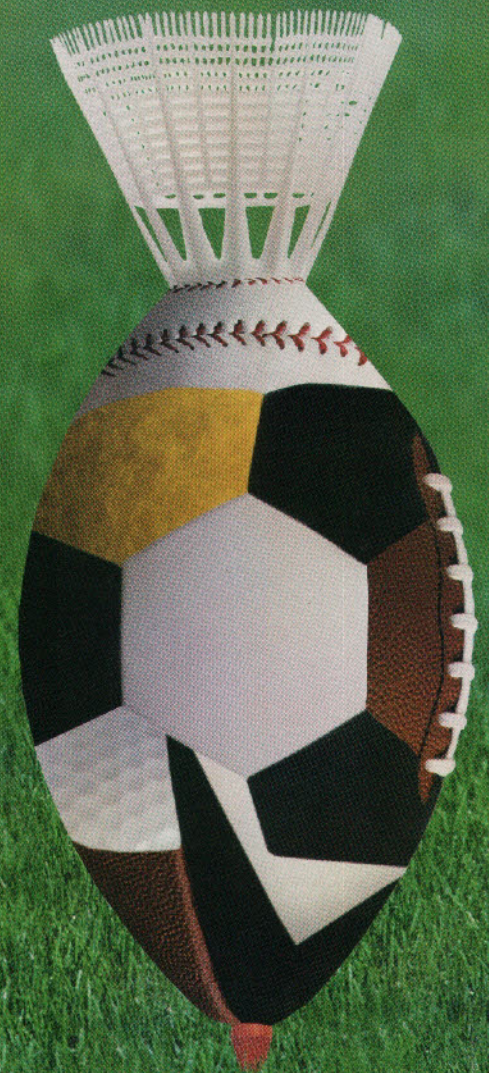
We, as an association, need to let them know that the goals of sports turf managers at all facilities are safety first, playability second, and aesthetics third. We need to offer the resources of this association and of our members to help provide information at any time.

Steve Trusty, STMA Executive Director



STEVE TRUSTY,
STMA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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