



Angels' Lopas enjoys World Series spotlight

"I've been a grounds superintendent in major league baseball since 1985," said Barney Lopas, head groundskeeper at Edison Field, home of the World Series Champion Anaheim Angels. "I got my start in Appleton, Wisconsin, on a minor league team with the Chicago White Sox. I've been with the Angels for the last six years."

"The World Series and the playoffs were the most exciting things I've ever been involved with," said Lopas.

The Anaheim Stadium crew of Lopas, two assistants and 8 part-time employees has their hands full. After baseball season is over, the stadium crew is kept busy with high school and college football games. Once a year they completely remove the turf for the annual Motocross Races that are held in the stadium for six weeks. Then the crew replaces the turf and start getting ready for baseball season.

"I started using Jacobsen when I was grounds keeper for the Richmond Braves," said Lopas. "Before I came to Anaheim, I was using Jake equipment on the Florida Marlins spring training complex, so I was very familiar with the quality of the Jacobsen cut and the other products we're using now."

"We didn't do anything different for the World Series," explained Lopas. "One thing

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-Barney Lopas**

we did do that was a little different was to use walk behind mowers and brooms to cut the "A" in center field. That was really nice."

Keeping a major league field in peak condition isn't easy. "We aerate every six weeks," said Lopas. "The soil in this area is easily compacted, which creates real problems with root growth and thatch buildup. Aerating opens up the turf so it can breath and lets nutrients and water reach the root zone. We do a light top-dressing with USGA sand after each aeration."

Lopas also has a trick up his sleeve when it comes to maintaining healthy turf year round: his Turf Groomer. "We use it lightly all season long to 'tickle' the Bermuda grass, clear out thatch, and stimulate new growth. After overseeding, the Groomer helps us get rid of the rye grass and get the Bermuda started. The results are outstanding."

Lopas and crew use two Jacobsen Tri King's mowers, a pair of Cushman Turf Trucksters, a Cushman Turf Master 300 sprayer and the Top Dresser 2000 and a couple of Ryan Greens Air 24 aerators. Lopas also has two Jacobsen Greens King 526 Walk Behind Mowers and the narrow 18-in. Greens King 518 Walk Behind mower. A Jacobsen Groom Master rounds out the list of equipment.

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Textron Golf & Turf supplied this interview.