

# president's message

## Survival tips for Sports Turf Managers

**T**he word for this month is "stewardship." Each of us has taken stewardship, responsibility, if you will, for the venues we manage. It's an important duty we have undertaken, for the participants as well as the fans.

In that vein, here are some thoughts to reflect upon as the season progresses.

Today's event is the most important one of all. Not yesterday, not tomorrow.

When asked why he played hard everyday, Joe DiMaggio, the famed "Yankee Clipper," replied that it was because someone might be seeing him play for the first time, or, perhaps, for the last time. As sports field managers, we should always remember that today's event might be the first time someone sees our work and forms an opinion about us, as well as our profession.

Resist complacency. One practice I believe in is getting someone from the outside to give you an audit of your facilities. They will notice things, both good and bad, that you have grown accustomed to over time.

Be a professional at all times. We cannot expect to be treated as professionals if we don't project a professional image. Belong to professional associations such as STMA and don't miss opportunities for continued professional development and sharing what you have learned with others. Visit other facilities to pick up new ideas. Take part in STMA Chapter events. Start making plans now to attend the 2004 STMA Annual Conference & Exhibition, January 21-25 in San Diego.

Don't let what you can't do keep you from doing what you can.

Keep your eye on the things you can control and don't worry about the rest.

Good enough is not always good enough.

We should always strive for perfection in anything we do and always ask the question: Is there anything else we could do to make it better? It is impossible to be perfect but, when we are striving for perfection, the finished product will be closer. Replace the phrase "good enough" with "it's as good as we can do."

That said, maintain a proper perspective. The key to all of this is maintaining perspective. The game is the most important thing and our primary responsibility is to provide a safe and playable surface for the athletes. That is our No. 1 concern.

Think about it. When you're dealing with a field, you're dealing with history, with people's memories and feelings. People care. People have an ownership, an investment, in your field. What happens there is part of their lives. They believe it's their field.

"I would arrive hours before the game and watch the groundskeepers groom the field like a prize animal," W. P. Kinsella wrote in *Shoeless Joe*, the book on which the movie

"Field of Dreams" is based. "Then after the game in the cool of the night the same groundsmen appeared with hoses, hoes, and rakes and patched the grass like medics attending to wounded soldiers."

It's more than a job.

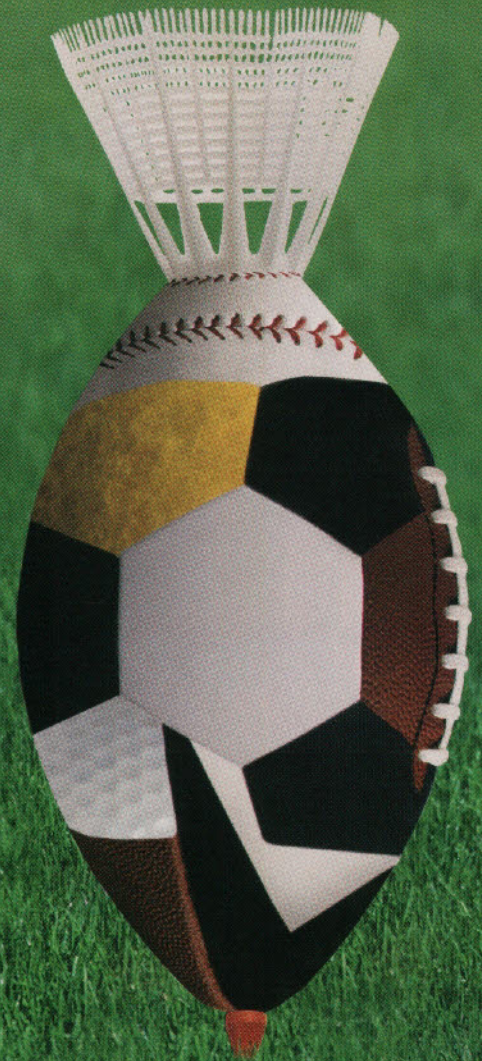


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