

president's message

An honor and a responsibility

This is my first column as President of the Sports Turf Managers Association. I'm humbled by the honor of serving as the representative of an association filled with individuals so dedicated to the profession. I've just returned from our 14th Annual Conference in San Antonio where I had the opportunity to meet many of you for the first time and to reconnect with others I've grown to know over the years. Once again, I'm impressed with the willingness of individuals to share their knowledge and expertise and to openly discuss what they've learned through their failures as well as their successes. The networking that takes part within this group of professionals is the greatest asset of our association.

Special thanks go to all those who contributed to the Conference. The members of the North and South Texas Chapters were willing and able hosts who provided that special touch of Texas hospitality along with all their assistance.

The presenters in the Major League Baseball Seminar did an excellent job. Thank you to Heather Nabozny and Gail DeGennaro of the Detroit Tigers; Leo Liebert and Tim Wilson of the Seattle Mariners; Eric Hansen and Larry Divito of the Los Angeles Dodgers; Charles Brunetti of the Boston Red Sox; and Luke Yoder of the Pittsburgh Pirates. Thanks also go to those who helped with the development of the Seminar, but were unable to take part due to job-related commitments. Special thanks go to Tom Burns of the Texas Rangers who handled the interim arrangements and Bob Christofferson of the Seattle Mariners who stepped up to the plate to coordinate the event both behind the scenes and onsite. Special thanks also go to site host, Tom McAfee of Nelson W. Wolff Municipal Stadium.

Serving as President is a responsibility that I take very seriously. I strongly feel it's important not only to give back to new members and young people starting off in this industry, but also to support the positive image of the sports turf manager as a professional in an important and worthwhile profession.

This past year was filled with challenges for sports turf managers with weather issues and field-use issues affecting field conditions even more than usual. Many of our members were the focus of negative media comments, often without any opportunity to discuss the conditions that led to a less than perfect field. Yet, as I watched the TV coverage on Super Bowl Sunday, it was apparent how far we've come as an industry in providing safe and playable fields. As sports turf managers have worked to improve field conditions, the expectations of field quality have also risen. And that's not a totally bad thing. High expectations combined with information on what it takes to produce and maintain high quality athletic fields, can give opportunities to provide the best possible fields for all levels of play.

Working together, we can meet the challenges of the future.

I want to see STMA continue to gain members because individuals see the value in what we're doing. Growing as fast as we are, there are bound to be some turbulent times. We need to work

through these, learn from them, and make wise choices to move forward for the good of the membership. I believe communication is very important. I want anyone to feel free to contact me or the other STMA board members at any time. I promise we will listen to you and take your opinions into consideration on any decisions made. You can reach me at bcampbell@utk.edu



BOB CAMPBELL, CSFM

Bob

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