

Wisconsin chapter event evokes "Wows!"

BY BRUCE SCHWEIGER, REINDERS TURF AND IRRIGATION

Here is a recap of a very enjoyable day, for those of you that were not able to attend the summer chapter meeting of the Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association (WSTMA) July 11 in Green Bay. The meeting had 78 attendees and was sponsored by the following business partners: American Sod Corporation, Rettler Corporation, Sports Turf Consultants, Olds Seed Solutions, Johnson Turf Equipment, and Reinders, Inc.

The meeting started with some great conversation and a chance to catch up with counterparts and old friends with coffee, OJ, and donuts. President Chris Brindley called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for his or her attendance. Chris then accepted on behalf of the WSTMA a check for \$150 presented by Dale Marach of Reinders, Inc., for proceeds from their Green Bay Packer Scooter raffles over the last year. You may have seen the scooter in their booths at various conferences and fields days.

We were then introduced to Bryan Spencer, the head of grounds at our host site, St. Norbert's College. Bryan gave us a quick overview of his operation and the challenges he faces. He maintains 89 acres of turf, ranging from stadiums to general grounds areas. He told us about his new athletic fields and discussed the challenges of establishing these fields. Bryan has a full-time staff of only 3 people and during the summer season may have as many as 12 interns and summer staff.

With the very limited space and time during the year Bryan faces many challenges like we all do, and that is the lack of time to implement all his pro-



grams. On his sports fields he maintains the turf at 2 1/2 inches and lowers it to 2 inches for competitions. He plans to aerify twice per year, spring and fall, and he slices as often as needed or as often as he has time. Keeping the fields growing in the summer months is the challenge since he has to water most of the areas with a Kifko Water Reel (of which he has only one). This allows him to water one field per day, applying one inch of water in each cycle. Bryan and his staff do a great job, one that would make any WSTMA member proud.

Next on the agenda, Dr. John Stier tackled the tough topic of "How to prepare your fields for fall competition." This was a very broad topic that could easily have offered time for a much-needed nap, but in the style of Dr. Stier it was exceptionally informative while being even more enjoyable. No nap for this reporter!

My notes from Dr. Stier are pages and pages long and there is no way to do his discussion justice, but here are a few highlights and memorable quotes. Many times when the powers be want to talk about getting fields ready for play for fall it is June or usually July, but Dr. Stier said that fall preparation starts when the snow melts in the spring or as he put it, "Turf does not take a holiday. It grows 24 hours a day, 7 days a week."

The next hour of his talk was spent discussing the nuts and bolts of turfgrass management. Dr. Stier talked about nutrients

usage, nutrient losses, water management, cultivation, topdressing, diseases, insect pests, field construction and others. A comment that I found to be critical to educate our powers to be is when Dr. Stier said, "High quality turfgrass

for sport fields CAN NOT be maintained without irrigation." He also did a calculation describing our aerification practices. It showed that if you aerify with 1/2-inch tines on 4-inch centers, the results would be a removal of only 1.23- percent of the surface. This last comment is remarkable when you think what your field looks like after an aerification. You would swear it was much more.

This portion of the field day was filled with an enormous amount of information. All of the attendees I talked with left with many new ideas and a much better understanding of their turf and changes they will attempt to make in the future to their fields.

Following Dr. Stier two raffle prizes were drawn. The Great Wolf Lodge in Wisconsin Dells donated two packets of 4 passes, which Jerry Ramseier from Frontier FS and Ron Hazzard from the University of Wisconsin-Superior won. Thank you Great Wolf Lodge and Craig Schlender for this donation.

After a terrific lunch the entire group made their way to Lambeau Field where we were treated to a tour of the new facility. All I can say was WOW, the renovation is very impressive. Thank you to all the Packer Staff for this opportunity.

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STMA Chapter News

Florida Chapter # 1: The Chapter will participate in the Florida Turfgrass Association Show to be held in Tampa September 8-10. A Sports Turf Tour is scheduled September 8 with a Free Trade Show Day September 10. For more details on the FTGA show, call FTGA at 800-882-6721. The Chapter will meet October 21 at the City of Pinecrest. The educational focus for this event is "Overseeding Bermudagrass Athletic Fields." For information on the Chapter, or pending activities, contact John Mascaro at 954-341-3115 or STMA@Turf-Tec.com.

Ohio Sports Turf Managers Association (OSTMA): The Chapter's Fall Field Day 2003 will be held September 9 at the OSU Intramural Complex (Fred Beckman) in Columbus. Now is the time to prepare you applications for the OSTMA Educational Scholarship Program, STMA National Conference Scholarship Program, and the OSTMA Field of Distinction Award. See the OSTMA newsletter or website for details.

For information on the Chapter, or upcoming events, call OSTMA Headquarters at 888-824-9805 or 419-824-9805 or Boyd Montgomery, CSFM, at 419-885-1982; or visit the chapter's website at www.ostma.org.

The Greater LA Basin Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association: The Chapter's General Meeting, including the Nominations for 2004 Board members, will be held September 10 at 2:00 PM at Mt. San Antonio College. The speaker for this event will be announced soon. The Chapter will hold its General Meeting and Election for 2004 October 22 at 3 PM at the Japanese Garden of Cal State University

- Long Beach.

For information on the Chapter or pending events, call Steve Dugas, California State University - Fullerton, at 714-278-3929 or email sdugas@fullerton.edu.

MO-KAN Sports Turf Managers Association: The Chapter's Fall Field Day will focus on strategies for High Use, Low Budget Fields. It will be held September 10 at Kansas City, KS, Parks and Recreation. More details will be announced soon. The Chapter also will meet at the Kansas Speedway and Community America Ballpark from 8:00-3:00 PM October 15. Registration begins at 7:30 AM. This will be a unique opportunity for a behind the scenes tour of the Kansas Speedway. Following lunch in the infield garage area, attendees will tour the new Community America Ballpark, home of the Kansas City T-Bones Baseball Club. Look for more details in August.

For information on the Chapter, or upcoming events, call Jody Gill at 913-239-4121 or JGill2@bv229.k12.ks.us.

Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association: The Chapter will hold a September 17 workshop at North Scott Community Schools.

For information on the Iowa Chapter, or upcoming activities, contact Jeff Wendel of The Turf Office at tel. 515-232-8222, or fax 515-232-8228, or e-mail: Jeff@iowaturfgrass.org.

Midwest Chapter STMA: The Chapter will hold a Baseball Field Maintenance Seminar at the Schaumburg Flyers facility in Schaumburg September 19, with the event repeated on Saturday, September 20. This will be a hands-on workshop



The Toro Foundation steps up to bat for SAFE

The Toro Foundation has issued a grant in support of the Foundation for Safer Athletic Field Environments (SAFE), noting the following:

"The Toro Foundation is pleased to make a donation in the amount of \$8,500 in support of research that supports sports turf managers and volunteer turf practitioners. On behalf of The Toro Company, thank you for your efforts toward improving the playing surfaces across the country.

"This grant, along with a \$3,500 scholarship award given earlier this year, brings The Toro Company support of your work to \$12,000. We value your organization's contributions to the industry and are proud to be a supporter of your efforts."

SAFE was created by the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) to provide research, educational programs and scholarships geared to sports fields. SAFE greatly appreciates the grant from The Toro Foundation and The Toro Company's support of the scholarship program.

The SAFE Foundation believes in pro-active research and education. We are dedicated to fund the kind of research that sports turf managers need to improve the playing surfaces they oversee. Our close relationship with STMA provides an excellent perspective of the needs of today's sports turf managers. At the same time, STMA's sports turf managers and educators are the experts in the industry and will be capable of leading our research and education efforts. SAFE also recognizes that research must be effectively disseminated to professional turf managers and volunteer turf practitioners. Thus, our goal is to fund sports turf research and education.

Also, as part of our mission, SAFE is dedicated to supporting students focused on the profession of sports turf management through our scholarship program. Scholarship funds are earmarked for students of 2-year programs, students in 4-year undergraduate programs and for grad students.

The SAFE Foundation has much work to complete before it can supply the sports turf industry with the desired level of programs. Additional funding is needed to fulfill the scholarship, research and education arms of our mission. Your willingness to consider the SAFE Foundation's request for funding is truly appreciated.

Want to help us start a Sports Field revolution?

Contact Steve Trusty at
800-323-3875 for more information on how
you can make sports fields SAFE!

Plan Now To Attend **The 2004 STMA Conference & Exhibition**
To be held **January 21-25, 2004**

At the Town and Country Resort & Convention Center • San Diego, California

For more information Call STMA at **800/323-3875**

Or check out the website: www.sportsturfmanager.com