The educational needs of the Green Industry have changed over the past 10 years. Time has become a very expensive commodity and travel has become more difficult as well. Many professionals have trouble devoting several days, let alone a week for their continuing education. Your career might depend on your hands-on management. How can the busy professional do it all?

Online sessions, workshops and training, allow the busy professional to keep up to date on information and CEU license requirements. Currently there are online classes available both as tutorials and interactive. Many are informational and some offer CEUs or some form of certification.

The challenge is two-fold: First, online courses attract national registration; second, each state has its own individual requirements. Many of the sources for online continuing education are regional. That is why I created LandsExpo.

**Online continuing education a reality**

**BY STEVE PORUS**

LANDSExpo West 2005 will be hosted in Las Vegas on March 23, 2005. The conference program will offer (12) 2-hour sessions in Arboriculture, Sports Turf, Park/Landscape, and Irrigation both on-site and online. Sessions have applied for continuing education credits: ASLA CPEs, CCA Hours, DPR Hours, GCSAA PDUs, IA Hours, and ISA Hours. All sessions feature industry renowned speakers from universities, government agencies and the Green Industry.

Online registration includes: virtual exhibits, selection of 3 sessions and downloadable handout materials. Attendees can see, hear, and forward questions to speakers in real-time, as well as view PowerPoint presentations for a complete virtual and interactive educational experience.

Thousands of Green Industry Professionals will meet either on-site or online at LandsExpo. Attendees will include professionals in landscape architecture and design, selection, implementation and maintenance of public and private landscapes, parks, golf courses, irrigation, pest control, and more.

LANDSExpo Exhibitors will have an opportunity to be featured on the online exhibits and product guide, reaching a national audience. Exhibitors can schedule "CHATS" at LANDSExpo.com to promote products and services while sharing expertise with other green industry professionals. Buyers will be able to view exhibitors' products and services as well as contacting exhibitor for more information or to schedule an through exhibitor's online booth for 60 days prior and 60 days post-LANDSExpo.

LandExpo Session Overviews:

**Sports Turf Track**

Pesticides on Turfgrass
Maintenance of high quality sports turf, including golf courses, rely on the adequate use of pesticides in order to protect against pests, and restore the competitive balance in favor of the turf. This session will cover two facets of pesticides on turfgrass. One will be the fate of pesticides in the environment and strategies for minimizing pesticide runoff and offsite movement. The other will cover cultural and chemical practices for managing specific weeds in turfgrass with various stressful conditions.

Examples will be drawn from golf courses and professional sports fields, all the way down to your children’s beat-up soccer fields, with suggestions how you can help create and maintain a safer and better performing turfgrass.

Turfgrass Selection
Kent Kurtz, Ph.D., California State Polytechnic, Pomona
John Rector, Turf-Seed, Inc.

Specific turfgrasses are necessary for specific uses from a front lawn to a sports field. Grasses need to be able to spread and recuperate after injury and provide wear tolerance for all types of sports and activities. Turfgrass species and maintenance techniques suitable for the high desert environment will be reviewed along with breeding efforts, new releases, and the latest varieties available featuring improved heat, salt, and wear tolerance.

Evaluating and Amending Soil
Kent Kurtz, Ph.D., California State Polytechnic, Pomona
Dirk Muntean, Soil and Plant Laboratory, Inc.

There are many types of soils used for the construction and establishment of turfgrasses on sports fields. Poor soil physical properties and fertility imbalances reduce turf health, quality, and performance. Thorough examination and correction prior to turf planting can solve many potential problems. This session will provide the turf professional with a check list of potential problem areas that can be adjusted or corrected prior to turf installation by considering types of field materials or soils, pre-plant fertilizers, and organic amendments.

Park and Landscape Track
Assessing Plant Stress
Angela O'Callaghan, Ph.D.
University of Nevada, Cooperative Extension
Susan Sims, Sims Tree Health Specialists

Plant stress equates to compounding plant problems. They must be distinguished in order to treat them properly. Understanding a plant’s resource allocations and defense mechanisms allows one to approach stress problems with a proactive approach utilizing prevention and avoidance techniques. This session will focus on proper plant selection and plant health care methods to minimize problems resulting from plant stress.

(continued on page 44)
Natural turf still the standard

While synthetic fields continue to be popular, conversations with players, architects, and others working "in the field" reveal concerns on how the new surfaces may affect the athletes competing on them. In this regard health-related questions about newer synthetics are currently under discussion by the EPA’s Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances and Turfgrass Producers International (TPI). Among the questions being raised are:

- The hazards posed to athletes by the potentially toxic content of infill rubber.
- Problems associated with the elevated heat levels.
- The sanitation challenges of a non-absorbent surface.
- The effect that the new surfaces may have on an athlete’s health and longevity.

Referring to the last point, there’s strong evidence that natural turf remains the playing surface of choice:

Football. In a survey by the National Football League Players Association (NFLPA) 88.8 percent of respondents said they prefer playing on natural grass fields and nearly 96 percent said they believe that artificial surfaces were more likely to contribute to injuries.

Baseball. Comments from players and groundskeepers reflect a preference for natural turf. Bret Saberhagen, a two-time Cy Young Award winner and current head baseball coach at Calabasas (CA) HS, recently headed a fund-raising campaign to construct a state-of-the-art natural grass field for his team. "In the majors we used to dread going on the road to play on an artificial field," he says, "and there's no way I would consider one for my kids. Baseball was meant to be...

"I’VE NEVER FOUND A Basketball player who doesn’t prefer natural turf."

TREVOR VANCE, HEAD ASSISTANT to the Kansas City Royals

Guess Who Rolled Out The Turf For Super Bowl XXXIX?

PENNINGTON GRASS SEED was chosen as the base sod (Princess 77 bermudagrass) and as the overseeding mixture (Pennington Tournament Quality Professional Select Rye/Blue Mixture) to cover the entire field in Jacksonville. And we were in Houston last year for the 36th Super Bowl. The fact is, Pennington is on a roll with grass seed products so good they are used in many of the most important sporting venues in the world.

So whether it is the biggest arena in pro football or your front lawn, you can trust Pennington to go the extra yard for all your turfgrass needs.

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played on grass.

In his recent book "Nitty Gritty Dirt Man" George Toma writes, "George Brett was one of the finest ballplayers I have ever seen. However, the artificial surface at Kauffman Stadium took its toll on George's knees and the rest of his body. George once told me the carpet was good for his batting average, but bad for his body."

"I've never found a ballplayer that doesn't prefer natural grass," says Trevor Vance, current head groundskeeper for the Kansas City Royals. "Number one is safety; the grass is giving where artificial turf is not and it's awful hard on your back and knees."

Do his peers share the same opinion? "Absolutely," Vance says.

Soccer. "We haven't been able to convince the top international teams to play on anything but grass," says Mike McFaul, of First and Goal, Inc. the parent company of Seattle's Qwest Field. "So on three separate occasions we've enlisted the help of West Coast Turf to create a Tifway II Bermudagrass field over our existing infill surface."

The result, according to McFaul, has been a successful series of international matches at Qwest Field. The natural turf has held up well under hard use and the players loved it. "It has also provided good public relations because, after each series, we've donated it for use in area schools and parks where it has proven to be very viable."

One good example of this is in Kirkland. There, City Parks Superintendent Jason Filan put the "used" natural turf to work in a soccer-mad area where many schools and parks have gone to synthetic surfaces. "We had a field with a very beat-up surface," Filan says, "and we prepped it thoroughly before getting the turf. We now have a first class soccer field that has held up well after two seasons of very heavy use."

Sport Field Architects. As independent consultants, sports field architects are understandably reluctant to "take sides" in the natural vs. artificial competition. However, on the basis of not being named, one active and respected practitioner shared personal opinions in the following conversation:

Q. What's your basic assessment of the natural vs. artificial situation?
A. Our goal is to make sure we give our clients the best surface for their needs. We find there are applications where synthetics can be very practical, but, in my opinion there's no better surface than well-maintained natural grass."

(continued on page 46)
**STAPLE GUN FOR GROUND**
North American Green has a new Surelock II Convertible Staple Gun that makes installing rolled erosion blankets, geotextiles, sod and other materials that must be secured to the ground easier, more efficient and more economical, the company says. The gun is available in manual and pneumatic-drive models, with two separate magazine packages available for each model, one for six-inch wire cartridge staples and one for four-inch or six-inch BioStakes.
North American Green/800-772-2040
For information, circle 060 or see http://www.oners.ims.ca/4569-060

**NEW GAME DAY PAINT**
Game Day 8090 Ultimate White athletic field marking paint is Suntec Paint’s newest product, developed especially for sports turf pros. This paint is highly pigmented with concentrated amounts of titanium dioxide and optical brighteners for brilliant white finish. And there’s no calcium carbonate so there’s no limestone buildup on your field, and settling after mixing is drastically reduced.
Suntec Paint/800-333-1104
For information, circle 119 or see http://www.oners.ims.ca/4569-119

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For premium performance and a color that will set your field apart, choose the Soilmaster Select Series from Pro’s Choice. Scientifically engineered to meet daily maintenance challenges and give your field a professional look, Soilmaster Select is the TRUE choice of groundskeepers around the league for building and maintaining winning ballfields. Available in four distinct colors, Soilmaster Select’s uniform granules manage moisture and alleviate compaction to keep your field in top playing condition. Pro’s Choice delivers a full line of sportsfield products for conditioning soil and infield mix, topdressing infields, quickly drying puddles and revitalizing turf.
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Komatsu Zenoah American Inc/800-291-8251, x214
For information, circle 057 or see http://www.oners.ims.ca/4569-057
around the grounds

**NEW PRODUCT!**

"CLEAN SWEEP"

Husqvarna's 326Sx Clean Sweep has the power to move materials too heavy for a blower, such as debris left by snowplows or construction work, and can be used on a variety of surfaces, from turf to concrete. The 326Sx features Husqvarna's E-TECH II engine, a new technology that meets more demanding environmental requirements. Benefits include low emissions, low noise and low weight without sacrificing high power and high torque.

Husqvarna/800 HUSKY 62
For information, circle 059 or see http://www.oners.ims.ca/4569-059

**ATHLETIC FIELD MARKER**

Newstripe has an all-new field marker, the Eco-Liner, which uses a standard 5-gal. pail as the paint tank, eliminating the clean-up hassles and safety concerns of pressurized paint tanks. A deep cycle marine battery provides more than 8 hours of striping, eliminating the maintenance and expense of gas engines and compressors. The Eco-Liner operates silently and is as easy to use as aerosols but with the economy of bulk paint.

Newstripe, Inc/800-624-6706
For information, circle 054 or see http://www.oners.ims.ca/4569-054

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**ENKAMATPLUS**

EnkamatPlus provides protection for natural turf fields. The 95 percent open, three-dimensional matting provides airspace and a structure that flexes as athletes and coaches continually walk on it. The polyester fabric provides a smooth walkable surface that allows rainfall to penetrate through to the turf below allowing the field to breathe and the grass to stay green season after season.

Covermaster/800-387-5808
For information, circle 061 or see http://www.oners.ims.ca/4569-061

**POWERVAC**

Powerful vac unit moves a high volume of air that carries even wet grass, high-moisture leaves, pine straw and dethatching debris to the collector. Deck-driven PowerVac eliminates the noise and extra maintenance of an auxiliary motor. Quik-D-Tatch design offers one-step conversion to non-collection operation.

Grasshopper/620-345-8621
For information, circle 058 or see http://www.oners.ims.ca/4569-058

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Indus-Tool/800-662-5021
For information, circle 062 or see http://www.oners.ims.ca/4569-062

**SPORTSTURF**

http://www.greenmediaonline.com
V-BLADE PLOW CONTROLS
A new hand-held CabCommand Control and a Joystick option are now available for the Western MVP adjustable V-Plow. Key features include: each function has its own button; wings move in or out either simultaneously or separately; and buttons are backlit for night use.
Western Products/414-356-2310
For information, circle 070 or see http://www.oners.ims.ca/4569-070

PRESSURE WASHERS
Mi-T-M Corporation manufactures the HSE Series hot water electric pressure washer, professional grade units that are quieter and vibrate less. Features include: fan cooled electric motor with manual thermal overload protection; top fired, dual spiral coil with powder coated heat exchanger; and 50-ft. steel wire-braided pressure hose.
Mi-T-M/800-553-9053
For information, circle 068 or see http://www.oners.ims.ca/4569-068

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Many times the landscape professional is faced with the declining health of landscape plants. This session will focus on the long-term improvement strategies for plant health and vigor by learning the basics of soil science. The role of soil amendments and fertility as they relate to physical and chemical properties will be discussed, along with commonly observed landscape problems and possible solutions.

Soil Erosion Control
Rod Dahl, USDA

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Al Schrand, Fiber Marketing
Competition for the very limited water supplies of the arid west has led to intensive changes in land use strategies. Part of this session will focus on a project located in the Newlands Project, Nevada, where multiple factors have contributed to the demise of irrigated farmland. Because of these factors, this area suffers severe wind erosion. Related to this focus will be a discussion of new technologies in erosion control along with how biostimulants and soil amendments can virtually eliminate failures.

Irrigation Track

Irrigation Design
Bob Morris, University of Nevada, Cooperative Extension
Tom Ash, HydroPoint Data Systems
In our arid climate, irrigation design is the most important factor in establishing a water-use efficient landscape. Proper design must incorporate the appropriate heads and layout with the correct choice and location of valves. This overview of irrigation design will explore the various factors that influence evapotranspiration (ET) of plants, and microclimates. Add to that a discussion of the new generation of “Smart” ET controllers, and you have a session that will showcase how the landscape industry at all levels can benefit. A demonstration of the WeatherTRAK “smart” ET controller will be highlighted.

Irrigation Efficiency
Shoumo Mitra, Ph.D., California State Polytechnic, Pomona
Mike Baron, Walla Walla Sprinkler Company
As water becomes an increasingly precious commodity, maximizing irrigation efficiency is a must. Learn the factors that affect irrigation efficiency in the field, such as sprinkler performance, installation considerations, and site conditions.

Steven Jay Porus has 27 years of conference and tradeshow experience. He can be reached at siporus@unlaccess.com.
Q. You stress “well-maintained” grass.
   A. The problem is that, too often, someone who isn’t trained properly will be
   assigned to maintain a field. It will begin to deteriorate in a few years and the athletic
   director will begin thinking about an artificial surface. So you get in a cycle where
   proper planning up front could have saved a lot of money.

Q. Could the same problem occur with synthetics?
   A. Yes. Adequate preparation and maintenance are essential for both surfaces.
   Since we are now in the first generation of the new types of synthetic turf enough
   time hasn’t elapsed for a true test and some problems are just beginning to show up.

Q. For example?
   A. Things like improperly glued seams may not show up until later. These can be
   fixed. But neglecting proper surface preparation can be even more of a
   problem. What happens if you discover surface undulations through the
   lines in a football or soccer field? On natural grass you can just mow them
   out. But on synthetics the problem may be clear down in the subbase and
   can’t be fixed without replacing the turf. So, in some ways, surface prepara-
   tion for synthetics can be more exacting than grass.

Q. What about maintenance items such as cleaning and
   marking on synthetics?
   A. These are things that will have to pass the test of time. Many synthet-
   ic fields will have permanent markings for soccer and football; if there’s a
   third it will just be painted on. The markings will fleck off the synthetic
   fibers in time, but not from the rub-
   ber. So there will always be kind of a
   shadow there that’s hard to remove.
   As for maintenance, synthetics don’t
   take to burning and gum very well.
   They can be watered down for
   cleanup from things like vomit and
   bleeding, but the rubber and sand
   down below tend to get a little fouled
   over time.

Q. How would you compare
   costs between the two sur-
   faces?
   A. They can even out. The cost
   of maintaining a well prepared, sand-
   based natural turf field will be higher.
   Compared with the fact that, over
   time, the synthetic surface will have
   to be replaced, it can be a wash. But
   it’s important to remember that cost
   comparisons can’t be really valid
   unless there has been a comparable
   commitment to subsurface prepara-
   tion and adequate maintenance.

Q. So what’s your view of the
   future?
   A. Synthetic surfaces have been
   on the upsurge, but as organizations
   see that an investment in good turf
   managers is the best strategy for get-
   ting more out of natural fields I think
   we’ll see a move back toward the mid-
   dle.

Swanson Russell, a marketing
communications firm in Lincoln,
NE, supplied this article.