

Online continuing education a reality

BY STEVE PORUS

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.

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LANDSExpo
Design, Selection, Implementation and Maintenance

March 23, 2005

Onsite: Texas Station, Las Vegas

Online: GreenIndustryEducation.com

Time	Arboriculture	Sports Turf	Park/Landscape	Irrigation
7:00 a.m.	Tree Selection: New Varieties Session 1	Exhibits/Buffer	Assessing Plant Stress Session 3	Exhibits/Buffer
8:00 a.m.	Exhibits/Buffer	Pesticides on Turfgrass Session 2	Exhibits/Buffer	Irrigation Design Session 4
9:00 a.m.	Tree Health Session 5	Exhibits/Buffer	Soil Issues Session 7	Exhibits/Buffer
10:00 a.m.	Exhibits/Buffer	Turfgrass Selection Session 6	Exhibits/Buffer	Irrigation Efficiency Session 8
11:00 a.m.	Pros/Cons of Micro-Injection Session 9	Exhibits/Buffer	Soil Erosion Control Session 11	Exhibits/Buffer
12:00 p.m.	Exhibits/Buffer	Evaluating and Amending Soil Session 10	Exhibits/Buffer	Irrigation with Reclaimed Water Session 12
1:00 p.m.				
2:00 p.m.				
3:00 p.m.				
4:00 p.m.				

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.

Contact Steven for exhibiting and sponsorship opportunities at 877-964-6222.

LandsExpo Session Overviews:

Sports Turf Track

Pesticides on Turfgrass

Jay Gan, Ph.D., University of California, Riverside

Bruce Kidd, Dow Agro Sciences

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, TurfSeed, 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)

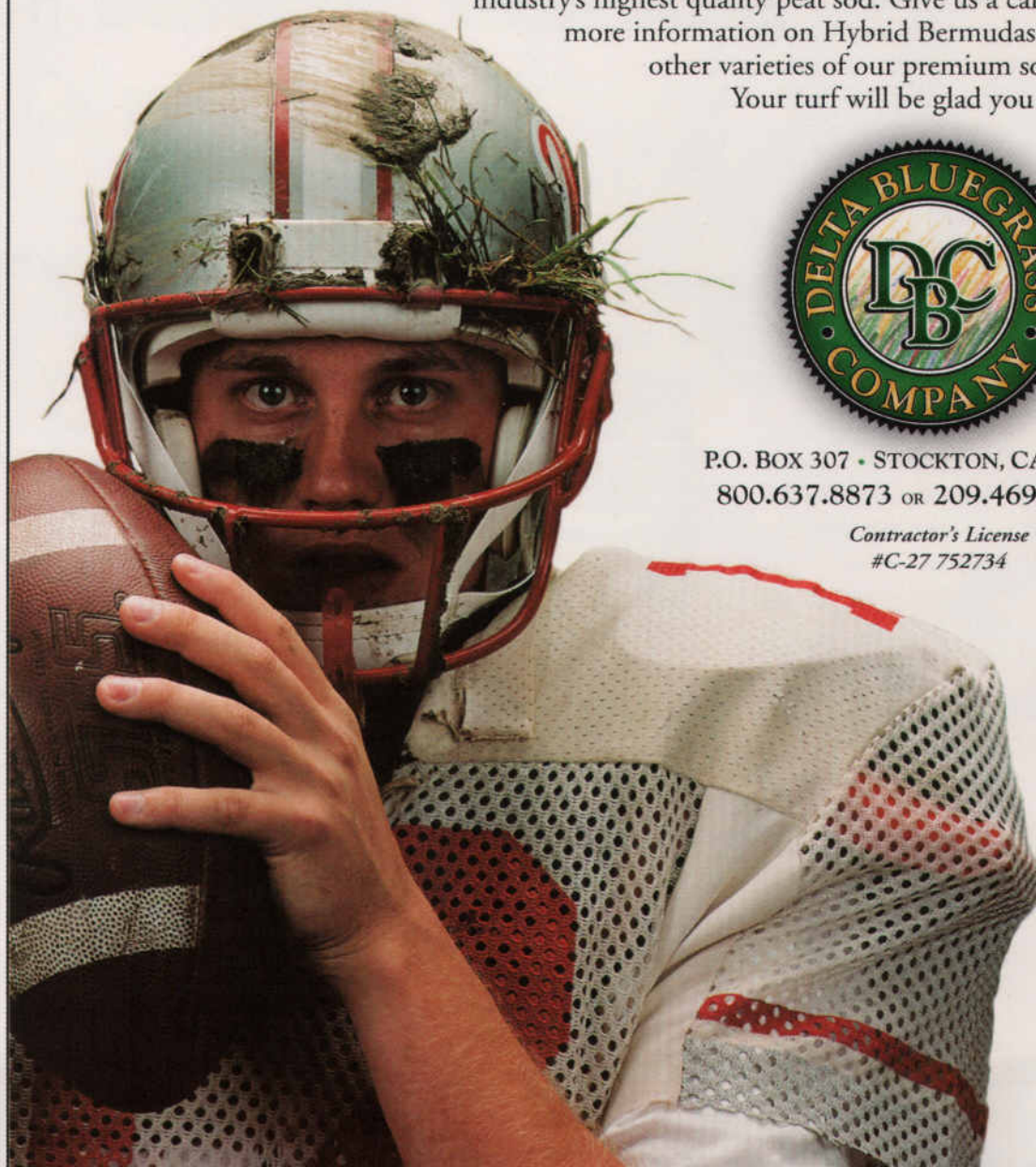
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Natural turf still the standard

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 in-fill 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.

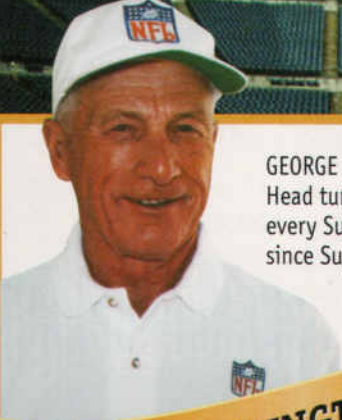
Referring to the last point, there's strong evidence that natural turf remains the playing surface of choice:

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

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TREVOR VANCE, HEAD
THE KANSAS CITY ROY**





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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)

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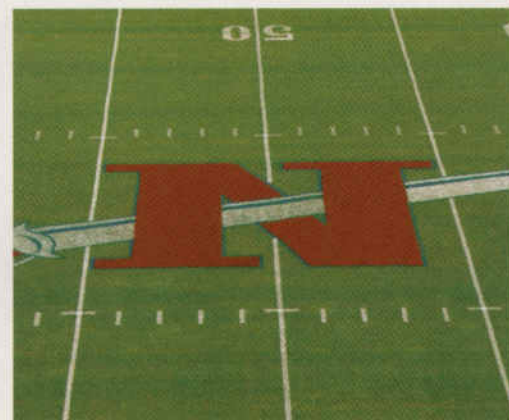
North American Green has a new Surelock II Convertible Staple Gun that makes installing rolled erosion blankets, geotextiles, sod and other materials that must be secured to the ground easier, more efficient and more economical, the company says. The gun is available in manual and pneumatic-drive models, 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.

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Soil Issues

Shoumo Mitra, Ph.D., California State Polytechnic, Pomona

Dirk Muntean, Soil and Plant Laboratory, Inc.

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

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. **ST**

Steven Jay Porus has 27 years of conference and tradeshow experience. He can be reached at sjporus@unlaccess.com.

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(continued from page 37)

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 preparation 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 synthetic 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 rubber. 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 surfaces?

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 preparation 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 getting more out of natural fields I think we'll see a move back toward the middle. **ST**

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

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