



North Scott, Netwal repeat as FOY winner

John Netwal, CGCS, and the high school sports complex of North Scott Community School District, Eldridge, IA, won the 2005 STMA Complex of the Year in the High School/Parks category. Netwal also won the 2004 High School Soccer Field of the Year last year.

The North Scott community covers 220 square miles north of the Quad Cities metro area. All maintenance is handled by the district's grounds department, which consists of three full-time and two summer seasonal employees, who handle approximately 115 acres of school grounds and sports turf areas. The staff also handles many other duties for the district and are known as the "can-do" guys.

Netwal, director of operations, was a golf superintendent for 20 years before beginning to manage sports turf 5 years ago, and is a past president of the Iowa Sports Turf Managers

Association. His full-time staff includes department head Andy Hamann, Terry Loesel, and Chris Thomas. The department is responsible for all grounds, playgrounds, parking lots, and fence maintenance, all outdoor facility improvements, as well as indoor deliveries and furniture moving.

"My primary responsibilities include the management of the district's entire physical plant and approximately 65 employees working in the custodial, transportation, and building maintenance services," says Netwal.

"My first job in the sports turf industry was working on a local golf course that just had been completed. I was hired along with every 13-year old at our high school to help pick rocks out of the recently constructed fairways during the grow-in phase of the project. The standard equipment issued every employee was a screwdriver and a metal bucket. The only time you could get up off our knees was when you had a full bucket to dump into the

trailer for removal," Netwal says. "I was one of only a few to survive this chain gang and quickly had new opportunities to move up to other golf course maintenance tasks."

How well does he balance his family life with work demands? "Good thing you didn't ask my wife this question, as hard as I have tried, probably not as well as I should have," says Netwal. "I always tend to put the organization first and occasionally have sacrificed things more at home than I would like to admit. This isn't a simple thing to do in the golf course profession or in the sports field management industry. I hear it all the time from peers in both industries; everyone seems to be getting just a little busier than they have ever been. For those who have managed to find that perfect balance, I commend them; as for me, I continue to strive for a better balance."

How does he see his job changing in the next 10 years? "I believe that the sports turf



industry is going to change more in the next 10 years than my current responsibilities. I'm constantly hearing from many sports turf managers about the ever-increasing demands placed upon them for improved playing conditions and facility access," says Netwal.

"This pressure is leading to the development of many new sporting complexes throughout our area as well as a rededication of resources to improve existing complexes. These demands are going to provide sports turf managers with many new opportunities to

grow and expand their work experience. When you hear people discussing the desire to install irrigation systems in youth sporting complexes, you begin to realize that people are beginning to raise the bar," he says. "As this bar goes up, so will the requirement for more training, experience, and skill for every sports turf manager in the industry. These changes will require tomorrow's sports turf manager to bring more management and educational experience to the position to go along with the art of sports field management." ■

MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

North Scott Baseball Field

April

First seasonal mowing at 2 in. height
1x/week in off-season
Fertilize with Country Club 18-5-9 at 4 lbs./m
Gypsum at 10 lbs./m
Dimension pre-emergence herbicide at 1.25 oz./m

May

Mow 2x/week at 1 1/2 in. in-season
Fertilize with Country Club 18-5-9 at 4 lbs./m

June

Mow 2x/week at 1 1/2 in. in-season
Fertilize with Country Club 18-5-9 at 4 lbs./m

July

Mow 2x/week at 1 1/2 in. in-season
Fertilize with Country Club 18-5-9 at 4 lbs./m

August

Mow 2x/week at 1 1/2 in. in-season
Fertilize with Country Club 18-5-9 at 4 lbs./m
Overseed with 2 lbs./m of United Seeds' low growth Sure-Shot bluegrass blend
Gypsum at 10 lbs./m
Aerify 5/8-in. tines

September

Mow 1x/week at 2 in. during off-season
Fertilize with Country Club 18-5-9 at 4 lbs./m

October

Mow 1x/week at 2 in. during off-season
Fertilize with Country Club 18-5-9 at 4 lbs./m

November

Mow 1x/week at 2 in. until top growth stops
Fertilize with Country Club 18-5-9 at 4 lbs./m
Triplex herbicide at 1.25 oz./m (three rotation)
Aerify 5/8-in. tines if season permits