

SoCal STMA renovates field named for a legend By Mike Tarantino

At first the project seemed to be overwhelming, and more than the members of the SoCal Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) probably wanted to take on. But when we considered it further and finally realized what kind of support it might receive from individuals and businesses, it became "definitely doable."

Rick Covert, STMA secretary and Facilities Supervisor/Landscape at Miramar College, and Ron Lardizibal, Athletic Director at San Diego's Herbert Hoover High, talked during a walk-through at Petco Park. They agreed they wanted to continue the recent STMA tradition of volunteering each year to renovate a public field.

Lardizibal mentioned that the varsity field at the school was certainly a candidate for a local project. The field is called the Ted Williams Field, named in honor of the baseball legend, who while still enrolled at Hoover High, made his professional baseball debut in the minor leagues with the San Diego Padres of the Pacific Coast League.

That this was the school where Williams played baseball when he was a youngster was certainly part of the allure of taking on this project.

Padres' Director of Field and Landscape Maintenance Luke Yoder, an STMA member, and his assistant, John Turnour, echo that sentiment. "I can't think of a better opportunity to give back to the community than at Hoover High and a field named after a true legend," Yoder said.

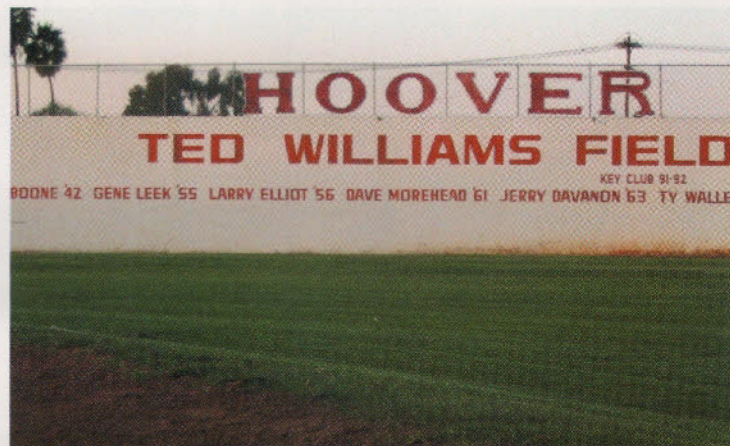
When we looked at the field in January it was clear that it was going to be a challenge. In no uncertain terms, we knew there was much work to be done.

Lack of funds meant the field had not been maintained properly. It wasn't because of lack of interest or knowledge, just money. Budget priorities at municipal and other public organizations are forced to shift from year to year because of a similarly shifting economy.

Ron Hostick, an STMA board member and Lead Groundskeeper for San Diego State University, said that some preliminary irrigation and skin work was done Wednesday and Thursday before the weekend event.



Getting it done: Mike Tarantino, middle, flanked by Ron Hostick, right, and Mike Radigan, left.



Before renovation; check out that bad infield lip.

Hostick, who is responsible for maintaining Charlie Smith Field at Tony Gwynn Stadium on the university campus, said the major part of the massive effort was conducted over 2 full days, July 7-8, with some residual work on Sunday and Monday.

Approximately 50 persons added their labor and talent. Eleven businesses from the San Diego area were present with their product and service donations. The work focused on a number of areas, especially the replacement and updating of the field's irrigation system. Sprinkler heads were replaced and new piping was laid. Sod replacement followed along with removal and replacement of the pitcher's mound.

A major job was the removal of the lip where dirt and grass meet. Over the years, the lip had grown so high that it easily had turned into a hazard for the youngsters using the field.

The businesses that are credited for participating in the event are AA Equipment, Barkshire Laser Leveling, Best Professional Products, Green One Industries, Horizon, Hunter Irrigation, Profile Products, Pro's Choice, Target Specialty Products, Turf First and West Coast Turf. About \$75,000 in products and services were donated!

Mike Tarantino is Director of Maintenance and Operations for Poway Unified School District, and president of the Southern California Chapter of STMA.

STMA partnerships benefit you

You walk by your athletic director's office, and he waves to you to step inside. In his hand is *Interscholastic Athletic Administration* magazine. He says, "I just read about STMA's partnership with the NIAAA. I didn't realize that your association is *my* association's education partner."

In fact, STMA has been the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) education partner since 2005. That partnership grew from a desire to open educational and informational channels about safety and sports field management challenges facing

NIAAA members, who are the athletic directors for high schools, junior high schools, and middle schools. As an education partner, STMA offers to NIAAA information and access to local sports field managers who can provide technical knowledge and advice. Each organization shares information and promotes each other's events. STMA exhibits at the NIAAA annual conference, and has provided an instructor to co-teach "Athletic Administration: Athletic Field Management." Several members serve on NIAAA's Sports Turf Advisory Committee.

STMA, its charitable arm The SAFE Foundation, and NIAAA are also partnering to produce a mound-building and home plate maintenance instructional video/DVD. The video will be produced this month and be available to the members of each association.

STMA continues to seek out and develop meaningful partnerships with organizations and associations. These alliances are important on two fronts:

1) as organizations share resources and information, opportunities are created for joint projects that enhance both organizations (i.e. the mound building video with the NIAAA)

2) greater visibility leads to more influence and recognition for each organization and thus, for each member of the organization.

How do YOU benefit from partnerships?

The more exposure STMA has with credible, national organizations, the more awareness the profession receives. And, the more visibility for sports turf management, the greater the recognition STMA members receive. Organizations look to STMA members for their expertise in

sports field management. They understand that STMA members stay current with changing technologies and employ environmental stewardship. This establishes STMA members as "the experts" and the result is an increased respect for all sports turf managers. Add this to the good work you do on a daily basis, and the effects can be significant.

STMA also provides education to the National Recreation and Parks Association. We have been a staple at its annual conferences by exhibiting at its trade show and by having members present educational sessions. This year, member Stephen Wightman is presenting "Maximizing Your Ball Fields on Real-World Budgets."

Another partner, Minor League Baseball (MiLB), supports STMA members through its Sports Turf Manager of the Year awards program. The STMA Awards Committee selects the winners, and the STMA president presents the awards to the winners at the Baseball Winter Meetings annual awards banquet. STMA also provides information to each attendee about the benefits of having an STMA member at their baseball facility. This program promotes the importance of and the value minor league teams receive by having a sports field manager.

The American Sports Builders Association (ASBA) has relied on STMA for review of technical information on synthetic surfaces and for educational presentations at its annual conference, as did the International Association of Assembly Managers when it featured two STMA members at its annual conference.

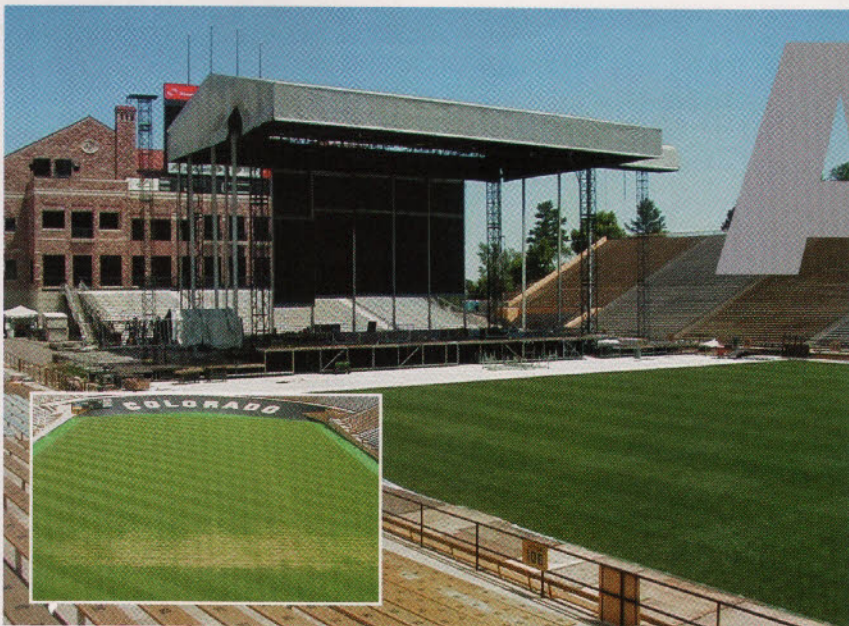
The association has many opportunities to further build important partnerships and will be aggressively advancing this initiative throughout the remainder of this year and in 2007. ■

John Mascaro's Photo Quiz

Answer: from page 38

This brown area is a result of a Dave Matthews Band concert held at the University of Colorado's Folsom Field in Boulder, 4 weeks before the first scrimmage game of the 2001. The small brown squares are where the stage footers were on plywood blocks, the larger brown area is the area directly in front of the stage. Even though the area was covered with commercial grade temporary flooring, the damage was still evident. The area was rejuvenated by using a solid tine aerifier four times during the 6-week window. They also used a 2-inch spike roller that also drops seed to create nice holes to put pre-germinated seed into. They seeded eight different times in order to be ready for their first televised game 6 weeks after the concert. They have not had a concert on the field since this event but there are talks about bringing them back again!

Photo submitted by Jason E. Depaepe, Athletics-Business Affairs at the University of Colorado at Boulder. ■



If you would like to submit a photograph for John Mascaro's Photo Quiz please send it to John Mascaro 1471 Capital Circle NW, Ste # 13, Tallahassee, FL. 32303 or email to john@turf-tec.com. If your photograph is selected, you will receive full credit. All photos submitted will become property of *SportsTurf* magazine.