

# Lincolnshire's North Park wins *Field of the Year*



roy Taylor and his crew won the 2006 Sports Turf Managers Association's Field of the Year Award for Schools/Parks Complex. North Park in Lincolnshire, IL covers 67 acres, including 28 acres of athletic facilities. The fields hosted 4,200 hours of events in 2006 and were named the Illinois STMA's Outstanding Facility Award in 2005.

**SportsTurf:** What attracted you to a career in sports turf management?

**Taylor:** Since I was a little kid, I have loved the outdoors, and was always outside. In grade school and later, I would help my grandpa work on his friend's yards. This is when I started to think, "Hey I get to be outside and make a little money, this is pretty good." When I was 16, Steve Roser of the Rockford Park district, hired me. Steve is incredibly knowledgeable [Ed.'s note: Roser won a FOY in 2005] and taught me

many things. I worked for the Rockford park district for 8 years, and this is where I came to the conclusion that a career in sports turf management was for me. In 2002 Scott Phippen of the Village of Lincolnshire hired me for the North Park sports complex. The village of Lincolnshire has been a great place to work for, Scott has taught me many tricks for field maintenance and the management side of things. My sports turf management career choice has been a good. I still get to work outside, made many new friends with the STMA and, to see the kid's smiles when they get to play on a professional like field makes all the long hours worth it.

**SportsTurf:** What are your specific responsibilities in this job?

**Taylor:** Luckily I have a great co-worker, Cory Purinton, to help me share some of the responsibilities in this job. My responsibilities are overseeing all operations at the North Park sports complex. This



# FIELD OF THE YEAR

includes all field maintenance, ice rink maintenance, building and equipment maintenance, ordering supplies, etc. I also have two other main parks that I help out with baseball and soccer maintenance. In the wintertime I help the Public Works department plow the cities streets.

**SportsTurf:** Do you plan any adjustments, large or small, to your maintenance plan in 2008?

**Taylor:** Other than a couple new equipment pieces to help out with field maintenance, our maintenance plan will stay pretty much the same. It seems to be working well with the amount of field usage we have.

**SportsTurf:** How do you balance your family life with work demands?

**Taylor:** I think this is one of the hardest problems any sports turf manager has. With events during the week, and weekends, you can spend a lot of time away from home. As a solution to this, my co-worker, Cory Purinton, and I take turns working on the weekends.

This solution lets us spend more time with our families.

**SportsTurf:** How do you see the sports turf managers' job changing in the future?

**Taylor:** Sports turf managers have evolved from the person who cuts grass, to the go to person that manages the entire operation. Our responsibilities are much bigger now. We are constantly maintaining for the higher demands of usage on our fields. As the world is turning more environmentally conscious, we as sports turf managers have also turned more environmentally conscious, by recycling cans and plastics, using organics for fertilizer, bio-diesel in our field equipment, and not overwatering our facilities. ■

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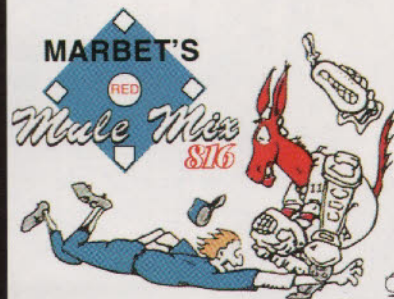


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