

STMA Regional Conference and Exhibition set for June at Iowa State



Iowa State is hosting STMA's June 24-25 Regional Conference.

STMA, in partnership with eight chapters from the Midwest, will be bringing national level education and an outdoor exhibition to Iowa State University in Ames, June 24-25, 2009. The Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, MO-KAN, Gateway, and Ozark Chapters approached STMA about jointly hosting a conference in the Midwest, and STMA Immediate Past President Mike Andresen, CSFM offered up the facilities on the Cyclones' campus. While focusing on Sports Turf Managers, STMA encourages attendance by members and crew alike, and will be providing education for all levels of sports turf experience.

Attendees will be afforded an intimate look at the Iowa State University athletic facilities, as well as an in-depth view of some of Dr. Dave Minner's notable sports field specific research on the ISU turf plots. Brad Jakubowski will be presenting on fertilizers as well as repeating a very popular session from the National Conference in San José, "Weather 101: Fundamental Meteorology for Turf Managers."

In another repeat of a popular session from the National Conference, STMA

Board Member Dale Getz, CSFM, CSE, will be presenting "Communicating with Coaches, User Groups, Administrators, and Other Nefarious Characters." Dr. Andrew McNitt of Penn State and John Netwal, CGCS, have been invited to speak at the as well.

Another STMA Board Member, Larry DiVito, head groundskeeper at Target Field in Minneapolis, the future home of the Minnesota Twins, will be recounting his work at another MLB facility, Nationals Park, in Washington, D.C. The focus of his presentations will be "Constructing a New Major League Facility from Scratch," as well as how to integrate state of the art environmental practices at a facility. Also planned are hands-on demonstrations that will cover topics such as Workplace Safety, Mowing Patterns, Field Maintenance Handwork, and Irrigation Issues.

According to Dr. Mike Goatley, STMA Conference Education Chairman, "You will

not find a better sports turf specific educational experience outside of the STMA Conference and Exhibition held every January."

Registration costs for the 2-day event are \$75 for a member of STMA National or one of the eight participating chapters and \$95 for a non-member. This price will include 2 days of education, entrance to the exhibition, an attendee gift, and most meals. Online registration will be available, so keep checking back at www.STMA.org for the most up to date information regarding the event.

STMA has also negotiated reduced rates at two Ames hotels. The AmericInn provides hot breakfast every morning and has double-occupancy rates starting at \$79. The Country Inn and Suites, which neighbors the AmericInn, and also serves a daily hot breakfast, as well as a cocktail hour, starts at \$89. For those looking for more economical accommodations, there are four-

person, two-room suites available starting at \$109 at the Country Inn and Suites. Both properties are less than a 5 minute drive from the Iowa State Athletic Complex and each are taking reservations at these special rates through May 27. Call 515-233-1005 for the AmericInn or 515-233-3935 for the Country Inn and Suites, and mention



Virginia Tech's Dr. Mike Goatley, STMA Conference Education Chairman.

that you are with the Sports Turf Managers Association to get the negotiated rate.

Put June 24-25 on your schedule and start talking to your employer about making sure that you are able to attend this incredible educational opportunity. If you have any questions, please contact STMA at 800.323.3875 or STMAInfo@STMA.org. ■

DiVito to oversee Twins' new field construction



Larry DiVito, left, and Bill Deacon, New York Mets manager of field operations, at a panel discussion on infield maintenance during the STMA Conference.

STMA Board Member Larry DiVito has been announced as the new Head Groundskeeper for the Minnesota Twins and their new ballpark in downtown Minneapolis, Target Field, which is slated to be ready for Opening Day 2010. According to MLB.com, DiVito is only the second Head Groundskeeper in the history of the Twins. The other was STMA Founder Dick Ericson, hired in 1961 to oversee Metropolitan

Stadium. The Twins have played on a synthetic surface in the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome since 1982.

The Twins received more than 150 applications for the job before narrowing the search down to 10 finalists, and then finally selecting DiVito. "I am thrilled to have the opportunity to build another field at the MLB level. Opening Target Field and bringing big league baseball back outside in Minnesota for the 2010 season is going to be exciting for all of the fans in Minnesota Twins' territory," DiVito said.

DiVito, entering his 15th year in professional baseball, comes to the Twins from the Washington Nationals, where he spent the past 3 years as Head Groundskeeper for the team. After two seasons at RFK Stadium sharing the surface with D.C. United of Major League Soccer, DiVito was instrumental in the planning and construction of the field at Nationals Park.

Before taking the job with the Nationals in 2006, he worked as the grounds crew supervisor for the Los Angeles Dodgers for four seasons. He began his career in professional baseball in 1995, when he took over as head groundskeeper for the Triple-A Pawtucket Red Sox in Rhode Island.

Originally from California, DiVito is a 1993 graduate of San Francisco State University with a B.A. in Sociology/ Urban Studies. He currently serves as the STMA Director who represents facilities used by professional athletes. He chairs the Scholarship Committee and co-chairs the Conference Off-Site Workshop and Tours subcommittees.

DiVito says, "I appreciate the impact that STMA has had in helping me to grow my career opportunities. Our association is in a position to educate people at all levels of our specialized industry and improve playing conditions across the country." ■

STMA aligns with Global Sports Alliance-USA

The STMA is pleased to announce that it has signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Global Sports Alliance-USA (GSA-USA) to "promote the principles of environmental stewardship in the world of sports," and "environmentally responsible sports related activities."

The document, signed by STMA President Abby McNeal, CSFM at the spring 2009 Board Meeting, and Jane Poynter, President of GSA-USA, indicates the two organizations' shared commitment to promoting environmental stewardship among sports enthusiasts and to demonstrate leadership. STMA CEO Kim Heck reports that the Board of Directors is strongly supportive of the collaboration. "Our Board is excited to share information and work with GSA-USA on initiatives that preserve

and protect our environment." This GSA / STMA cooperative agreement opens the door to future opportunities to work together in promoting environmental leadership in the world of sports. It establishes an avenue for STMA and GSA-USA to communicate freely and to work together on issues of common interest. Additionally, the agreement invites, supports and encourages these organizations to jointly plan and carry out projects that are mutually beneficial and of environmental significance.

STMA and the GSA-USA will share information and will identify opportunities to work cooperatively to promote the principles of environmental stewardship in the world of sports: the area where the organizations' missions and objectives overlap. ■