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Field builders' certification now available

THE AMERICAN SPORTS BUILDERS ASSOCIATION (ASBA), the national organization for builders and suppliers of materials for athletic facilities, has developed a new Field Builder Certification Program. The program, which was developed to help raise professional standards and improve the practice of athletic field construction, will offer its first exam at the ASBA's Technical Meeting in Savannah, GA December 5-7.

ASBA already offers certification for tennis court and running track builders. In both cases, individuals must meet eligibility requirements and successfully complete a comprehensive examination. In order to maintain their designation, they must recertify every 3 years.

The exams offered are for Certified Field Builder, demonstrating expertise in both natural and synthetic turf construction; Certified Field Builder-Natural; and Certified Field Builder-Synthetic. The certification program marks the first time the ASBA has collaborated with two other industry organizations on a certification program, the STMA and the Synthetic Turf Council. Members of those organizations are eligible to take any of the three new exams at the substantially lower ASBA member rate. Of the three exams, the CFB requires a more comprehensive knowledge. All certifications would be renewable every 3 years.

"The Field Builder Certification Program represents a huge step forward for the industry," says ASBA's Field Builder Certification Committee Chairman Dan Wright of Sports Turf Company, Whitesburg, GA. "It will help promote quality construction and just as importantly, will allow the public to identify builders who have taken their knowledge to the next level."

The exam is based on role delineation studies—surveys of builders that define the scope of practice and the knowledge and skills required to function competently as a sports field builder. If you're interested in learning more about the certification exam contact ASBA at 866-501-ASBA, 410-730-9595, or info@sportsbuilders.org.

Art Lewis didn't invent the Thatch Master machine but over the past 18 years he's been building and improving the fine turf verticutting machine. He announced last month that he had sold his interests to TurfTime Equipment.

Lewis says his original market was golf, as the machine started out as a 3-foot-wide unit for use on greens. "But early on I decided to call on the athletic field market. I started displaying it at the Sports Turf Managers Association shows and got requests for wider machines, which led first to a 4-foot machine and later to the 5- and 6-foot machines.

"I have been at every STMA show since the first one and have enjoyed working with athletic field managers. Over the years I have made many friends in the STMA and will miss this part of my life," Lewis says. "The STMA has done a good job of educating athletic field personnel and of bringing advances in maintenance to all levels of facilities. Recently, I have been doing more business with high schools and colleges as well as with the larger facilities. When I sold the business was about 60 percent athletic fields.

"I sold my business because the time had come to retire and spend more time at my hideaway on Pine Island, FL."

Glenn Musser, vice president of TurfTime Equipment, says, "We are grateful for the 18 years that Art Lewis has dedicated to Thatch Master. We will continue to support Art's customers through the existing distribution network."

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