

# FIELD OF THE YEAR



» Above: LEFT TO RIGHT, Barry Brooks, David Presnell and Charles Jarrard  
» Below: THE EAST END ZONE on Game Day.



## Gainesville, GA Parks wins Football Award for 2008

LED BY LANDSCAPE & TURF TECHNICIAN DAVID PRESNELL, the Gainesville, GA Parks and Recreation Agency's Bobby Gruhn Field at City Park Stadium was named STMA Schools/Parks Football Field of the Year for 2008. Charles Jarrard, parks maintenance crew leader, Barry Brooks, parks maintenance worker, and supervisor Jimmy Savage round out the team.

City Park Stadium has been around since 1916 and now features TifSport bermudagrass while hosting soccer and lacrosse games as well as football. In 2005 a sub-strata, sand-based drainage system and new irrigation system was installed, along with new turf, fencing, goal posts, perimeter walkways, retaining walls, and landscaping. Drainage issues and an uneven playing surface prompted the renovation.

"The one thing that sticks with me is that turf managers are professionals and should carry themselves like professionals."-David Presnell

# Bobby Gruhn Field Maintenance Schedule

## January

Fertilize field with 18-0-0 Ammonium Sulfate (1# of N per 1000ft<sup>2</sup>) (500# Total)

Re-Seed any bare spots with perennial rye if needed (30 days prior to pre-emerge)

Irrigate only to target wilt

Mow field weekly or as needed @ 1.25 inches

## February

Lay-out and paint Soccer field & Lacrosse field

Contact school and have them bring Goals (Soccer & Lacrosse)

Apply Pre-Emergent to field at mid-month to target summer weed germination (5-5-25 granular fertilizer w/ 1% Ronstar / 6.7# product to 1000ft<sup>2</sup>)

Irrigate only to target wilt

Mow field weekly @ 1.0 inches (Twice weekly by end of month as temps begin to rise)

## March

Take soil sample and have analyzed

Check/test irrigation system

Spot spray 3-way liquid post emergent to target broadleaf weeds

Fertilize field with 29-3-8 + 6%Fe (1# of N per 1000ft<sup>2</sup>) (300#s total)

Irrigate as needed in conjunction with temperatures and rainfall

Back-Lap Reels

Mow field every other day @ 3/4 inch

## April

Spot spray 3-way liquid post emergent to target broadleaf weeds

Add nutrients/lime as recommended by soil analysis

Chemically remove Perennial Ryegrass at mid-month with Revolver (.4oz per 1000ft<sup>2</sup> / 17.4oz per acre)

Apply Heritage Fungicide at a rate of .4oz per 1000ft<sup>2</sup> / 17.4oz per acre

Fertilize field with 16-4-8 (1# of N per 1000ft<sup>2</sup>) (500#s total)

Monitor transition to Bermudagrass

Begin irrigating as needed (monitor rainfall to allow 1.5 inches of water weekly)

Mow twice weekly @ .75 inches (mow rye every other day at beginning of month if needed)

## May

Core Aeration w/ 3/4" tines and remove cores

De-thatch and sweep field

Lay-Out and paint field for Spring Scrimmage (Bring Field Equipment)

Fertilize field with 29-3-8 + 6%Fe (1# of N per 1000ft<sup>2</sup>) (300#s total)

Re sod any needed areas at mid month

Topdress new sod week after putting down

Irrigate as needed (monitor rainfall to achieve 1.5 inches water per week)

Mow every other day @ 1/2 inch

## June

Take soil sample and have analyzed

Core Aeration with 5/8" tines (remove cores) and Top-dress with 1/4" USGA Topdressing Sand (50 tons)

After aeration fertilize field with 29-3-8 + 5%fe (3/4# of N per 1000ft<sup>2</sup>) (200#s total)

Mid month fertilize field with 29-3-8 + 5%fe (3/4# of N per 1000ft<sup>2</sup>) (200#s total)

Irrigate as needed (monitor rainfall to achieve 1.5 inches water per week)



» Above: PRESNELL spreading fertilizer.

» Above right: PRESNELL PULLS A STRING to set up the stenciling of his endzone logo.

Presnell related in his award entry the challenges he's faced during drought-related water restrictions:

"The sand-based drainage system has worked well in dissipating any sudden or prolonged heavy rainfall. The system also allows any irrigation water to pass through the surface rapidly and prevents the root-zone from holding much water. A prolonged drought resulted in state Level 4 water restrictions that have made it very difficult to maintain the turf properly.

"We were directed to discontinue irrigation in the fall of 2007. Exemptions allow for use of irrigation systems to water in fertilizer and herbicide applications only. We were able to maintain the overseeded rye in good condition over the winter for soccer and lacrosse play in spite of the restrictions. We then applied Revolver to remove the rye in mid-April and with limited irrigation and the 6 inches of rain we had in April and May, the TifSport came out of dormancy.

"All went well until the first of June, when ironically we co-hosted a Turfgrass Field Day with our county extension serv-

ice. The agronomists and turf experts from the University of Georgia were very impressed by our turf; however, the temperatures reached the high 90's over the following weekend and by Monday we discovered that the turf had almost burned. This was attributed to the sand drainage system that contributed to higher soil temperatures.

"Sideline wear requires annual re-sodding on both sides of the field and the Level 4 restrictions allow for 10 weeks of irrigation, 3 days a week, when new sod is professionally installed. So we quickly ordered our sod and were able to water it and the existing stand minimally, bringing back the turf."

**SportsTurf:** How has the recession affected your operations?

**Presnell:** Our budget has certainly tightened with the recession. We have subcontracted our chemical program in the past but decided this year to bring it back in-house. By handling our fertilization and IPM program internally, we have been able to better manage costs, make more timely applications when needed, and be more

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responsive to problems as they occur. Of course we've had to make some scheduling adjustments and retool some of our older equipment, but it has been a positive experience.

**ST:** What changes to your maintenance plans are you expecting to make this year, if any?

**Presnell:** I am always tweaking existing practices and trying new things. Our maintenance program has been very effective over the past couple of years so we are not looking at any major changes. I am looking at some different fertilizers and possibly adjusting the application times of our fungicide program. One very positive change we made this year was increasing the number of core-aerifications this year and it seems to have been extremely beneficial.

**ST:** What's the best piece of turf management advice you have ever received?

**Presnell:** I have received a lot of great advice and hopefully will continue to get great advice from fellow turf managers. The one thing that sticks with me is that turf managers are professionals and should carry themselves like professionals. Always continue to educate yourself and always be open to new ideas. I also love the "Give an extra 15 minutes" and George Toma's "And then some" attitudes.

**ST:** How do you balance your work and personal time?

**Presnell:** This is a challenge. Maintaining our fields and facilities at the high level our clients and community expect requires many hours and lots of nights and weekends. I have a great wife and children who support me. During football season when I am working the most hours my family will come to the games so we can spend some time together.

**ST:** What do you see yourself doing 10 years from now?

**Presnell:** I would love to see myself with Gainesville Park & Rec and managing turf. The community here is really football-minded and I take a lot of pride in the football field. But one thing is certain, I will be managing an athletic field and providing a quality, safe surface for athletes to play on. ■

The STMA Field of the Year Awards Program has been made possible through the generous support of its sponsors. They include: Carolina Green Corp.; Covermaster, Inc.; Hunter Industries; Turface Athletics/Profile Products, LLC; Scotts Professional Seed; and World Class Athletic Surfaces.

Back-Lap reels  
Mow every other day @ 1/2 inch

## July

7/1 Complete stadium walk-thru and make punch list  
Core Aerification w/ 5/8" tines & remove cores  
De-thatch if needed (.5" thatch or greater)  
Broadcast Amdro to target fire ants (1# per acre)  
Spot treat weeds as needed (DO NOT SPRAY IF TEMPS ARE OVER 90 DEGREES)  
Fertilize field with 29-3-8 + 5%fe (3/4# of N per 1000ft2)(200#s total)  
Begin aerifying weekly with solid tines  
Irrigate as needed (monitor rainfall to achieve 1.5 inches water per week)  
Back-Lap Reels  
Mow every day @ 1/2 inch

## August

Core Aerification w/ 5/8" tines & remove cores  
Put Goal Posts up  
Bring Tarps and Field Equipment to Stadium  
Paint border and yard lines two weeks prior to scrimmage  
Paint numbers and yard markers one week prior to scrimmage  
Paint logos one week prior to first home game  
Fertilize field with 29-3-8 +5%Fe (3/4#N per 1000ft2)(250# Total)  
Broadcast Amdro to target fire ants (1# per acre)  
Aerify field weekly with aeravator (solid tine)  
Grind reels  
Mid Month be FOOTBALL READY  
Fertilize field mid-month with 24-2-11 +3%Fe (3/4#N per 1000ft2)  
Spray field with liquid iron 7 to 10 days prior to first home game  
Fill divots with sand after each home game  
Irrigate as needed (monitor rainfall to achieve 1.5 inches water per week)  
Mow every day @ 5/8 inch (begin mowing football stripes beginning of month)

## September

Take soil sample and have analyzed  
Fertilize field with 24-2-11 +3%Fe (3/4#N per 1000ft2)  
Aerify with aeravator (solid tine) after home football games  
Fill divots with sand after each home game  
Apply Heritage Fungicide at a rate of .4oz per 1000ft2 / 17.4 oz per acre (mid-month)  
Aerify with aeravator, verticut, sweep field and overseed with Double Eagle Perennial Rye (10# per 1000)(1000#s total seed)  
Target date is 3rd week and this will be done according to football schedule  
Set irrigation to light frequent times for proper seed germination  
Fertilize with 18-24-12(1# of N per 1000ft2) (2 weeks after overseeding)  
Mow every other day at 3/4 inch

## October

Fertilize with 24-2-11 +3%Fe (3/4N per 1000ft2)(300# Total)  
Apply Heritage Fungicide at a rate of .4oz per 1000ft2 / 17.4 oz per acre (mid-month)  
Fill divots with sand after each home game (with perennial rye seed)  
Re-seed sidelines and mid-field with perennial rye after home games  
Irrigate as needed (monitor rainfall to achieve 1.5 inches water per week)  
Mow every other day @ 3/4 inch

## November

Fertilize field with 32-3-8 + 2%Fe (1#N per 1000ft2)(300# Total)  
Re-seed sidelines and mid-field with Perennial Rye  
Winterize irrigation system  
Fill any remaining divots with divot mix  
Irrigate only to target wilt  
Mow field twice weekly @ 3/4 inch(raise to 1.25" after football season)

## December

Goal Posts taken down and stored in mill  
Tarps and Field Equipment to shop  
Re-seed any bare spots with perennial rye (if needed)  
Irrigate only to target wilt  
Mow field weekly @ 1.25 inches