

likes of John Madisen, Bill Davis, Vic Youngner, Kent Kurtz, and Gibeault. Vic is closely involved with some major developments in sports turf. He is a close observer of sod grown on sand for resodding sand-based

sports fields, combinations of warm and cool season grasses, and fertigation. Vic is a leader in educating sports turf managers in Southern California on proper field construction and care. His research emphasis is

important to sports turf technology as it enters a new growth phase.

These six innovative veterans of sports turf provide a strong foundation of guidance for this magazine. ■

Where were you in 1985?

GREG PETRY, Waukegan (IL) Park District

I was working for the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District as the Coordinator of Park Services. Our big project was sodding 10 acres of athletic fields and keeping them alive during the summer/fall drought. Those were the days; working out in the field with the guys and seeing a project come to fruition!

HEATHER NABOZNY, Detroit Tigers

In 1985 I was a sophomore a Milford High School in Michigan. I had tall hair and wore too much makeup. I was the captain of the downhill ski racing team and had a thoroughbred horse that I showed equestrian.

I remember that year I took great pride in mowing my parents property on a 1939 Ford tractor with a PTO-driven flail mower attached to the back.

STEVE COCKERHAM, University of California, Riverside

I was Superintendent of Agricultural Operations at the University of California, Riverside, full-time and well into my own turfgrass research program for my academic appointment. In that year, we finished the first phase of the turfgrass research facility at UCR. I had just been through the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles as consultant for the LA Memorial Coliseum and the Rose Bowl. George Toma had been working with me on the Rose Bowl as the soccer venue.

"Turfgrass Water Conservation" was published in 1985. Dr. Victor Gibeault and I had edited the papers of a 1983 Symposium that we organized and conducted, which was sponsored by the (then) American Sod Producer's Association. The book became

one of the most frequently cited publications in our industry for many years. I attended the International Turfgrass Society Meetings in France and gave a paper on water use in turf. At that meeting I met researchers from England and, in discussions with them the idea for the design of a sports turf traffic simulator was born. The Brinkman Traffic Simulator was built that fall. I gave some papers at various meetings and had some publications. All in all, I recall it being a busy year.

As a note, I continue consulting with the LA Memorial Coliseum and, this year, celebrate my 28th year with that facility.

KIM HECK, CEO of STMA

In 1985, I was hired by McCaw Communications and placed on the team that brought cellular technology to the Kansas City market. My job was marketing and advertising. McCaw was heavily into acquiring communications companies as its growth strategy, and I traveled when necessary to the acquisitions to help integrate the marketing plans. Travel was often on the corporate jet! I had just had my first child and was still figuring out the "new mom" stuff and work/life balance.

DR. DAVE MINNER, Iowa State

In 1985 I was in my second year as a faculty member at the University of Missouri. It seems like yesterday and I can still probably locate every head we placed ourselves in the new irrigation system at the research facility, with lots of good information generously donated by the turfgrass industry. Things haven't changed much; this industry and its professional organizations

have grown, but they have never lost the desire to share information.

I was a newly elected STMA board member in 1985 and most of our meetings were in Chicago. I was fortunate to serve on board at the same time as the late Harry Gill. Harry taught me a lesson about how to communicate with sports turf managers and it has certainly influenced how I listen and react to a group of professionals who are really the true experts.

At my first board meeting as the representative for academics I wanted to show my superior knowledge, so I was describing something and used the scientific name for two grasses and followed it up the term "verdure." (Look it up if you don't know it, I learned my lesson once.) When I was done with my scientific pontification, Harry looked at the group and said, "I don't have a clue to what he just said but what we really need is someone to help us find answers to the problems we can't solve and also a way to get advice to the little guy" (his way of saying we should share our information with smaller organizations that didn't yet have a dedicated groundskeeper).

Well, I took off my tie, along with my cap and gown, and it has been a wonderfully rewarding 25 years of learning and teaching and listening and doing with the sports turf industry. Thanks Harry, for setting the kid on a straight and better path.

ABBY MCNEAL, CSFM, Wake Forest University

1985—the time when big hair, preppy clothes, parachute pants and being a high school freshman at Queen Anne's County (MD) High School were all that I knew. I was actually destroying grass as a member of

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our marching band but did not realize it. Our band was more successful than our football team. As the youngest of four, I was left with most of the chores that nobody wanted to do and had been mowing the yard for about 6 years by then. I still did not know what I was planning to do with my life but I enjoyed sailing, playing basketball, and playing trumpet.”

MIKE ANDRESEN, CSFM, Iowa State University

In 1985 I was employed as a Grounds Supervisor for Des Moines Area Community College. At the time the college was in an extensive building phase and my job was to implement the new master landscape plan. We also had some simple recreation athletic fields and our crew was charged with maintaining them.

A couple years before the college allowed me to attend a PGMS conference in Chicago where I met an early group of STMA members and founders. I was blown away with their openness and willingness to engage a young guy that didn't know a field drag from a mower! Though it seemed impossible to even imagine it happening, 1985 was about the time I set a clear goal to get into this profession. It's a cliché but it's true: "If you can dream it, you can do it."

BOB CURRY, President of Covermaster

In 1985, the year before we joined STMA, we were introducing a new lightweight tarp for the sports field market. Even though this new material was half the weight of traditional tarps it was a new concept; we were having some success but the old theory SHOW ME was taking time.

By getting involved with STMA we had the opportunity to reach the market, the actual people who dealt with the tarps and prove our concept. Nowadays the majority of sports fields use lightweight covers and it is satisfying to know those early efforts played a role in what you see today on TV.

DR. A. J. POWELL, JR., University of Kentucky

In 1985 I was in my 16th of 41 years working for University Extension in the tran-

sition climatic zone of the US. Most turf-grass educational programs and publications before 1985 were related to golf course and home lawn management. Sports turf concerns were mainly limited to professional game fields and university football game fields. High School and Parks & Rec fields were pretty much ignored. A transition period occurred around 1985 where we became much more concerned about safe and aesthetic sports turf and realized that it all started at the high school level.

It is hard to believe now, but before 1985 we had very few game fields with automatic irrigation. We had no sports turf contractors for construction and maintenance for high school fields; fields were constructed with a road grader or small bulldozer, without laser technology. Most fields were seeded with Kentucky 31 tall fescue or traffic-intolerant Kentucky bluegrass. Sprigging or seeding with a winter hardy bermudagrass was only a dream. Farm fertilizers and farm herbicides were the norm. Core aerifiers and reel mowers were very scarce on high school and Parks & Rec fields.

The transition from these inexpensive, mediocre fields to our outstanding show-fields of today is a tribute to research and development of better products and equipment, and certainly to magazines like SportsTurf that promoted the best in product purchasing and maintenance practices. This transition was greatly complicated by increased traffic imposed by the introduction of soccer and girls sports in the late 80's and early 90's, and also by the increasingly restrictive land resources for field construction. This increased the necessity for quality research and educational programs through universities, private associations like STMA and magazines like SportsTurf, all inexpensive methods of getting out the word. Thank you, SportsTurf magazine.

STEVE WIGHTMAN, Qualcomm Stadium

Wow! 1985 was a long time ago! I'm at that age now when I can remember things that happened 25 years ago but not things that happened this morning. Of course, those things that I remember 25 years ago have now expanded into memories that have

been stretched, grown and expanded into more significant and extraordinary happenings and experiences than what was reality at the time. And another thing, I had hair and it was blonde 25 years ago!

Twenty five years ago I was in my 10th year as Head Groundskeeper at Mile High Stadium in Denver. The Broncos were becoming the force to beat in the AFC-Western Division led by Head Coach Dan Reeves along with a potent offense that included John Elway, Sammy Winder and Steve Watson. However, the defense, dubbed the Orange Crush, was the team's foundation that most opponents found difficult to score against.

On November 17, 1985 the Broncos were host to the San Diego Chargers on a day that brought 18 inches of snow to the Mile High City. It was a very long weekend that was spent entirely at the stadium plowing snow and repainting lines in Bronco orange paint. Denver won 30-24 in OT.

In 1985 Mile High Stadium was also home to the Denver Zephyrs Triple A baseball team that kept my summer busy with baseball and the Bruce Springsteen concert. Then came August and September, with baseball and football sharing the same space and making it very difficult to have a quality playing surface for either team...some of you know what that's like!

1985 I was also busy with STMA. As President, I spent a great deal of time attending Board meetings and helping plan how STMA could better serve its members. The Association became incorporated and we established the first official office in a small complex in Upland, CA with the late Dr. Kent Kurtz as Executive Director. At the national conference STMA presented Tony Burnett, Groundskeeper at RFK Stadium, with the "Lawn Ranger Award" (later renamed the "Harry C. Gill Memorial Award").

Twenty five years seems like a long time ago. My sons were 8 and 5, I weighed much less and the days seemed to go by more slowly then. 1985 brings back many fond memories, both personally and professionally. My experiences were gratifying—challenging, yet gratifying. ■