

Ask a CSFM

**John Watt, CSFM,
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Benefits of certification verified

Editor's note: This is another installment on how becoming a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) can benefit turf managers professionally as well as improve their facilities



How did you prepare for the CSFM Exam?

Watt: My preparation for the exam started with looking at the resource list of materials on the STMA web page to see what information I felt I needed to review. There are more books on that list than I read through my college years. I did go through "Sports Fields: A Manual for Design Construction and Maintenance" and "The Mathematics of Turfgrass Maintenance." Also I used the practice exam to familiarize myself with the style of questions.

How did you approach your employer to support your certification, both financially and in the time needed to prepare for the exam?

Watt: Since I work for a School District, approaching my employer on education factors was an easy task. I explained the benefits of being a CSFM and what can be applied for the future of the athletic fields. Most of my time studying for the exam was on my own, but I took full advantage of gaining more work-related experience.

Why did you decide to pursue certification?

Watt: I decided to become a CSFM when I realized that this type of work is my career, not just a job. This is a way to express my knowledge, experiences, and abilities to my employer and the industry.

How has certification helped your career?

Watt: Since becoming a CSFM I have made more business contacts, gained respect from coworkers, continued my role on the board for Mo-Kan STMA chapter, and become a committee member for STMA. ■

Jacobsen celebrates 90th anniversary

FOUNDED BY DANISH IMMIGRANT KNUD JACOBSEN and his son, Oscar, in 1921, innovation began from day one when they introduced the Four Acre Mower so named because, powered by an internal combustion engine, it could mow four acres of lawn in a single day. It cost \$275, a relatively large sum at the time, indicating the size and complexity of the machine. It was designed specifically for use in parks, cemeteries, playgrounds, golf courses and large estates with 75 built in that first year.

In 1923, Jacobsen again made history with the introduction of the first cast aluminum greens mower; this was able to cut fine turf and bent-grass greens without damaging the meticulously-conditioned surfaces.

Mower production gave way to manufacturing equipment for military use in World War II. Deserving a special mention was the small, 22-pound backpack generator set for use by paratroopers in radio transmission. The company subsequently received Army and Navy "E" awards for meritorious service in wartime production.

In 1955 Jacobsen mowers maintained the grounds at the 1958 Brussels World's Fair and in 1962, the Chief, all-purpose compact tractor was introduced.

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw Jacobsen really establish its golf credentials with the introduction in 1968 of the first riding greens mower, the Greens King, which quickly became the standard for the turf maintenance industry. Launched in 1971, the F-20 was the world's largest golf course mower, a 78-horsepower tractor pulling nine cutting reels, cutting a 19.7 foot swath and capable of mowing 12.35 acres per hour.

The MAGSystem was introduced in 2004. This breakthrough technology used magnets to secure bedknives in position, saving technicians time and improving the quality of cut.

1986 witnessed the development and introduction of the Turf Groomer, one of the most significant advances in greens maintenance. Invented by superintendent Larry Lloyd it allowed green speed to be increased without lowering the height of cut.

Another industry first came in 1989 with the introduction of the lightweight 5-gang LF-100 mower, specifically designed from the ground up to be as light as possible, providing less compaction and healthier turf.

The company expanded dramatically in 1998 with the acquisition of Ransomes, a British firm with a 200-year history manufacturing agriculture and turf maintenance tractors, mowers and accessories. This brought many new products and brands to the Jacobsen name, including Cushman trucks and Ryan aerators.

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In 2007, the world's first hybrid walking greens mower, the Jacobsen Eclipse 100 series was launched. This used a small petrol engine linked to a generator to provide electric drive for traction and mowing.

This was followed in 2010 by the larger riding version, the Eclipse 322, a hybrid mower, which dispenses with the need for a hydraulic system to power the traction, reel lift and spin the reels. ■