

Offers Sport of Princes



time and place and the Hindi word, chakar.

The ten playing fields in the polo complex at the Palm Beach club were built in 1978 to house a fast-riding, hard-driving sport that excitingly combines the most daring tactics of horse racing, hockey and soccer. In a nutshell, two teams of four mounted men with mallets try their best to drive the ball through their opponents' goal posts, which are made of light wood (or even paper-mache) so that they will

collide upon command, they also make quick stops and sudden turns that regularly dislodge large divots of turf. As in football, it's as though the turf is carefully built up and pampered during most of the week so that it can then be destroyed in a few hours of heart-stopping violence.

There are two types of polo: high-goal and low-goal. High-goal or fast polo is used for major tournament play during the winter season. For these matches the turf is maintained at low height of cut, increasing its susceptibility to damage.

The fields are either boarded or unboarded on the sides. Both types are 300 yards long, but boarded fields are only 160 yards wide, while unboarded fields are 200 yards wide. However, the sideboards don't offer spectators all that much protection: They are only 11 inches high.

That's all the more reason to be sure the turf is not likely to trip up the horses: At the Palm Beach club, the fast-growing runners help the bermudagrass provide the flat, dense turf needed to support their high-speed gallop.

The turf, of course, is only as good as the irrigation system that feeds and invigorates it. At the Palm Beach facility the two main stadium fields have the most extensive irrigation system. Field One has 44 Rain Bird quick-coupler heads, divided into six zones. They are covered during games with turf plugs, which somehow do their job despite the hard action pounding down on them during each polo match.

Each sprinkler head delivers 75 gallons of water per minute. Every zone runs a 30-minute cycle that applies 15,750 gallons per zone.

The outer polo fields, known as the Southfields, are irrigated by 22 quick-coupler heads per field. These are supplemented with water winches when the rain falls short.

In his six years as head superintendent at the Polo Club, Newman has given several automatic sprinkler systems a try. One test was conducted on a four-acre stick-and-ball practice field, where the players practice without benefit of horses. The superintendent discovered that the rounded-head, automatic sprinklers were potentially dangerous to the horses. They could suffer serious or fatal leg injuries without turf plugs over the heads. Wisely he switched back to a manual system of Buckner kicker-type heads.

Drainage is helped by a 30-foot center crown in each field. Excess water is collected into drainage swales that run down the sides of the field. In the center of each swale are 18-inch tile drains. They lead to canals that girdle the playing fields. The canals are supplemented by a 40-acre



Prince Charles and Princess Diana stay in a villa like this when they visit the exclusive club.

break easily if a horse runs into them.

The matches are divided into six seven-and-a-half-minute periods—the chukkers. Total playing time is 45 minutes.

Since the object of the game is for two offensive players to move the ball downfield with their bamboo mallets and get it through the opponent's goal posts, much of the turf damage occurs during the rush downfield to score. Not only do horses

While the resort also has tennis, croquet and golf facilities, it is polo for which it is famed. The game is one of the oldest in recorded history, and is believed to have originated in Persia—the present-day Iran—some 4,000 years ago. The modern game had its start in Punjab, India, when a group of British officers copied it from some tribal horsemen. The word, chukker, dates from that imperial



All fields are topdressed with sand and smoothed with a box scraper prior to fertilizing and irrigating.

continued on page 30

Meeting Coaches' Needs Is the Game at Penn State



Beaver Stadium is packed for the annual Homecoming Game. The top-ranked Nittany Lions play on one of the few natural fields in their conference.

Auto pioneer Henry Ford once decreed that his customers could have their cars in any color they wanted—as long as it was black.

That may have kept prices down, but Ford would have flopped if he'd been in charge of turf maintenance at Pennsylvania State University — better known, of course, as Penn State—in University Park, Pa. Every coach there wants the grass on his or her playing field to be a different length from all the others, it seems, and Bob Hudzik accommodates every last one of them. To him it's all in the game.

At a surprisingly young 30 years of age, he looks as though he could still be hurrying across that same campus from one agronomy class to another, as he did a scant decade ago.

In those days, however, he hardly noticed the turf. Certainly he had no idea that one day he would be responsible for every blade of grass around him—plus the field at Beaver Stadium—plus the University's two golf courses.

Hudzik's rapid rise in turfdom at Penn State, a school justly famous for its turf

expertise, began with a job on the campus grounds staff. A real grass-roots beginning, if you will. When the head of campus maintenance retired, Hudzik was hired to replace him.

Campus and athletic field maintenance were separate at the time. Then the head of athletic field maintenance also retired, and the departments were combined under Hudzik. The next thing he knew, the golf course superintendent had also left and that job was added to his double duties. Of course, it wasn't just a case of filling various vacuums. Talent and performance were the determining factors that made him Penn State's grounds maintenance superintendent.

Now a triple threat, Hudzik has to hustle to keep up with all his duties. "My day usually starts with a bang and ends in a flash," he confides. "There's never a dull moment when you're constantly challenged."

Of all his responsibilities, Hudzik admits that the athletic fields are the most challenging and enjoyable. Willingly he ticks off the reasons. "Maintaining a golf course to high standards is an art," he

allows, "but the challenges are fairly predictable. The resources and time are adequate. Golfers pay a greens fee and expect groomed fairways, tees and greens.

"However," he says firmly, "it's about time we reacted to the needs of players and coaches of other sports played on turf."

Athletic field maintenance involves challenges that push both man and nature to their outer limits, says Hudzik, who seems to thrive on renovating 65 acres of intramural fields in less than one short month each spring.

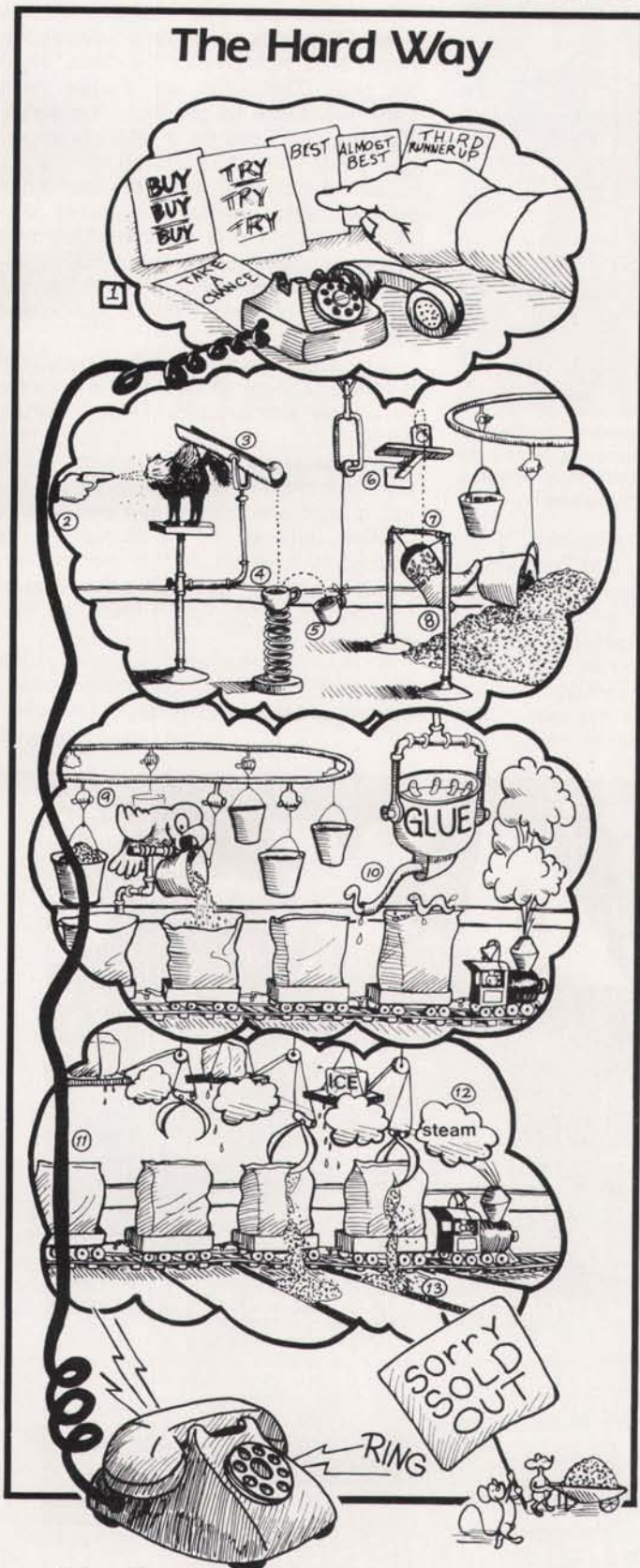
In order to accommodate his campus clients, this busy young man has different maintenance specifications for each area of responsibility. Just keeping them all straight is a job in itself.

For instance, the ladies' field hockey pitches are mowed at one inch. The soccer fields are mowed at 1-1/2 inches. The intramural fields have to be 1-5/8 inches. Each height is based upon the request of the coach in charge of that particular sport.

continued on page 14

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*National Turfgrass Evaluation Program April 1985.

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It's no wonder that Hudzik's mowing crews have to stop frequently to change the mowing height on their Toro Parkmaster and their Jacobsen F-10.

"Each sport has its own special characteristics that can be helped by the height and density of the turf," he points out. "What is right for rugby may not be right for field hockey. The only way to find out is to ask the coach."

To provide turf feedback on Beaver Stadium, one member of Penn State's Nittany Lions coaching staff collects comments about the field from players and other coaches and presents them to Hudzik. Conflicting comments are discussed by the coaching staff before being passed on to him.

Hudzik's year begins when the calendar year is about to end—at the conclusion of the football season. Whether or not the ground is frozen, his crew cuts the sod out of the endzones. By that time, weeks of painting and one-yard stands have taken their toll on the mixture of Kentucky bluegrass and perennial ryegrass, so he resods the areas even if it has to be done in the snow.

Sometimes the endzones are not enough. Beaver Stadium was totally resodded in 1978. After he had consulted with fellow Penn State turf specialists Joe Duich and Tom Watsche, Hudzik selected

a sod from Sporting Valley Turf. It contained Touchdown, Adelphi and Majestic Kentucky bluegrasses and Manhattan and Pennfine perennial ryegrasses.



Hudzik bases his maintenance of the Beaver Stadium field on comments collected by one coach instead of conflicting remarks from various players and coaches.

Why that particular mixture? "Even though some people say that Touchdown is a heavy thatch producer, I find that its aggressiveness aids in quick recovery," Hudzik explains. "The last sod we purchased for the endzones contained Touchdown, Baron and Fylking."

He resods in the fall instead of the spring because that's when he has the

time. Spring is when his crews renovate virtually every sports field on campus—more than 65 acres of playing surface.

The action begins when all the fields are aerified eight to ten times with an Arien Renovator with 3/4-inch hollow tines. "The tines penetrate an average of two to 2-1/2 inches into the surface," Hudzik says. The fields are dragged with chain-link fence to distribute the cores. Five lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. of triple superphosphate (0-46-0) is applied.

Springtime also finds the perennial ryegrass fields being overseeded with more Pennfine and Manhattan from a Jacobsen 548 Aeroseeder. This is followed by an application of 1-1/2 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. of nitrogen from sulfur-coated urea (SCU).

"Our experience proves that perennial ryegrass is tough to beat in this area for intramural and practice fields," Hudzik explains.

Next he gives the grass a good drink: Over two miles of portable aluminum irrigation pipe are moved from one field to another until all the fields have been soaked to a depth of five inches. The result is a nearly miraculous recovery of 65 acres of sports turf in less than four weeks.

As Hudzik's crew removes the irrigation pipe from the fields, intramural soccer, football and field hockey teams take over.

continued on page 16

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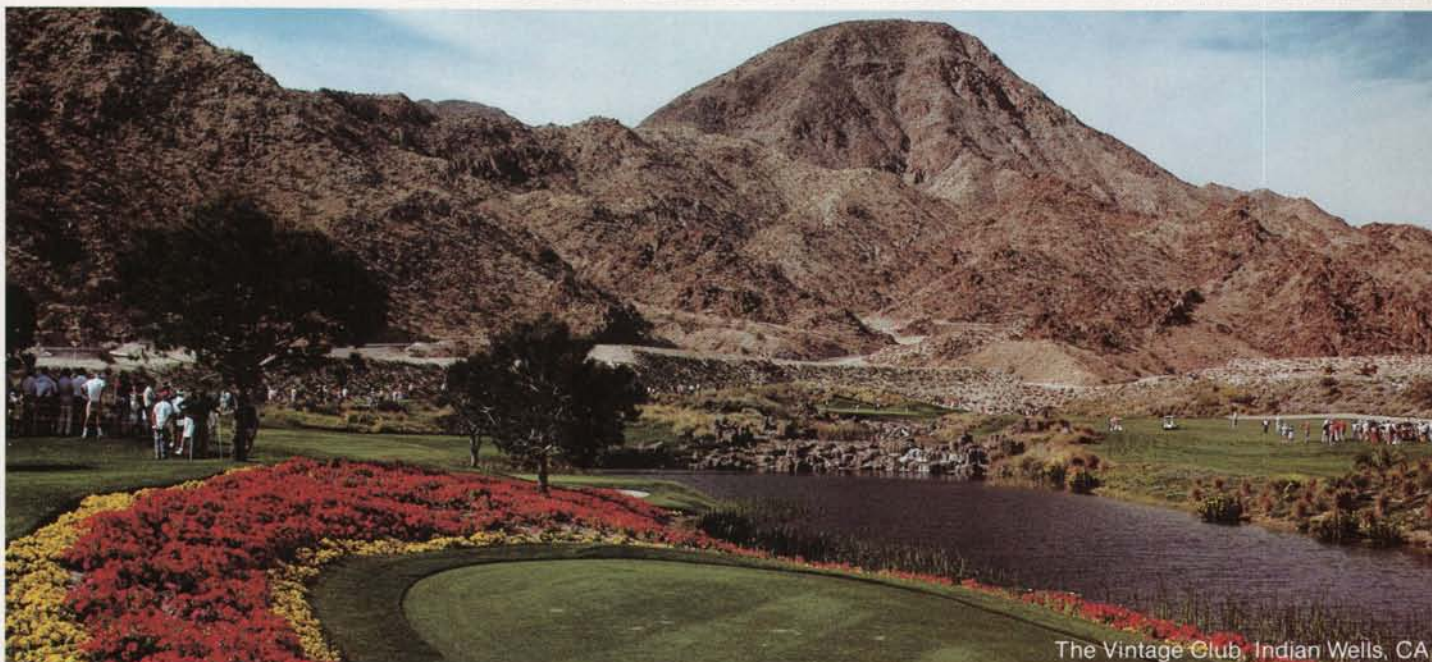
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The stadium field is mowed at 7/8-inch three times per week using a Ransomes 230D with vacuum for clippings.

Penn State

continued from page 14

When the spring semester is winding to a close, soccer and football camps begin.

Although a big believer in aerification, Hudzik doesn't like to aerify during the playing season. Aerification during the season appears to encourage surface damage, he has discovered: "The cleats seem to rip up recently aerified areas more easily."

In September the fields receive another 1-1/4 lbs. of nitrogen per 1,000 sq. ft. of sulfur-coated urea before intramurals begin again.

If the intramural fields are pampered, the field at Beaver Stadium receives an even higher level of care. The crew does everything humanly possible for Penn State except win the football games.

After the spring scrimmages the field is aerified eight to ten times. Next it is overseeded in two directions with a Jacobsen Aeroseeder. Three Kentucky bluegrasses (Touchdown, Baron and Fylking) and two perennial ryegrasses (Manhattan and Pennfine) are cut into the topsoil.

The groove seeder removes nearly all thatch built up during the previous season. Three dump trucks full of thatch were swept up by a Rogers Sweeper last spring.

At that point the field looks like a disaster area to the casual observer—brown and very thin.

Hudzik's crew finishes the spring work with two lbs. of phosphorus per 1,000 sq. ft.; 3/4 lb. of nitrogen in the form of an 18:5:9 fertilizer containing urea and sulfur-coated urea; and 12 lbs. of active ingredient per acre of Tupersan (siduron) to keep crabgrass seed brought up during cultivation from germinating.

Two four-inch Wade Rain aluminum irrigation lines are laid parallel from endzone to endzone. Three-inch laterals branch off the main lines and Rain Bird impact sprinkler heads are attached to these. The field is soaked to a depth of five inches. Fertilizer and preemergence herbicide are also watered into the rootzone.

A 1-1/2-lbs.-per-sq.-ft. application of straight sulfur-coated urea is made in late May. Hudzik doesn't want to risk problems with diseases—especially pythium—so he uses preventive applications of fungicides throughout the summer. He alternates between Boyleton, Chipco 26019, Daconil 2787 and Subdue.

The work goes on. In mid-June Hudzik applies a tank mix of MCP, 2,4-D, and dicamba to the field to control any broad-leaf weeds. The field is watered as needed and mowed three times a week at 7/8 of an inch, using a Ransomes 230D with grass catcher.

In August, having done all he can, Hudzik surrenders the field to the Nittany Lions football team for scrimmages. Divots made during these practices are toppedressed with a mix of 70 percent sand, 20 percent peat moss and 10 percent topsoil.

Since most of Penn State's rivals have artificial turf fields, Hudzik must also maintain an 80-yard field of AstroTurf at the team's practice facility. The squad will practice on plastic for two or three hours a week before the game. However, the majority of their workouts are still on natural turf.

With so many balls in the air at one time, it's impossible for Hudzik to specialize in any one area. "I call on extension very often for advice and counsel," he explains. "A turf education certainly has come in handy. To avoid surprises I keep in close touch with the coaches and with Herb Schmidt, the assistant to the dean. This allows me to get the most out of my budget and crew in scheduling my work."

Having one person in charge of both campus and athletic turf eliminates duplication of machinery and effort, he points out: "The set-up at Penn State wasn't originally planned to be this way, but it seems to work out best."

It does when the Numero Uno of turf is named Hudzik, because the man has a class act. When it comes to maintaining Penn State's sod in mint condition, he has shown that he is a Cadillac, not a Ford. ▶

FEBRUARY WEEKEND PACKED WITH SPORTS TURF

Circle February 1-2, 1986, on your calendar, call your travel agent and make plans to be in San Francisco for the Annual Sports Turf Managers Association Conference, held this year in conjunction

with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

You don't even have to miss a day of work; fly in Friday night. You'll be up early on Saturday because educational ses-

sions start at Moscone Convention Center at 8:15 a.m. More than 30 different sports turf specialists from around the world will speak before the clock strikes 5 p.m.

continued on page 18

STMA Educational Program Moscone Convention Center

February 1, 1986

8:15 a.m. Welcome—David Frey, STMA President, Manager, Cleveland Stadium

8:30 Sports Turf Management in the 80's—Dr. James Beard, Texas A&M

8:45 Sports Turf in the U.K.—Dr. Peter Hayes, Director of Sports Turf Research Institute, Bingley, England

9:00 Grasses on the Horizon—Dr. Vic Gibeault, University of California

9:15 Aerification—Dr. Paul Reike, Michigan State University

9:30 Sand Topdressing—Dr. William Davis, University of California

9:45 New Ideas in Sports Turf—Dr. William Daniel, Turf Services Inc.

10:00 Questions and Answers for Previous Speakers

10:30 Sports Turf in San Francisco—Barney Barron, Parks Dept.

10:45 School and Park Problems—Michael Schiller, STMA Vice President, Arthur Cleason Co.

11:00 Multi-Use Stadia—David Frey, Steve Wightman, Mile High Stadium

11:30 Problem Solution Panel—Dr. Jack Butler, Colorado State University; Dr. Robert Carrow, University of Georgia; Dr. William Knoop, Texas A&M; Dr. Richard Skogley, University of Rhode Island; Dr. John Madison (retired), University of California.

12:00 Luncheon Speaker—John Macik, Sports Medicine Coordinator, National Football League. "Are Injuries Avoidable?"

1:30 The Sports Turf Manager—Harry Gill, Milwaukee Stadium

1:45 Quality Construction—John Souter, Turf Consultant, Scotland

2:00 Baseball Field Construction—Karen Ollerton, A-G Sod Farms, Phoenix, AZ.

2:15 Care in Construction—Tim Bowyer, President, Southern Turf Nurseries, Tifton, GA.

2:30 Event Coordination—Constance Borg, The Rose Bowl

2:45 Innovations—Tom Mascaro, Turf Consultant, Miami, FL.

3:00 Equipment Selection Panel—Roger Thomas, Jacobsen; Richard Dillon, Toro; Eric Ramsey, Ransomes; Clarke Staples, Ryan

3:40 Baseball Infields—Mark Razum, Oakland Athletics

3:55 College Fields—Jim Long, College of Holy Cross

4:10 Pac-10 Sports—Chuck Raetzman, University of Arizona

4:40 The Future—Fred Grau, President, Musser Foundation

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Sunday will find you boarding a bus for a close-up of Candlestick Park and Kesar Stadium. In addition, you can visit Moscone Center, where the largest collection of turf products in the United States will be on display for the Golf Course Superintendents of American Trade Show. When you catch your plane Sunday night you probably will have experienced the two most worthwhile days of your sports turf career.

If you can arrange a few days off, then the GCSAA has seminars the week before and two days after the STMA Conference. The GCSAA Show floor is open Sunday through Tuesday for hands-on evaluation of products from more than 230 companies supplying the turf industry.

For more information on the GCSAA STMA Conference call 1-800-GSA-SUPT.

MONSANTO CONSOLIDATES ASTROTURF OPERATIONS

Monsanto Company is consolidating all Astroturf operations and locating the Recreational Product Division in Dalton,

GA, site of the Astroturf manufacturing plant. Functions currently handled in St. Louis and St. Charles, MO, will be relocated to Dalton, says business group Director David Orrick. This will enable Monsanto to compete more effectively in the marketplace and to control all aspects of production, marketing and service for Astroturf.

The Sport Install subsidiary and business operations in St. Louis will be located in Georgia by the year end. "At that time, employees of the restructured organization will be in place," says Orrick.

Monsanto President Richard Mahoney recently announced the layoff of approximately 1,500 employees in St. Louis, MO, in an effort to withdraw from marginal businesses and production facilities that "no longer have strategic importance" to the company.

NEW MIAMI STADIUM GETS GREEN LIGHT

Developers of a new Miami Dolphins stadium complex were allowed a zoning variance in September paving the way for a new home for Don Shula's football dynasty by the start of the 1987 season. Residents contested the zoning change but failed to change the minds of Dade County Commissioners.

The Dolphins are exploring a Prescrip-

tion Athletic Turf (PAT) System similar to the one in Miami's Orange Bowl. Construction will begin November 15 on the 73,000 seat, \$90 million complex.

Like many municipal stadia, the Orange Bowl markets the field for a multitude of events to generate revenue. In the past three years during football season, the Orange Bowl hosted Michael Jackson, Prince, and Bruce Springsteen. It also serves as home field for the University of Miami and a number of area high schools, as well as the site of the Orange Bowl Classic.

The Dolphins organization, by owning its stadium, can control the type of events using its field. Joe Robbie, majority owner of the Dolphins, will lease the land for the facility from the county for a nominal fee, conceivably avoiding a large property tax burden.

Dale Sandin, field manager for the Orange Bowl, told *sportsTURF* that Dade County voters turned down three different bond issues to modernize the Orange Bowl. Robbie's primary interest in a new stadium is that it would be more modern than the Orange Bowl. "I think Mr. Robbie would have stayed with the Orange Bowl had voters passed the last \$55 million improvement bond issue," Sandin said. "The stadium is 50 years old and the last modernization was in 1965. We are budgeting for new seats this year. The PAT System was installed in 1975."

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Baseball and Ryegrass Fit the Need in North Texas

By William Knoop



Baseball fields are fertilized four times; prior to seeding, in late fall, early spring and late spring.

Spring comes early in the South and so does baseball. In fact, baseball comes so early that there may not be grass to play on, at least no green grass.

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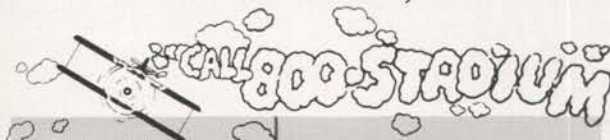
Baseball's season of play and the bermudagrass plant's growth pattern just

don't fit together well in many parts of the South. The fact is that it may be toward the middle or end of the baseball season

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