

# FROM THE PUBLISHER



A new season is underway and I'm excited. What excites me as I look around is that there is more and more interest in the sports turf market. Even though golf courses have had recognition for some time, even more acknowledgment is coming forward. Suppliers are beginning to realize that there is a definite line between the golf course superintendent, parks and recreation personnel, sports complex managers and the landscape contractor.

I have felt from the onset that articles should be written with the superintendent and the sports turf manager in mind. That is the reason for starting *sportsTURF* magazine in the first place. I guess it takes a little while for the nickel to drop. I am delighted to see the whole area of sports turf receiving more and more recognition, and rightfully so.

By the way, if you didn't attend the golf course show in Phoenix, AZ, recently, you missed an opportunity to review all the latest in equipment, irrigation, and even some new chemical applications. It was the largest show ever held by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. More than 12,000 turf managers viewed the more than 300 exhibits at the show.

We are all aware of the impact the Environmental Protection Agency is having upon our industry. With the pesticide sensitivity problem constantly being thrown in our faces, we need to present a unified front with all the forces we can muster.

Herbicides, insecticides and fungicides are important tools for the professional manager. We have to triple our efforts to stay informed in the proper and safe use of pesticides. Ask older superintendents how tough it was to control diseases and pests before we had these products at our disposal. They'll describe in detail the hours of labor needed to control insects before chemicals came along. With today's high cost of labor, we can't afford to go back to the old way.

Pesticides are really no different than medicines. After all, there are medicines that can kill you if they are used improperly—and yet those same medicines save millions of live each day. If we were to stop using pesticides on our agricultural crops, we wouldn't be able to feed the world very long.

Another area that is becoming critical and will become more so in the next few years concerns our most precious natural resource . . . water. Even the Pacific Northwest, with seemingly unlimited rainfall, has experienced droughts in the past two years. Schools, parks and playgrounds in the Northwest are adding irrigation systems, at least portable ones, to save their sports fields during droughts. Golf courses and sports fields in virtually every state of the union should have the advantage of irrigation.

Irrigation systems actually enable sports turf managers to save water. They are the tool which controls water application, eliminating waste while protecting the most important parts of our landscapes from drought.

If we are to be the masters of our own destinies and not be highly regulated by outside sources, we need to pay more attention to these sensitive areas. More importantly, we must be able to show the bureaucrats and the public at large how we are handling the situation. In other words, we need to become highly visible, maybe not as individuals, but surely through the various associations that serve us.

It is incumbent upon each of us to support these organizations. Through membership in the Sports Turf Managers Association, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and its local chapters, and the Professional Grounds Management Society, we can lend our strength and have these organizations represent us most effectively. Associations were created for more than just social camaraderie. They are tools that we can use effectively in keeping us updated, and by educational seminars, they can spread the word of the part we are playing to control the environment. Associations can be a great podium for better public relations. Let's use them.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. E. Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a background of horizontal lines.



# THE FRONT OFFICE

OPINION PAGE



## TO DOME OR NOT TO DOME . . .

**T**hat is the question being asked by numerous stadium authorities around the country this winter. In their quest to have a facility that meets the needs of all types of events 12 months a year, stadium authorities are re-examining the advantages of both natural and artificial turf. As a result, proponents of both surfaces are going back to their drawing boards and coming up with some pretty fascinating ideas.

A stadium authority is an organization established by a city or state government to wade through all the facts about stadium construction

and operation and to figure out methods of financing. Their motivation is often to attract a professional sports franchise to the city—or to prevent one from leaving. Sometimes the competition gets pretty tough.

The true test really is the fans. It doesn't matter what type of stadium a city has if the fans don't buy tickets. Anything that discourages fans from attending games, such as consistently bad weather, a losing team, or a bad field, hurts the profitability of a sports franchise. A few years of losses and any team owner starts looking for greener pastures.

To help their team's bottom line, more and more cities are looking into dome stadiums. They realize quickly that domes cost considerably more than outdoor stadiums to build. This fact alone forces a stadium to schedule non-sporting events to make up the difference. Non-sporting events, such as concerts, swap meets, auto shows and tractor pulls, require imaginative approaches to protecting sports turf. The field has to support all types of activities for the dome to pay for itself.

Realizing this, the city of Toronto has planned a retractable dome for its new stadium, under construction a few blocks from old Exhibition Stadium on the shores of Lake Erie. Toronto Blue Jays fans have made it perfectly clear to Robert Hunter, vice president of Stadium Corp., that they do not want to sacrifice the things that make outdoor sports special just so other events can use the same facility. The retractable dome is part of an effort to satisfy the fans.

It's the second request by Blue Jays fans that has Hunter and his stadium engineers concerned. The fans want natural turf too. In fact, they have enlisted the support of Toronto Star sportswriter John Robertson. He has interviewed experts from all over the continent to defend natural turf against the standard questions raised by developers of indoor stadiums.

In February, Rose Mary Branson, president of the Blue Jays Fan Club, organized a "Grass Day" to publicize the club's position on the stadium turf and to provide both the fans and the press with answers. Steve Wightman, turf manager of Mile High Stadium in Denver, CO, was able to satisfy most of the concerns the stadium authority had about protecting natural turf from non-sporting events. Toro's Dr. Jim Watson and Laurel Meade and Dr. William Daniel of Prescription Athletic Turf also fielded questions from the press, the stadium authority and the fans. Rarely has sports turf gained so much attention prior to construction.

Before next summer, a decision will be made. It's important to note that, regardless of the final decision, the Toronto project has brought new life to natural turf.

You can't force a professional team to stay in a city. Build a dome stadium that fans don't like and the team will still have to leave. We commend Toronto's Stadium Corp. for the way it has listened to fans so far. We hope stadium authorities in other cities learn from Toronto.

*Bruce Shank*

# EVENTS

CALENDAR

## MARCH

**24** Third Annual Sports Turf Institute, Cal Poly University, Pomona, CA. Contact: Kent Kurtz, Dept. of Horticulture, Cal Poly University, 3801 W. Temple Ave., Pomona, CA 91768. (714) 869-2176.

**24** USGA Green Section/Southern California Golf Association Joint Meeting, Newport Beach, CA. Contact: Kevin Heaney, SCGA, P.O. Box 3375, Tustin, CA 92681. (714) 980-3630.

## APRIL

**4-6** National School Boards Association Annual Exposition, Moscone Convention Center, San Francisco, CA. Contact: NSBA, 1680 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314. (703) 838-6722.

**10-14** National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA. Contact: NIRSA, Gill Coliseum, Room 221, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR 97331. (503) 754-2088.

**13-14** Southeastern Turfgrass Conference, Georgia Coastal Plain Experiment Station, Tifton, GA. Contact: Dr. Glenn Burton, Dept. of Agronomy, Coastal Plain Experiment Station, Tifton, GA 31793. (912) 386-3353.

**27-29** Turf and Landscape Institute, Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, CA. Contact: Ed McNeil, 2492 East Mountain St., Pasadena, CA 91104. (818) 798-1715.

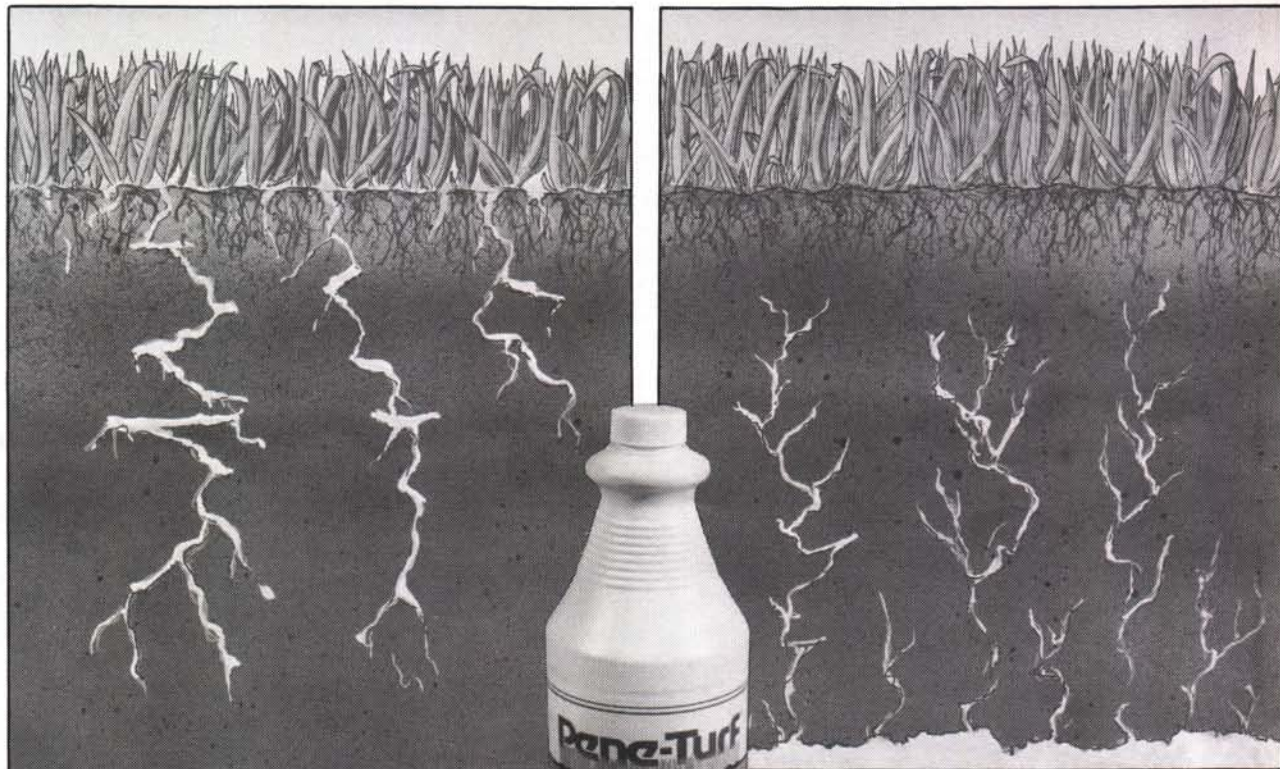
## MAY

**20** North Carolina Turf & Landscape Field Day, North Carolina State University Turf Field Center, Raleigh, NC. Contact: J. M. DiPaola, NCSU, Box 7620, Raleigh, NC 27695-7620. (919) 737-2657.



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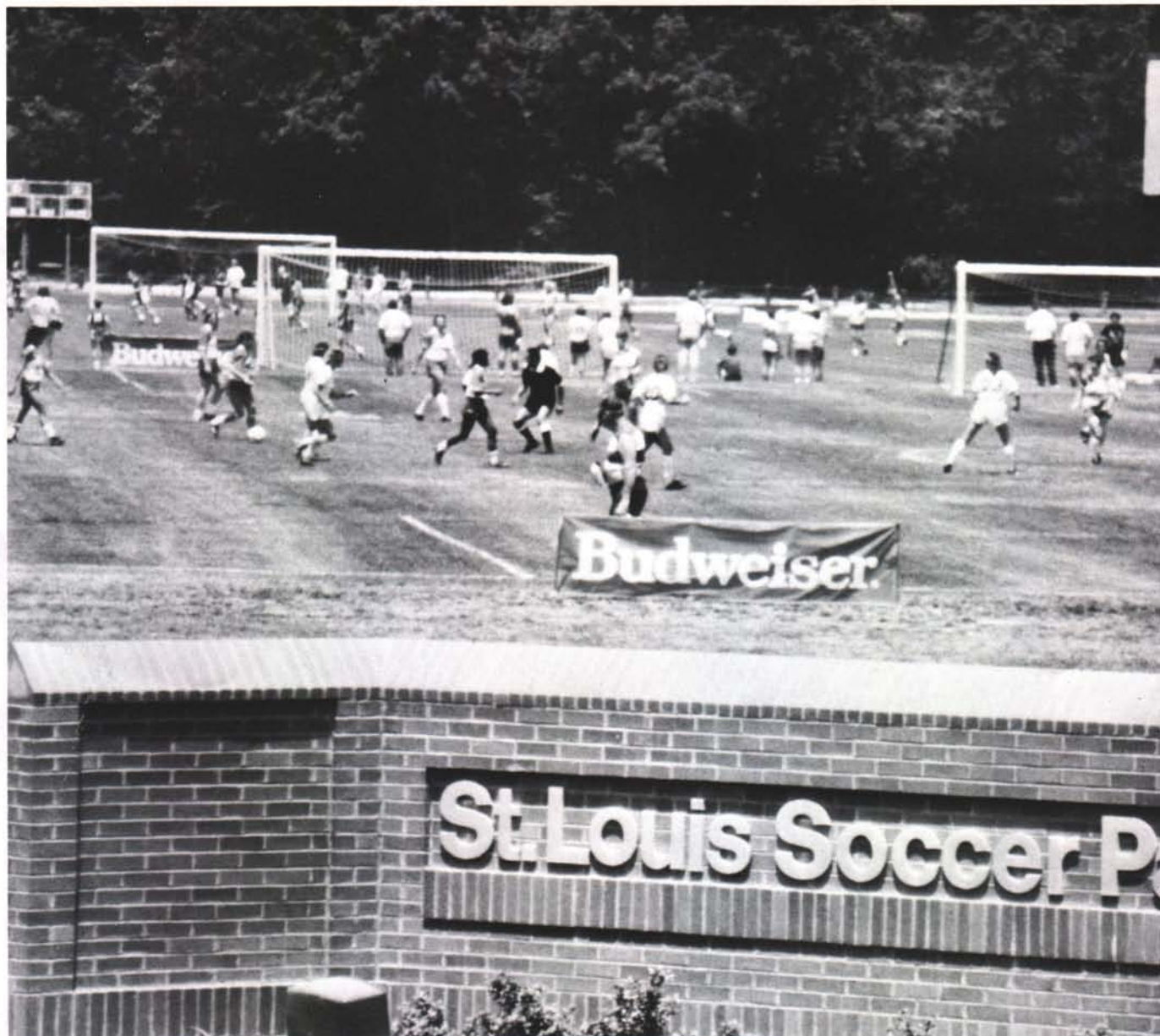


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What was once 34 acres of idle flood plain is now busy with soccer games year-round.

# St. Louis Park Carries Torch For U.S. Soccer

**T**here is a new spirit in St. Louis today. It's a devotion to soccer that brings out players and spectators whose enthusiasm has not been matched since Missourians welcomed back Charles Lindbergh from his solo trans-Atlantic flight in 1927. They loved Lindy and his monoplane aptly named the "Spirit of St. Louis."

Today a similar spirit is building in the community for the sport the rest of the world calls football. The city and the game are inseparable. Only two other landmarks approach soccer in significance, the 600-foot-tall arch on the banks of the Mississippi and the brewery that's headquartered there, Anheuser-Busch.

The riverfront city has a rich heritage as the once bustling port for paddlewheelers hauling cotton and slaves up and down the Mississippi. Mark Twain's legendary accounts of life on the "big muddy Mississippi" were written after he served as captain





Gardens, and Williamsburg, VA, it always claims St. Louis as its home in all its advertising and public relations.

The Busch family owns the St. Louis Baseball Cardinals and built Busch Stadium, which serves as the hub of downtown St. Louis. August "Gussie" Busch Jr. brought pennants and notoriety to St. Louis with baseball players such as Stan Musial, Ken Boyer, Curt Flood and Bob Gibson. When Sportsman's Park started to crumble after decades of use, he built a stadium that was not only practical for baseball and football, but attractive as well, to serve as a foundation for urban renewal. Only the Arch dominates the city more than Busch Stadium.

When the St. Louis Youth Soccer Association (SLYSA) approached Dennis Long, president of Anheuser-Busch, eight years ago for help in creating a soccer complex in St. Louis County, he did not hesitate. St. Louis has been recognized as a soccer city for decades. The Catholic Youth Council (CYC) in the city embraced the sport in the early '50s as a healthy, inexpensive form of competition for hundreds of parochial school students. Public schools and recreation departments in the city and county quickly responded to the growing popularity of this international sport. As a result, a harvest of talented kids growing up playing soccer have made St. Louis the capital of soccer in North America. St. Louis University's high ranking in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) tournaments each year is continuing proof of the city's dominance in the sport. Each year soccer teams from around the world come to St. Louis to test their skills against American kids who grew up like they did, playing soccer.

Anheuser-Busch's involvement with youth soccer started in 1971 when the Busch Soccer Club of St. Louis was organized by Long who was then with the company's Busch Gardens entertainment division. The club's 14 boys teams and three girls teams have captured numerous Missouri state titles, Midwest regional championships, North American titles and even international titles such as the Shamrock Games (Ireland) championship crown in 1984 and a tie for the London Cup in 1985.

Long has maintained his dedication to soccer since becoming president of the company. His international ties developed through the sport have contributed to the company's success in marketing to countries where soccer is the major sport, especially in England, Ireland and Scotland. Anheuser-Busch didn't have to wait for the National Football League to play exhibition games at Wembley Stadium to get its message out to British sports fans.

When Long had the chance to help create a soccer park in Fenton, MO, a southwest suburb of St. Louis, he did all he could to raise money and donated the use of Anheuser-Busch staff to make it a reality. Plans were drawn for a seven-field complex on donated land in the Merramac River flood plain. Everything was to be first class. It had to be to withstand heavy play and periodic floods during the fall and spring. Fruco Engineering of St. Louis specified a network of drain pipe on a graded base covered with 12 inches of selected sand topped off with a 4-inch layer of 90 percent sand and 10 percent soil. Soil scientists generally recommend at least 80 percent medium-size sand for sand/soil fields. The fields had to drain well to recover quickly.

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of one of these riverboats. Charles Lindbergh grew up here, flew mail planes out of the city and started the first leg of his famous trans-Atlantic flight at Lindbergh Field.

It was this heritage and the city's importance as a center of trade for the country's breadbasket that attracted many immigrants to establish businesses here. It was two immigrants from Germany who decided to establish a brewery here more than 125 years ago. Eberhardt Anheuser and his son-in-law, Adolphus Busch, took a small brewery in 1860 and built the foundation for what is today the world's largest brewery.

When it comes to sports, few companies are as deeply involved as Anheuser-Busch, Inc. Sports sponsorship is part of the company's tradition along with its dedication to the riverfront city where it was founded. Although Anheuser-Busch has played a large role in the development of other cities, such as Tampa, FL, site of Busch



**One day after a 12-inch snowfall, the artificial fields at the soccer park were the only fields in the area available for games.**





The subgrade of both artificial fields was covered with geotextile fabric before perforated drain tubing and sand were installed.

#### St. Louis Park

*continued from page 15*

The fields and stands were built by volunteers with some help from contractors. But, as construction proceeded and costs climbed, some of the original field specifications had to be compromised. The decision was made to increase the number of drain lines to make up for only six inches of sand and a topsoil that was 70 percent construction sand and 30 percent soil. A Rain Bird irrigation system with 24 heads on 60-foot centers was installed on each field. There were six zones per field, each controlling four heads.

Long arranged to have Lee Redman, superintendent of Bellerive Country Club in Creve Cour, consult on turf seeding and maintenance. Chuck Hutton, Scotts technical representative, also helped select seed and set up a maintenance program. Lights were installed on three out of the seven fields. Although things were tight, it appeared that everything was under control.

Then, in 1982, the Merramac swelled over its banks twice causing damage to two fields and upsetting plans for construction of a 10,000 square foot building for locker rooms and meetings. Without the floods, the SLY-SA volunteers may have been able to



The goal box is painted on one of the new fields.

manage the facility successfully. It was becoming evident that more compromises would be necessary.

Long could not bear to see the promising soccer center struggle. Anheuser-Busch's standards were high and sponsors had given generously of their time and money to make the center a reality. His experience with the company's entertainment division gave him an idea. What if Anheuser-Busch bought the facility and placed it in its entertainment division? It could become a conference center in addition to a top-quality soccer center for local, national and international games. It could serve as the home park for SLYSA, St. Louis University Billikens and the Busch Soccer Club. Suddenly the potential of the center took on new dimensions. The transaction was completed in November 1985.

Now the problem that had to be addressed was how one facility was going to withstand tremendous use and maintain the quality fields necessary to attract tournaments? Furthermore, soccer play was heaviest in the fall and winter when the fields were least able to recover from damage. The center needed a way to stay open in all kinds of weather without ruining the fields.

Long knew international soccer teams would not play tournaments on artificial turf. On the other hand, since Busch Stadium has an Astroturf surface, he was familiar with its advantages in bad weather. In fact, Monsanto, the manufacturer of the artificial surface, is headquartered in St. Louis and Anheuser-Busch has always made an effort to support other St. Louis companies. By replacing two of the fields with Astroturf System-90, some of the load could be taken off the natural fields during bad weather. The drain-through asphalt base, pad and carpet could withstand flooding and snow storms and be in play before the natural fields would be dry enough to play on.

"The fact of the matter is," says park manager Mike Krivonack, an eleven-year veteran from Busch Gardens in Tampa, FL, "we can play more than 1,200 games per year on each Astroturf field. We try to keep the number of games on the natural fields down to save the turf. Teams want to play here because there is good turf everywhere, including the goal areas and the center of the fields. By the time schools enter the playoffs, their fields are often worn-out. They know they can call us and be able to play their important tournament games on a good field. We had a foot of snow two months ago and played on the Astroturf fields the next night. Almost nothing stops us."

Two things drive home the point that the St. Louis Soccer Center hasn't abandoned its support of natural turf. Field Number One, the field directly in front of the conference center and site of all major tournaments is natural. Secondly, the soccer center hired Pat Gray, former superintendent of Paradise Valley Golf Course, as turf manager.

"I took a lot of kidding from other golf course superintendents when I took this job," admits Gray. "They thought maintaining ar-



tificial turf was beneath a superintendent." Gray has a degree in agronomy from Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield, MO. "I just felt that the artificial fields would enable me to make the five natural fields the best in the country. How many superintendents get a chance to have the best golf course in the country?"

Gray had just begun to work at the soccer center when construction started on the two AstroTurf fields. "We had the original specifications for the natural fields, but we didn't know how they were actually built." As Fred Webber Construction Company began excavating for the base of the artificial fields, Gray watched like an archeologist trying to discover what lay beneath the surface. That's when he learned the sand base and topsoil were shallower than planned and the drainage lines were closer together. "Knowing what's under the turf has been a great help in modifying field maintenance," Gray adds.

Webber graded the subbase to trenches running lengthwise down the fields 20 feet apart. Six-inch perforated drain pipe was placed in the trenches and both fields were completely covered with a geotextile blanket. A thick layer of washed, three-quarter-inch gravel was spread over the fabric and graded to be flat. Four inches of "pop-corn asphalt," were carefully laid over the gravel to provide a smooth-as-possible surface.

Sport Install, the division of Monsanto that installs AstroTurf, took over from Webber at this point. The two fields which appeared like parking lots, were sprayed with fire hoses to check for drainage through the asphalt. Specialized equipment was brought onto the fields. First the pad was carefully stretched and seamed, then the crew started installing the AstroTurf. The conversion of the asphalt base to acres of bright green carpet was dramatic, even for Gray. As the lines were painted on the new fields, people driving by the park stopped to watch.

Walking on the fields for the first time, Long and Frans Van Balkom, director of coaching for the Busch Soccer Club, felt that the soccer center would finally be what they had hoped for, a standard for other soccer centers to follow. Now, they could provide relief for the natural fields and keep both surfaces in play throughout the year.

Wasting no time, Gray immediately took one natural field out of play for renovation and "a rest" and asked the soccer center to reduce the schedule on all natural fields. "Each year the fields get better because we can control them better," says Gray. Players have learned to stay off fields that are roped off for maintenance. They are beginning to appreciate the difference in the quality of the fields resulting from controlled use.

Twice a year, Gray borrows equipment from Busch Stadium to scrub the artificial fields. A degreasing agent is sprayed on the field first. Then fire hoses connected to quick couplers on the edges of the field are directed in front of the machine with large revolving brushes as it scrubs the AstroTurf. The crew also goes over the field with a Tennant Sweeper after each game.

"We've had downpours and played ten minutes later," Gray says, almost in amazement. "I can't deny the artificial fields are pretty warm in the summer, but we can schedule nearly all games on the natural fields then. The point is we can use those fields when we need them most, in the winter.

Gray has ordered tarps for the two artificial fields in case of floods. "I want to make sure silt deposited by a flood won't enter the drain-through system. We can deep aerify the natural fields and topdress with sand after a flood. In a few instances we've had some minor resodding, but the natural fields drain and hold together well so far. It takes the river a few days to crest and that gives Gray time to remove the goal posts and bleachers and to cover the artificial fields.

Since the artificial fields take some of the pressure off Gray, he concentrates his efforts on the natural fields, especially the number one field. "We schedule about 50 games per year on the main field," says Gray. "After each game we touch up and overseed any divots. We use spade forks to fluff up the soil in the goal areas as recommended by a visiting soccer coach from the Dutch Sports Federation.

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## St. Louis Park

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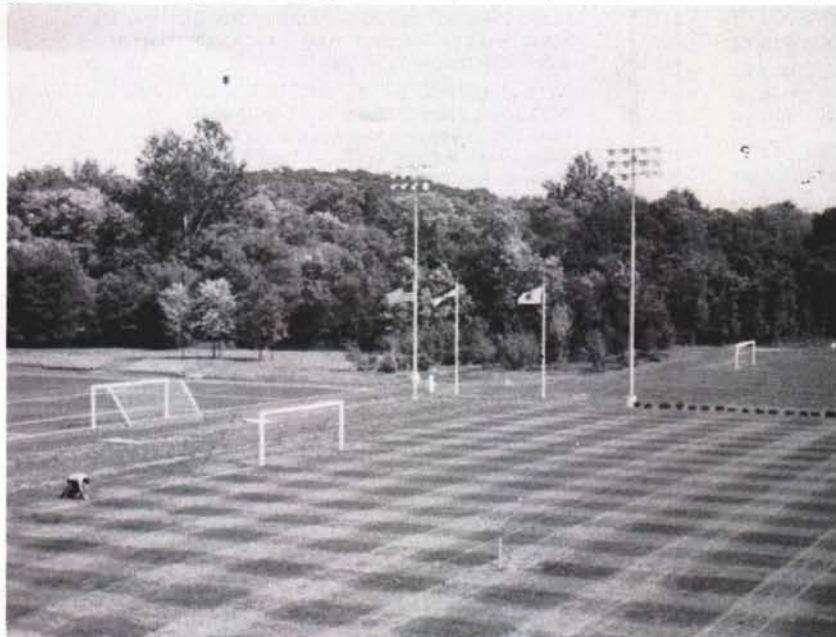
The other fields are used for up to 200 games per year. Once a month during the playing season all fields are aerated with a pull-behind drum aerifier. Once a year Gray uses a European machine called a Verti-Drain which drives solid tines more than a foot into the soil and provides a lifting motion to open up the soil below. He topdresses the fields with sand prior to using the deep aerifier to increase the percentage of sand in the soil.

In the fall, he overseeds each field with an Olathe slicer/seeder in two directions. Usually a combination of three Kentucky bluegrasses and three perennial ryegrasses

is in the hopper to limit the chance of diseases attacking any particular variety. The main field receives about 600 pounds of seed and the other fields get 350 pounds.

In the spring, all the fields receive an application of a starter fertilizer containing siduron, a preemergence herbicide that does not prevent turf seed from germinating. Every five weeks starting in May, Gray applies a 24:4:12 fertilizer containing IBDU, a slow-release nitrogen. "I avoid applications of fertilizer, especially ammonium sulfate, during hot weather," Gray states, "because the cleats on the kids' shoes can break up the fertilizer granules and cause the turf to burn."

In early spring a leaf-spot fungicide is applied, to protect the fields from any major



The main field is mowed in two directions and marked in preparation for a tournament.

problems with diseases. Gray reports the fields have not experienced any problems with insects.

Twice a year, soil samples are tested at a laboratory. Gray is trying to get the soil pH down from its current 7.3 to 6.5 with applications of sulfur. "Right now the fields are at about 7.2," Gray reports.

The fields are irrigated daily during the late spring and summer and as needed during the remainder of the year. The sandy fields dry out quickly requiring two cycles on hot, summer days. Gray runs one zone at a time per field. Since there are six zones per field, each with four heads, cycles can be adjusted to keep the goal areas and center of the field from getting too wet. "These areas get compacted quickly if they aren't relatively dry during games," Gray points out. All water is obtained from a well on site.

The fields are mowed three to four times a week with a Ransomes 213D triplex reel mower. The main field is cut at 1½ inches and the other fields a little higher since more games are played on them. Thatch has not been a problem since the seeder provides a light verticutting action.

Gray plans to rest one field each fall for major renovation. He takes the field out of play in August, heavily aerates it, topdresses with sand, reseeds with the slicer/seeder, and drags it. The field is not returned to play until the following spring. "We can use the field if we have to for a few games on a heavy week," states Gray, "but in general the field is not scheduled for any games."

Major improvements have been made to the soccer center since Anheuser-Busch took it over. Diane Padgett, the company's landscape architect, adds more trees and shrubs to the center's 34 acres each year. Hundreds of white and Austrian pines, flowering crabapples and weeping willows frame the entrance to the park as well as the buildings and stands. Ewes are being planted between some of the fields to resemble soccer parks in Europe. The facility also hired Mark Johnson to work full-time on the grounds so Gray can concentrate on the fields. The soil removed when the two artificial fields were constructed has been used to create a landscaped berm which also serves to hold back flood water.

Long went so far as to commission a seven-foot high bronze statue of a soccer player from world-famous sculptor Rudy Torinni. The artist designed the statue after viewing video tapes of World Cup soccer matches. The work depicts a young player with his eyes riveted to the ball with his foot poised to kick the ball.

Kick walls, practice goals and sand pits for goalie practice have been added for St. Louis University practices and numerous soccer clinics held during the year by Van Balkom. Few facilities offer the complete range of soccer training equipment that the soccer park offers.

The main exhibition field grandstand can seat more than 6,400 spectators. A press box on top of the grandstand with an up-



per deck for filming or taping with complete communications hookups has been added for tournaments and international events. The main field also features an animated scoreboard and marquee that includes a message center. Digital electronic scoreboards have been installed on five other fields. Each scoreboard provides scores on all fields at the same time.

The St. Louis Room in the main building overlooks field number one. Local businesses use the facility for banquets and meetings. Full catering services are now available for weddings and private parties. Long plans to use the expertise of the Busch Gardens entertainment division to develop the soccer park into a full-service conference center. It is the only conference center in the city where conference attendees can watch the action on the field as they eat.

It's soccer that has made and will continue to make the center recognized internationally. In May, the center will host the Olympic qualification match between the U.S. and Canada. Canadian amateurs return to the center in November for the USA/Canada Select Team Invitational. The Tower Lions of London, the Gweedore Soccer Club of Ireland and the West German National University Champions has already played there to date.

In addition to international events, the U.S. Soccer Federation Open and Amateur Cup finals are scheduled for June and the McGuire and Niotis Cup finals for July. If the St. Louis University Billikens repeat their past performance, the center may host NCAA playoffs. In June, the best high school soccer players in the U.S. will compete in the North/South All-Star Game. All this is in addition to state high school tournaments, the Billikens home games, the Busch Soccer Club home games and numerous clinics and a summer camp presented by Van Balkom.

The 47-year-old Van Balkom, who played his first soccer in Holland at the age of ten, hopes he can consolidate more than 20 years of professional experience for the St. Louis Soccer Center. Working from the St. Louis Soccer Park with both young players and coaches, as he has in Japan, West Germany, Holland, Australia, Hong Kong, Iran and Indonesia, Van Balkom hopes to raise the level of soccer in the U.S. "Soccer has come a long way in this country," he states. "While there has always been outstanding soccer in St. Louis, it was players such as Pele, Carlos Alberto, Frans Beckenbauer and Johan Cruyff who really helped spread the sport over the entire country. Most U.S. coaches forbid players to be creative. The result is that many players work nonstop the entire game but lack the skills and the know-how to take on opponents. Very few players take their own initiative and try to be creative. Those are the very things that serve as the trademarks of the outstanding players."

By taking the game seriously and providing quality facilities for young soccer players to become creative, Van Balkom sees no reason why U.S. players can't inspire

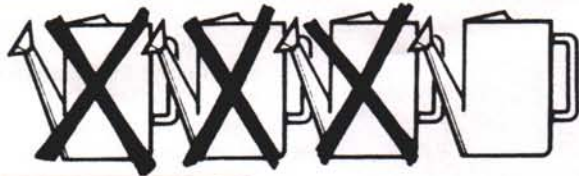
their own country to embrace the sport as European and South American players have. The Busch Soccer Club has begun to produce the kind of players Van Balkom talks about. They include Ty Keough, Jim Bokern, Greg Makowski, Greg Villa and Pat McBride, to name a few. They play for teams such as the St. Louis Steamers, Ft. Lauderdale Strikers, Kansas City Comets, and San Diego Sockers.

It's not just players the center wants to develop. It's also coaches to inspire and mold young players into world-class athletes. Many of the clinics at the park are for coaches.

The demand for soccer facilities is growing

rapidly. But, as Long and Van Balkom know, quality training and playing facilities are necessary to seriously develop soccer in this country. What started out as a plan to provide quality fields for St. Louis kids to play soccer on, has turned into a national launching site for soccer in the U.S. The difference is mainly in the scale which local organizations think compared to a company which thinks big all the time. Dennis Long has brought to the St. Louis Soccer Park an Anheuser-Busch perspective of soccer. This assistance in both the quality of the training and playing facilities might finally be the boost the U.S. had needed for more than 20 years. ☼

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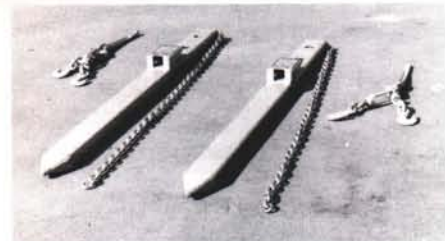
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## DIAMONDS RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE



Joe Torre presents the Beam Clay Award Trophy to the crew of Holy Cross College, Worcester, MA, winner of the college division. Standing (left to right) are Guy Durocher, John Grosnihan, Torre, George Query and Jim Kelsey, president of Partac Peat Corporation.

Fitton Field at Holy Cross College in Worcester, MA, and Heritage Park in Albany, NY, were the best entries in the first Beam Clay Baseball Diamond of the Year Awards. Jim and Bonnie Kelsey of Partac Peat Corp. announced the winners during the recent Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) banquet in Phoenix, AZ. Joe Torre, former manager of the St. Louis Cardinals and Atlanta Braves, presented the loving cups to the winners.

The purpose of the Baseball Diamond of the Year Awards is to recognize excellence and professionalism in maintaining city and college baseball facilities. John Liburdi is

head of grounds at Heritage Park, Albany, NY, home field for the AA Albany-Colonie Yankees. The city-owned Heritage Park has the reputation of being one of the best fields in the Eastern League. Liburdi is the first winner in the park category.

The grounds crew at Holy Cross College in Worcester, MA, won the college category for Fitton Field. The trophy was presented to John Grosnihan, athletic field foreman, Guy Durocher, assistant athletic field foreman, and Guy Query, greenhouse manager. Superintendent of Grounds Jim Long was also present for the ceremonies.

## CONSTRUCTION COSTS PEGGED AT STMA SHOW

Part of the sports turf injury problem is an unrealistically low idea of field construction costs. This is according to Dr. Henry Indyk, turfgrass specialist at Rutgers University, who recently addressed more than 120 sports turf managers during the STMA Annual Conference in Phoenix, AZ. A safe, well-built football field will cost between \$100,000 and \$225,000, Indyk revealed with statistics he has compiled over the past few years. This price includes proper drainage, irrigation, soil modification, grading and sod.

College, park and public school officials need to realize that there is a right way and wrong way to build an athletic field, Indyk said. The right way, if financed over ten years, will cost the institution up to \$40,000 per year plus maintenance expenses. The cost for an artificial surface, Indyk said, would be \$165,000 per year plus maintenance. With proper maintenance and scheduling, a natural field can remain safe during that period, he stated.

This is the first time a recognized expert on athletic fields has gone on record about costs. "With the threat of liability suits from

injuries growing every year, cutting corners during construction just doesn't make sense," he told the group.

The industry needs some type of field safety standards stressed Don Holland, an attorney from Eugene, OR. "If you don't create safety standards yourselves, the tort system will act for you," explained Holland. He used Parker Stadium at Oregon State University as an example. The hardness and condition of the artificial field were recorded every year. When a promising baseball player died as a result of injuries suffered while playing on the field, the records established that the pad should have been replaced sooner. "The real question in the case," said Holland, "was how hard is hard? Standards would have answered that question right away."

More than 25 sports turf experts from the U.S., Canada and England spoke during the one-day conference held in conjunction with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. The GCSAA Conference and Show set a new attendance record of more than 12,000.

STMA banquet speaker Joe Torre told the group that aspiring athletes get bad habits when they play on poor fields regu-