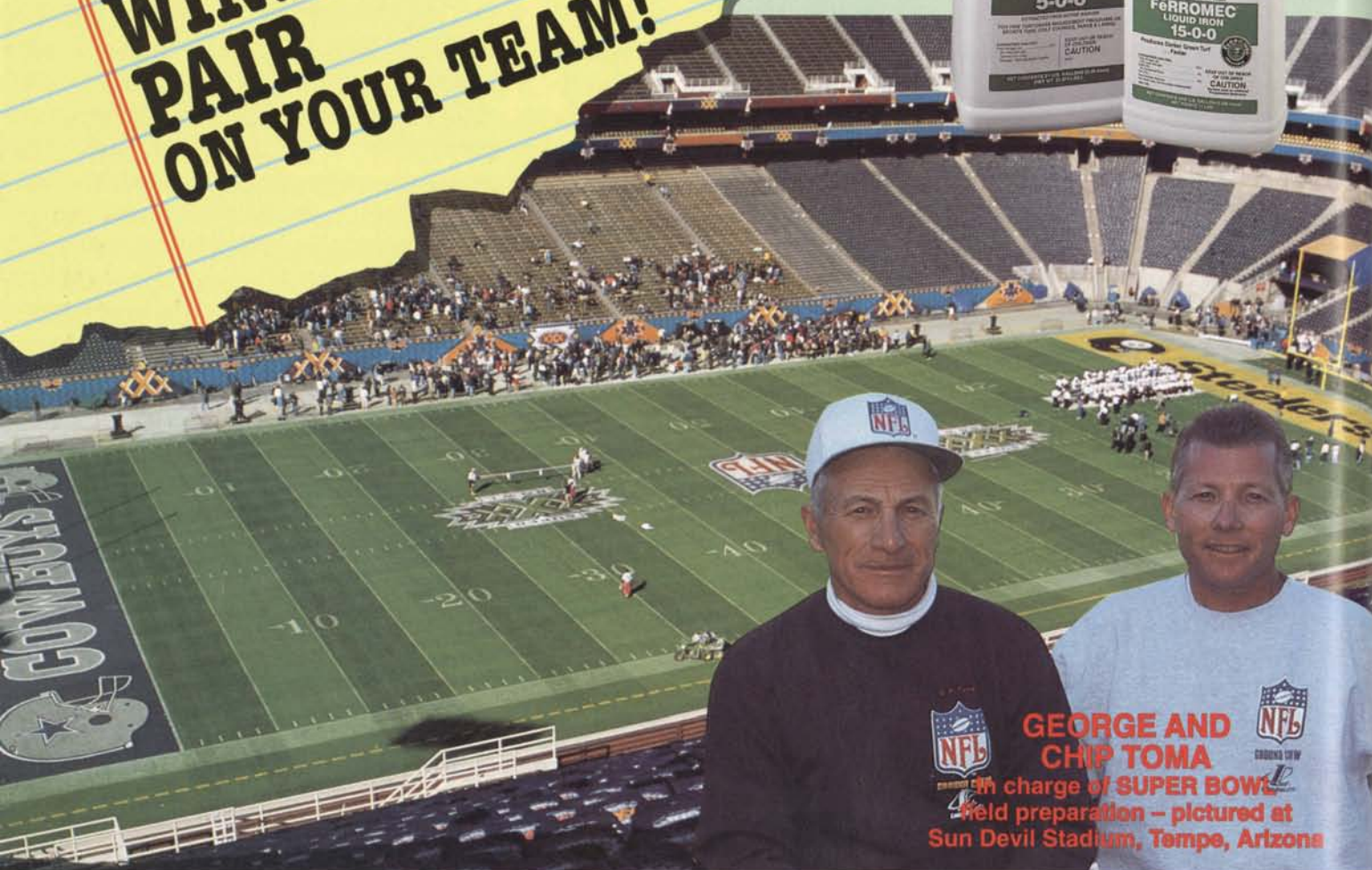


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VOLUME TWELVE, NUMBER THREE

MARCH 1996

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Mower maintenance means more productivity. Eli Luster shows how to prevent most problems that cost you downtime and money.

16 Playability Versus Liability

The million dollar price tag associated with field construction pales in comparison to the costs of a lawsuit. To control liability, the sports turf manager must stay abreast of the latest standards for field design and maintenance.

24 Balancing Turf on a Budget -- Natural Turf Management, Part 3

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The national pastime made a major league debut in Frankfurt, Germany, last year during "The American Sports Weekend." Murray Cook shows how patience, more than planning, paved the way for that very successful diplomatic tour.

30 Greg Petry Thrives on a Challenge

Managing the "front office" is a challenge much like walking a circus tightrope, and when the spotlight is on, Greg Petry is at his best.

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On the Cover:

The playability of this intramural field was marred by rutted sections that, before they were repaired, created liability for the school.

Photo courtesy: Stephen Guise.

STMA MESSAGE



By Mike Schiller

Problem Solving

not fill one of those spots? Get to meet new people and make friends. If you're interested, call our office number, (800) 323-3875, and let them know that you're ready to serve.

While you're at it, talk one of your friends into joining. We can only grow and become stronger by spreading the word. STMA is alive and growing, and I'm proud to be a part of it.

**Sports
Turf
Managers Association**

I have been asked several times in the past few months, "What benefits do I receive by becoming a member of STMA?" I can think of quite a few that I would like to list for you.

- You become a part of one of the fastest growing associations in the industry.

- You will receive a free subscription to *sportsTURF* magazine.

- You will receive the STMA newsletter, "Sports Turf Manager."

- You will receive a copy of our annual compendium of industry-related articles.

- Last, but not least, you will receive a copy of our directory, the *STMA Membership Roster & Resource Manual*.

This directory alone is worth the price of membership. It gives you the names and numbers of some of the best problem solvers in the industry: our membership. On numerous occasions when I have had a problem, I have called on fellow members to see what they had done in similar circumstances. In every instance, they were cordial and did everything they could to help.

I think one of the nicest parts of being involved with STMA has been the people I had the opportunity to meet and become friends with. It is very encouraging to know that the people in our field have always been willing to share their time and expertise -- to talk openly about their successes, and about their failures, to help you avoid the same problems.

I have enjoyed every year that I have been a member of this organization, and I urge you to become an active member. We still have several positions on committees open. Why

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THE FRONT OFFICE

OPINION PAGE



Bargain-Basement Balm

If you didn't attend STMA's 7th Annual Conference this past January, you missed a grade-A+ program. The 70 pages of notes I came away with captured a fraction of the wisdom and tidbits of information that flowed from STMA officers, speakers and rank-and-file members.

For sports turf managers who are typically unable to attend conferences because "there's no money for it," one member had some advice. The key,

he said, is to ask for the money well in advance, such as a year ahead of time. You might even ask that the time and money for attending the annual conference be included in your contract or budget. This is a common practice among golf course superintendents — which explains the reason their association's annual conference draws a hundred times more people than the sports turf managers' conference, even though there are probably three times more sports turf managers than superintendents in the U.S.

If administrators say the cost of sending you to the 8th Conference isn't worth the money, have them talk to Steve Roser in Rockford, IL, whose soccer fields were wiped out by the floods that devastated the Midwest in the summer of 1993. Thanks to advice and inspiration from the STMA, Roser not only had the fields fit for play by the fall of '93 but in the process won STMA's Soccer Field of the Year Award. The award was one reason Rockford administrators decided to fund a million dollar soccer complex, which has paid for itself many times over and generated mega-bucks for the city through the tournaments it's attracted.

Or have your administrators talk to Richard Moffitt at St. Louis University in St. Louis, MO. He says he has saved tens of thousands of dollars when building fields thanks to advice from STMA members.

Or ask your administrators to talk to the National Football League Players Association, which sent a couple of representatives to the 7th Conference because it appreciates the advancements the STMA has made toward creating safer playing surfaces. "While artificial turf was standing still," one of the representatives said, "turf managers have progressed, making grass better and safer. Now it's time for the STMA to promote itself and its statistics to the market." The representative urged this "not to put artificial turf manufacturers out of business but to provide the safest fields for kids" and others to play on.

At the 7th Conference, I saw the cheapest, surest way to achieve safety and aesthetics; I saw the best minds in sports turf and facility management. Some had famous names and talked from the podium; others were unfamiliar and sat in the audience. I didn't meet anyone who wasn't impressive in some aspect of maintenance or wasn't willing to share. I learned with a phone call or two their expertise could be tapped to solve a problem that might otherwise take months of reading and experimentation to figure out. As a quick fix for sports turf ailments, they're a bargain-basement special.

EVENTS

CALENDAR

March

27 South Florida Research Station Field Day and Exposition. Institute of Food and Agricultural Science, Davie, FL. Continuing education units will be issued. For more information, contact: John Mascaro (305) 938-7477.

28 Turf and Golf Course Management," sponsored by the Committee for Sustainable Agriculture. San Leandro, CA. CEUs applied for. Advanced registration, \$65, includes lunch. Contact: (916) 756-6967.

April

22 Fourth annual Envirotron Golf Classic, to raise funds for the Florida Turfgrass Association's research facility. World Woods Golf Resort, Homosassa Springs, FL. For tournament information, call Glen Oberlander at (904) 795-7017.

24-26 Pacific Equipment & Technology Expo (PETE '96). Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV. Contact: (800) 525-7383 or (510) 370-2200.

May

6-8 Southeast Turfgrass Conference. Tifton, GA. Contact: (912) 386-3353.

15-16 Environmental Landscape & Equipment Conference & Show. Sheraton Suites Hotel and the Los Angeles County Fairgrounds, Pomona, CA. Contact: (800) 877-3107 or (702) 736-5958.

June

14-18 American Society for Plasmiculture 26th Conference. Atlantic City, NJ. Contact: Cook College, Rutgers University, Office of Continuing Professional Education, (908) 932-9271.

Send announcements of your events two months in advance to: Editor, sportsTURF, 68-860 Perez Road, Suite J, Cathedral City, CA 92234. Fax: (619) 770-4380.

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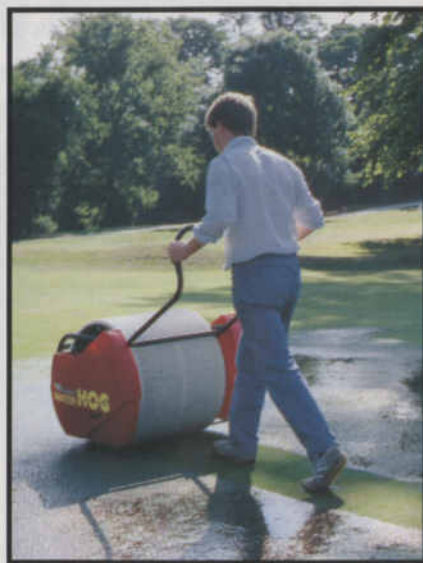
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SPRING TRAINING MANAGERS TALK:

FIELD RAKES



Baseball is big in Arizona. Not only during spring training, but during the rest of the year as well.

"It's like a 340-day homestand," says Clay Wood, grounds manager for the Oakland Athletics at Phoenix Municipal Stadium. "Between spring training, extended spring training, instructional league, rookie league, mini-camps, and local play our fields are in constant use."

The John Deere 1200 Bunker and Field Rake helps all these Arizona managers stay on top of this grueling 12-month schedule.

"It's versatile and has tremendous power," says Wood. "We use it for scarifying, blading, dragging, and pulling a heavy 2-board leveling attachment. It's the only machine we've had that has the power to handle it all."

"The 1200 does a great job and saves us time," adds Sal Leyvas of Tempe Diablo Stadium. "The guys love the blade, and also the

way the machine allows them to use more than one implement at a time. They do the warning one pass

tracks in now, where it used to take two."

"Our fields are in better shape because of the 1200," says Harold Gentry from the city of Mesa's Hohokam Stadium. "The steering, traction, and speed allow us to do more work in less time. Plus, my mechanic likes it because it never breaks down."

"It's become a safety issue with us," concludes Kris Kircher from the City of Chandler Sports Complex. We have a better surface with the 1200 and that means a safer surface for the players."

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Like all these managers, Clay Wood of the Oakland Athletics uses a 1200 to groom his field for not only spring training, but a year-round schedule of other games as well.



"The John Deere 1200 allows us to do a better job," says Harold Gentry of the City of Mesa's Hohokam Field, spring training site of the Chicago Cubs.

Sal Leyvas depends on a John Deere 1200 to take care of Tempe Diablo Stadium, home of the California Angels during spring semester.



Kris Kircher of the City of Chandler uses two 1200s to take care of the fields used by the Milwaukee Brewers for their minor league spring training.

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Munson Stadium Shines as Pro Diamond of Year

By Bob Tracinski

Thurman Munson Memorial Stadium is a shining example of the science and art of sports turf management melding in a dynamic working partnership. This gem of the City of Canton, OH, was just selected the 1995-1996 Beam Clay® Professional Diamond of the Year.

The ballfield of Thurman Munson Memorial Stadium stood as an oasis of green throughout the 1995 season while other fields and golf courses around it suffered tremendous turf damage from the searing heat and high humidity.

Munson field handled the 70 game home schedule of its Canton Indians, the AA Minor League affiliate of the Cleveland Indians. Then it stood up to 39 amateur games. In all, from April 8 through September 30, 1995, 109 games were played on the field of the facility devoted exclusively to baseball. In addition, the Canton Indians held three day-long baseball camps for area youth.

And this was a field in its first year of play. Reconstruction, which began on September 30 of 1994, had been completed just 1 1/2 months later, on November 15.

Robert D. Patt, manager of the Canton Civic Center and Munson Stadium, determined from the outset that field reconstruction and maintenance would be based on the scientific input of a

crack consultant team. And he knew who had the ability and dedication to deftly combine that science with art to create and maintain pro-level quality on a daily basis: Kevan Lindsey, field foreman for the Canton Recreation Department and now also head groundskeeper of Munson Stadium.

Patt says, "Prior to reconstruction, a combination of heavy native soil, compaction, and inadequate underground drainage made surface drainage a constant problem. We'd adopted an aggressive aeration program, but during the summer of 1994, we had ten inches of rainfall in one month and standing water in the outfield. Slitters helped drain surface water, but wet spots persisted. We needed a long-term solution."

Patt Answers

In typical fashion, Patt researched reconstruction options "thoroughly." Patt has spent 22 years in city management positions, and applied those basic management principles to the Munson project. "I exhausted every avenue I could track down, calling people and asking questions," says Patt.

The City of Canton selected S.W. Franks Construction Company of Cleveland, OH, for the renovation project. "Franks' reputation for quality work was proven in the recently installed new playing surfaces in Kansas City at

the Royals' Kaufman Stadium and the Chiefs' Arrowhead Stadium, as well as on the incomparable Jacobs Field in Cleveland, home of our Cleveland Indians," says Patt. "Munson Field was specified to replicate the playing surface at Jacobs Field because of the similar geographic and climatic conditions, and the player development association with the parent club."

Lindsey came on board in the head groundskeeper position at the beginning of the renovation project. "We wanted a groundskeeper who was both knowledgeable and conscientious," says Patt. "Kevan had proven his dedication throughout his ten years with the Recreation Department, always putting in the time and effort to get the job done right."

Intent on carrying out his philosophy, Patt didn't stop there. "If you surround good people with a good support team," he says, "you're not going to fail."

He enlisted the aid of Murray Cook, field director of the West Palm Beach Stadium Authority in Florida (and winner of the Beam Clay Field of the Year Award for 1993-1994), who served as consultant and on-site construction manager during the project and continues as part of the consulting team.

Jamie Heydinger of The O.M. Scott Company was on the consulting team from the beginning. Patt says, "Heydinger



A combination of art and science turned Thurman Munson Memorial Stadium into a field that can handle virtually any adversity. Photos courtesy: Robert Patt.