

STMA in Action — Chapter News

Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association: A meeting on football and baseball post-season repairs is planned for a mid-October meeting at Upper Iowa University, Fayette, IA.

A meeting on football and soccer post-season repairs will be held November 5 at Iowa State University and Ames High School in Ames, IA.

For more information on the Iowa Chapter or other upcoming activities, contact: Lori Westrum at The Turf Office at (515) 232-8222 (phone) or (515) 232-8228 (fax).

Minnesota Chapter: The Minnesota Chapter is planning a Fall Workshop for mid-September. Further details will be announced soon.

MSTMA will meet in conjunction with the Minnesota Turf and Grounds Foundation Annual Conference, scheduled for December 11-13 at the Minneapolis Conference Center.

For information on these events, the Minnesota Chapter or other upcoming activities, contact: Brian Deyak at (612) 255-7223.

Florida Chapter #1: The Florida Chapter will meet on October 24 in conjunction with the Dade County Extension Office educational program. The meeting will be held at Miami-Dade Community College in Kendall, FL. Further details will be announced soon.

A meeting is being planned for December 3 at Homestead Stadium in Homestead, FL. Baseball field maintenance and preparation will be the focus of this meeting.

For more information on these events, the Florida Chapter, and other pending activities, contact: John Mascaro (305) 938-7477.

Southern California Chapter: The Southern California Chapter will "do it again," adopting for its 1996 field renovation project the combination field-hockey/soccer/football field of Rancho Buena Vista High School in Buena Vista, CA, on October 25 and 26. The chapter

will meet at the school on October 25. The group will finalize the renovation plan, then move outdoors for hands-on demonstrations of the tasks that will be involved. Then, on October 26, the volunteers will converge on the field for the renovation work day. Plan now to join in this hands-on experience of learning and giving, one more example of the Southern California Chapter's concentration on demonstrating the STMA focus on better and safer sports turf areas.

For information on these events, the Southern California Chapter and other upcoming activities, contact: Chris Bunnell at (619) 432-2421.

Colorado Chapter: For information on the Colorado Chapter or upcoming events, call the 24-Hour CSTMA Chapter Hotline/FAX: (303) 438-9645 and leave a message, or contact: Troy Smith, Denver Broncos, at (303) 649-9000.

Midwest Chapter: For information on the Midwest Chapter or upcoming events, call: The Chapter Hotline (847) 439-4727.

STMA Chapters on the Grow

Great Plains Sports Turf Managers Association: The Great Plains Sports Turf Managers Association is planning a mid-September seminar. The same seminar format will be repeated during the designated week at different sites across the state — starting in east Kansas and then moving on to central and west Kansas locations.

For more information on the September seminars, or other pending events, contact: Mark Schimming of Wichita Baseball, Inc. at (316) 292-2907, Extension 205.

Arizona: The Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona is planning a seminar/workshop session tentatively scheduled for October in the Scottsdale area. Also in the planning stages is a December meeting to be held in conjunction with a Yuma Parks and Recreation Association event.

For more details on these upcoming events or the chapter, contact: Bill Murphy, City of Scottsdale Parks and Recreation Department, at (602) 994-7954.

Workshop on Wheels

Sunny skies and moderate temperatures greeted the 55 participants who gathered at St. Paul's Midway Stadium shortly before 8:00 a.m. on July 16 to kick off the Minnesota Sports Turf Managers Association's second annual Workshop on Wheels. Coffee, juice and bakery "goodies" added to the friendly camaraderie of registration. Chapter President Ken Dehkes welcomed attendees and got the meeting underway.

Grounds Manager Connie Rudolph and her crew coordinated the program at Midway Stadium, a heavily used, city owned and operated facility. It's home for baseball's St. Paul Saints (Northern League), key site for the city schools' baseball and football programs, a concert arena, and host to multiple other events.

This was the "working" part of the workshop, with hands-on, demonstration, ask-questions and try-it-out stations set up to tackle the preparation for that evening's Saints game. Stations ran simultaneously and included field-grooming and dragging equipment on the skinned area and warning track; mound and batters box construction, including the use of MoundMaster clay bricks around the pitchers mound; several different triplex mowers for cutting the outfield turf; and chalking and foul line painting options.

Participants then boarded the bus to Woodbury Athletic Complex, east of St. Paul. It's the primary baseball, softball, soccer field complex for this upscale suburb. Field construction, the focus here, was at the rough grade stage last year. Due to a combination of circumstances, the irrigation and turf are still not installed. Parks Manager Dick Riemscheider explained the problems encoun-

continued on page 22

STMA in Action

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tered and steps taken to move ahead. He also gave a tour of the ice rink and air-bubble-covered year-round sports field.

The bus load moved on to the Burnsville Maintenance Facility, this Minneapolis suburb's new "state of the art" public works garage, maintenance and office complex. This \$6 million facility is the headquarters of the crew leaders, secretaries and front-line workers of four city departments, including both parks maintenance and fleet maintenance.

Facility designers, architects and engineers were joined by worker representatives from every department in developing the plan — and it shows. Work space reflects strict compliance with all governmental regulations in a way that efficiently meets the multiple needs of the various departments.

Computerized systems control and monitor parts ordering and inventory, vehicle records, mechanic entries and combined or separated costs. A complex, computerized system even controls and monitors fuel use and tracks the driver and vehicle entry data.

Participants next wheeled to Petersen Seed Company in Prior Lake. This family-owned business is an international supplier of forage, as well as turf seed. Sales representative David Gamez led the tour of the storage, handling and packaging facility, noting the polymer coating process that allows such materials as fertilizers or fungicides to be "bonded to" individual seeds.

More camaraderie accompanied the box lunch enjoyed in the Petersen Seed Company lunchroom and meeting room facilities.

Then the bus headed for Dred Scott Fields in the suburb of Bloomington. This 25-acre complex was built in 1975 and includes softball, baseball, touch football and soccer fields. Paul Edwardson, parks supervisor, gave the tour. The native sandy soil had been modified somewhat during field installation. Total field irrigation and a good maintenance program allow the facilities to remain in good shape despite the high degree of use. The fields are on elevated ground, and the sandy soil and desiccating winds make irrigation a necessity.

Next came Bethel College in Roseville.

On the bus, attendees again took advantage of the time to compare notes and share ideas.

Reconstruction of the school's original heavy-clay-soil football/soccer field and construction of an adjacent practice field were the focus of the tour given by Mike Kelly of the Glenn Rehbein Company, the primary contractor.

Despite weather setbacks, this project was moving ahead, with irrigation installation taking place on the game field and rootzone placement on the practice field. Kelly noted that both fields have subsurface drainage, but at different spacing, and both have a sand content over 90 percent, with soil, rather than peat, as the organic content. Washed sod will be installed following the final grading. The fields will see limited play this year.

Next, the bus load headed to the Midway Stadium parking lot for a tail-gate barbecue and more networking. Most of the group wrapped up the day at the Saints' evening ball game. This jam-packed event was such a hit Workshop on Wheels III is already on the 1997 agenda. □

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All New Members Joining STMA Between September 1st and December 1st, 1996, will be eligible for a drawing for a free registration to the STMA 8th Annual Conference & Exhibition, January 15-19, 1997, in Colorado Springs, CO.

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The Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) is an organization of professionals representing all segments of the sports turf industry. Our members work to combine the science of growing grass and the art of maintaining sports turf to produce playing fields that are both safe and aesthetically pleasing.

STMA provides members with a variety of benefits, including: Education through regional institute and conferences; support for sports turf research; facilities tours; a national awards program; access to the STMA National Conference & Exhibition; complimentary subscriptions to Sports Turf Manager and sportsTURF Magazine; and much more.

If you're serious about the sports industry, then it's time to become a member of STMA. Join today!



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The Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) is an organization of professionals representing all segments of the sports turf industry. Our members work to combine the science of growing grass and the art of maintaining sports turf to produce playing fields that are both safe and aesthetically pleasing.

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Membership Category (please check one)

- Professional sports turf facility manager \$75
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For more information, contact STMA Headquarters at 800/323-3875

"Promoting Better and Safer Sports Turf Areas"

Maintaining a Uniform Playing Surface

By Kathleen Conard

Demands are constantly put on sports turf managers to maintain uniform, quality turf no matter what environmental, cultural or financial conditions they encounter. Lack of uniformity on a playing surface can result in serious injuries to players and costly liability for managers and their employers. Maintaining a uniform playing surface is one of the greatest challenges during the summer months since sports turf managers are continually battling the weather, increased disease potential as well as increased play and traffic on fields.

There are many factors to address in order to achieve turf uniformity and effective turfgrass management. The proper application and correct amount of water and turf management chemicals such as fertilizers and pesticides are

critical. Sport turf managers must employ proper watering techniques so plant roots receive adequate amounts of water and turf management chemicals.

It is often assumed that, once water is applied to the turfgrass surface, it will uniformly penetrate the surface and percolate into the rootzone where it is available for absorption by the plant roots. Often water and water-soluble chemicals cannot uniformly infiltrate and penetrate a soil profile. This is normally caused by a condition known as water repellency (hydrophobicity). Hydrophobic soils cause a number of water movement problems that may contribute to other turfgrass problems. Symptoms of water repellent soils can manifest themselves in the form of localized dry spots, compacted turf and the inability for turf to effectively handle environmental stresses (such as drought and excessive heat).

Researchers have also found that, due to the variabilities in soils, water and solutes often flow in unpredictable pathways. This is especially true in water repellent (hydrophobic) soils. Infiltrating fronts of water often become unstable and break into narrow, quickly moving "fingers of flow." Fingered flow patterns of water infiltrate and percolate only a fraction of the soil, resulting in uneven distribution of water and turf management chemicals into the rootzone. This uneven wetting pattern increases the chances of localized dry spots, compaction and inconsistencies in soil conditions.

How do sports turf managers effectively apply water and turf management chemicals so they can eliminate soil inconsistencies and promote turf uniformity? Unfortunately, adding more water usually isn't the answer. However, incor-

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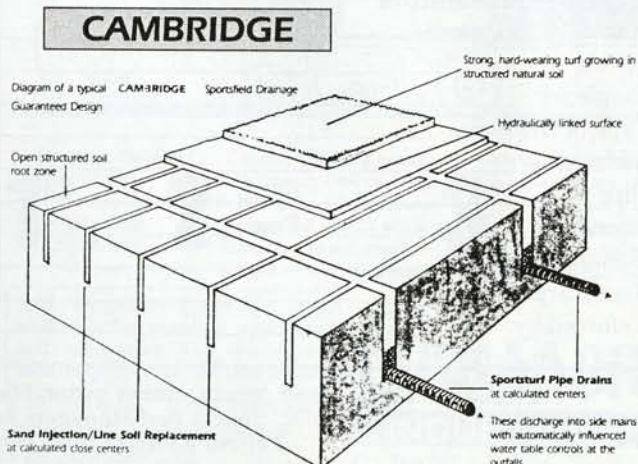
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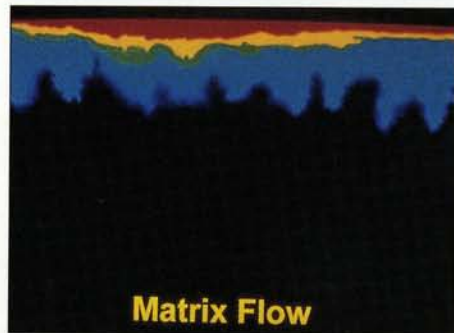
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Fingered Flow

A computer enhanced photo shows "finger flow" water movement through the soil. Photo courtesy: Aquatrols, Cherry Hill, NJ.



Matrix Flow

Computer enhanced photo of the soil shows the even distribution (the "matrix flow") of water that has been treated with a matrix-flow soil surfactant. Photo courtesy: Aquatrols, Cherry Hill, NJ.

porating an effective soil-water management program will increase the chances for uniform movement of water, fertilizers and pesticides.

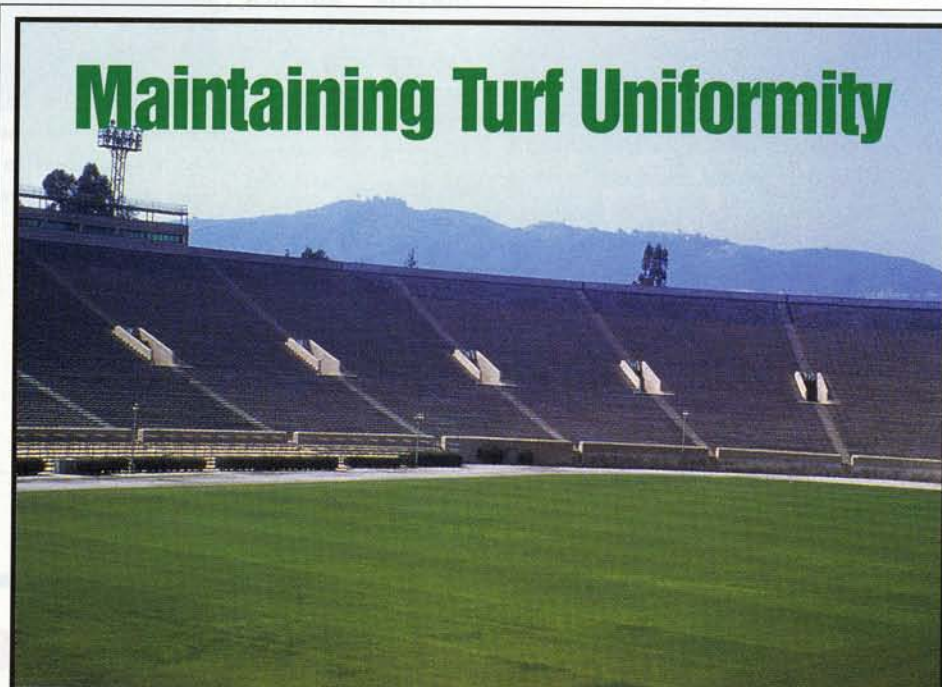
In some cases aerating the turf and/or a deep and thorough watering can help open turf pore spaces, resulting in improved distribution. This may be difficult to achieve when dealing with hydrophobic soils. Vertical mowers and thatch rakes are other devices used to make sports turf surfaces more uniform. Another option is the use of surfactants. Surfactants have been proven to reduce fingered flow and other water-related problems such as localized dry spots, wet spots, compaction and uneven wetting. Surfactants help establish and maintain a "matrix flow" — a downward and lateral water movement flow that ensures uniform movement of water and turf management chemicals throughout the rootzone. Matrix flow promotes healthy turfgrass since water and water-soluble chemicals penetrate deeper into the rootzone. Turf roots grow deeper to reach and utilize the moisture

and nutrients. A deeper root structure means a healthier, denser uniform turf surface. A well designed irrigation system is also a plus. Poor irrigation patterns must be corrected in order to get the maximum effect from a surfactant.

Surfactants have many practical benefits for the sports turf manager, but it is suggested that caution be used when selecting a surfactant. Ask the manufacturer for valid, scientific performance data as well as a list of turf professionals who use the product. Turf professionals

don't usually purchase fertilizers or pesticides without examining the products' credentials, and all other chemicals need to be treated the same.

Sports turf managers who incorporate effective soil-water management practices early in the season can maintain healthy, safe, uniform playing surfaces all season long. Effective, proven soil surfactants will aid in managing soil hydrophobicity and enhance penetration and infiltration of water and chemicals into and throughout the rootzone. □



Maintaining Turf Uniformity



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Olympic Softball's Invisible Gold Medalists

By Floyd Perry

On July 30, 1996, a first time gold medal was awarded to the United States women's softball team in a dramatic 3-1 victory over China in the 100th Olympiad. This victory celebration was shown nationwide on live television from Golden Park in Columbus, GA. It was a great day for the ladies who worked so hard and long to create a positive image for the softball players in future games and from various countries.

The other gold medal, which wasn't seen by the 8,900-plus fans in the stadium and the TV audience, was the one awarded to Columbus Park's maintenance staff, who under a multitude of conditions (rain, heat, foot traffic, sleep deprivation, and the stringent Atlanta Games Com-

mittee) accomplished a task that many groups wouldn't have even attempted. They created a positive, outstanding playing surface daily that allowed Olympic performances without any player knowing the behind-the-scene problems. The group of men had the desire and leadership generated for this task by their supervisors, Richard Bishop and Benji Brumboloe, and never once lost focus of their goal.

As with other Olympic venues, the pressure of game performance was so



Sod was hauled in to transform the "mud puddle" into a lush pasture of green. Photo courtesy: Floyd Perry.

great that even the smallest detail was magnified three-fold. Checks, double-checks and final walk-throughs were so common that they were accepted as ordinary before the first pitch. The respective department leaders all marched

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to different beats, so everyone evaluated the venue differently. The venue's owner, Richard Bishop, refused anything short of perfection when it came time to evaluate the playing surface, and his staff responded to his direction.

To prove that point, the one day off before the medal rounds when the top four finalists played for individual glory, his staff of 30 men put in a 16-hour day resodding and painting the stadium turf, which was ruined from a previous day's thundershower. This was the turning point of the softball event, and the comments that followed helped compensate the crew for all the sweat and physical anxiety.

One spectator from Australia who witnessed the whole tournament told the staff, "I thought I was at a different site! The picture perfect condition of the surface is night and day from Saturday's last out. How did you do it?"

Another visitor who was in attendance during the Friday thundershower was likewise outspoken at the metamorphosis of the field: "When I left it was a mud puddle! I returned, and it was a lush pasture of dark green color! Simply amazing."

The split teams of employees arrived at 6:30 a.m. for a 9 a.m. session start, and the second team left at 12:30 a.m. after the second session's final out. On one occasion, day cots were used by some of the night staff because a rain delay set the ending time at 2:30 a.m. and sleeping at the park was easier than going home.

A list of items that were done by the group are as follows: six placements of base, mound and home-plate tarps; four roll-outs of the 120/120 tarp; placement and scarifying of three tons of Turface in the playing surface; painting of "fair" lines with aerosol five times; chalking of batters boxes 32 times; mowing turf eight times; cleaning bases 32 times; and packing mound and home plate 32 times. And so on.

These tasks only featured the Olympic game site, not the two practice fields that were used daily for warm-up and batting practice. That six-man staff also created a quality surface for the participating teams and visiting national delegations.

The park staff was truly a well-coordinated and well-greased unit that had the 1995 SuperBall tournament and 1996 NCAA Division I World Series under their belts, but saved their best

effort for the July Gold Medal Series.

Few people appreciated the second gold medal performance unless they were in the stands and noticed the error-free performance of the players. The second medal was unceremoniously awarded to the park maintenance department located in "the pit" down the third-base line of Golden Park. My groundskeeping hat goes off to these men, and I will always be indebted to Columbus for allowing me the opportunity to volunteer my efforts. □

Floyd Perry travels the country coordinating workshops and seminars on grounds maintenance and facility improvement. He has authored two textbooks: A Pictorial Guide to Quality Grounds-keeping, Book I, Covering All the Bases and Book II, There Ain't No Rules. His third book, Keep It Simple — Make It Safe, featuring softball maintenance, will be on the market in December 1996. For information call (800) 227-9381.

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HAPPENINGS

Lofts Acquired by Budd Seed

The Budd family of Winston-Salem has completed its acquisition of Lofts Seed, Inc., the world's largest marketer of turfgrass.

The New Jersey-based Lofts Seed, Inc., sells to golf courses, sod farms, retail stores, landscapers, lawn-care operators and municipalities. Lofts has been a leader in the industry since 1923, and it has developed and owns patents on more than 25 seed varieties.

Richard Budd, chief executive officer of Lofts Seed, said, "We are very pleased to welcome this outstanding group of talented professionals into our company family. This is a major milestone in our company's history and for the seed industry.

Ken Budd, president and chief operating officer of Budd Seed, has become president and chief operating officer of Lofts Seed Company. Richard Budd, chief executive officer of Budd Services and Budd Seed, has also become chief executive officer of Lofts Seeds. Gerald Chrisco, chief financial officer of Budd Services, has been named Lofts' chief financial officer.

Sports Turf Managers Association Issues Sports Turf Topics/ Joins World Wide Web

The Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) has published its fourth annual *Sports Turf Topics: A Compendium of STMA Articles*. Based on 12 months of published material, the booklet contains nearly 40 articles, divided into five subject areas: Cultural Management of Sports Turf, Special Sports Turf Management, General Sports Turf Management, Award Winners and Profiles.

Each article was authored by a member of STMA and was published in a green industry publication. Copies of the publication may be purchased by non-members for \$30 each from STMA headquarters. Contact: STMA executive director Steve Trusty at (712) 366-2669 or (800) 323-3875. Fax: (712) 366-9119.

Now, STMA is also accessible on the World Wide Web. Services include a description of the organization, member benefits, the "STMA Message," and a membership application that can be sent directly to STMA Headquarters. Details of the upcoming 1997 STMA Conference & Exhibition to be held January 15-19 in Colorado Springs also will be available online soon. STMA's home page address is: <http://www.aip.com/STMA>.

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4. Operating budget for baseball diamond.
5. Irrigation: None _____ Manual _____ Automatic _____
6. Total number of maintenance staff for field.
7. Does baseball field have lighting for night games?
8. Number of events on baseball diamond per year.
9. Types and number of events on diamond other than baseball?
10. How many months during the year is the field used?
11. Why you think this field is one of the best?
12. **IMPORTANT:** Send two sets of color slides or prints.

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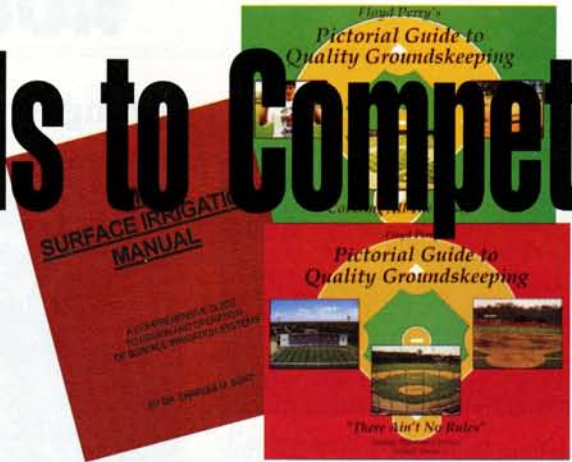
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The Surface Irrigation Manual, by Dr. Charles Burt. The text delves in-depth into the proper design and operation of surface irrigation systems. Also covers subjects such as soil types, salinity, surge flow and infiltration. Indispensable aid for farming, educators in agriculture; irrigation design professionals for government agencies working with the agriculture industry. 400 pp

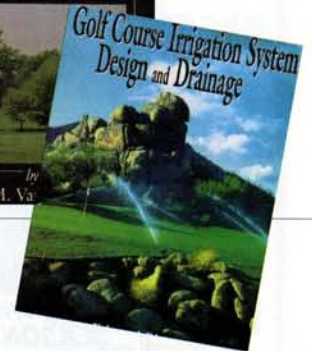
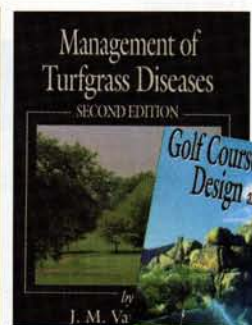
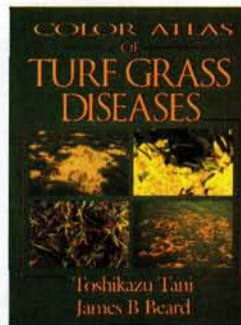
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