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VOLUME THIRTEEN, NUMBER EIGHT

AUGUST 1997

MAIN EVENTS

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Jack Trice Field, the playing surface at Cyclone Stadium and the home of the Iowa State University Cyclones, was converted from artificial turf to a sand-based natural grass surface prior to the 1996 football season. By the end of the year, the field had earned both the praise of the media and STMA's 1996-1997 College Football Field of the Year honors.

19 Hall of Fame Not Doubleday's Only Game

Established in 1920, Doubleday Field in Cooperstown, N.Y., blends the old with the new. Each year it serves as the focal point for the world of baseball, as it recently did for this year's Hall of Fame ceremonies and Hall of Fame Game.

20 Post-Season Baseball Diamond Renovation

After the baseball season, most field managers want a break from their diamonds, but the plain fact is that the four to six weeks after the competitive season is a crucial time in preparing diamonds for next season. Sports turf specialist Jim Puhalla shows how, with a few days' work now, you can substantially upgrade the diamond for next year.

30 Fall Equipment Maintenance

Demands on equipment during the fall frequently rival the intensity of the spring rush. Service specialist Eli Luster outlines a comprehensive equipment preventive maintenance program that can ensure machines are ready to work and curtail costly downtime.

34 Funding Fields for Fun, Profit — and Survival!

Sports turf management isn't simply a nice "feel good" program. Sports turf management is vital to the preservation of athletic field resources and the well-being of the humans who use those fields. It deserves adequate funding, and STMA President Mike Schiller tells why.

44 Avoiding Liability Lawsuits

Avoiding liability lawsuits is probably not part of your written job description, but it's definitely part of your day-to-day duties: your action — or lack of action — could put you and your facility at risk of time-consuming, costly litigation. Floyd Perry shows what precautions you should take to save life- and limb-threatening situations and stay ahead of the liability "wave."

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On the Cover: Jack Trice Field, home of the Iowa State University Cyclones, shows its new colors — red on natural turfgrass green. Photo by Jim Heemstra.

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THE FRONT OFFICE

OPINION PAGE



A Tribute to Park Managers

Turf managers whose work is confined to the civilized arenas of sports fields might like to know what their peers in the parks have to deal with. James N. Ward, a certified golf course superintendent employed by Los Angeles, provides a glimpse. He wrote the following remarks for the July 1997 issue of the *Divot News*, a publication of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Southern California.

Just Another Day

By James N. Ward, CGCS

Just another day in the Valley Region of the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks. Besides overseeing the problems associated with 72 holes of golf, I have the pleasure of dealing with park issues. Much like a golf course, parks have a few unique quirks.

I just returned from a wedding in one of our parks. Eighteen couples exchanged vows simultaneously in their Sunday best. What made this wedding unusual was that the couples were all canines. The ceremony was sanctioned by a City Council member and performed by a local radio station DJ. Television news media were on hand to cover the first-ever mass dog wedding at our new off-leash dog park.

You think your days are crazy? This wedding followed two weekends of events at other parks where activities ranged from fireworks, carnivals and bands on stages to a jazz festival around a reclaimed-water lake. Some events were attended by over 12,000 patrons.

Believe me, you haven't seen it all yet until you deal with the general public in our parks. How about dealing with a movie-location scout requesting a grassy hill with no trees so they can turn it into a cemetery and crash, flip and burn a car? Golfers seem tame with their disputes over course conditions and rules. My heart is in golf course management, but the parks keep me guessing what will turn up next.

I'm off to a City Council meeting regarding additional funding for brush clearance in our undeveloped park land. Just another day in the business of growing turf!

TIP O' THE MONTH



Getting on an infield too soon after a heavy rain often causes additional damage. Photo courtesy: Floyd Perry.

Conditioning Wet Infields

If your infield contains a conditioner, try the following after a heavy rain:

- First, stay off the infield and let the conditioner do the work. There may be some low spots on the infield that might need additional conditioner, but that's best saved for later. Most of the time, more damage is done to the field by getting on it too soon. If the sun is out after the rain and before a game, just let the field naturally dry for a couple of hours.
- If the field dries enough to work on without any damage (rutting or clodding), then nail drag the infield to cut it open in order to let the air get into the dirt. Make sure to cut it open *one time* and then let it sit about an hour before the game.
- At this time, screen drag it and level it back out.
- Do not cut open the infield with a nail drag if there is still a chance for more rain. If there is a chance for rain throughout the day, just let the infield sit and try to do any touch-up on it right before game time.

The above tip is courtesy of Earthen Technologies, manufacturer of Diamond Pro Infield Conditioner, Dallas, Texas. If you have a tip to share with others, send it to sportsTURF, 68860 Perez Rd., Cathedral City, CA 92234.

STMA MESSAGE

More on Meeting the Challenges



By
Mike Schiller
STMA
President

I challenge you to meet your present and future as the best you can be, equipped to meet your challenges and turn them into opportunities. Take a big step toward "Meeting the Challenges" by planning right now to attend our 9th Annual Conference & Exhibition, which will be held January 14-18, 1998, at the Coronado Springs Resort and Walt Disney World sports complex in Orlando, Florida. The conference theme is "Meeting the Challenges."

From Wednesday night's opening reception through Saturday's presentations from award winners, you'll have opportunities to learn, see the newest and best products and services, renew relationships, make new contacts and share ideas with other sports turf managers and key

industry educators.

You'll hear John Souter's views on stadia of the future; catch up on Floyd Perry's ideas on tools and techniques to make your work more efficient and effective; join in an in-depth, behind-the-scenes tour of the 200 acre Walt Disney World sports complex facilities. And, Reggie Williams, former Cincinnati Bengals linebacker and now vice president of Walt Disney World Sports, will "knock your sox off" with a dynamite presentation.

Murray Cook, Jon Strantz, and the rest of the Disney sports complex staff have some great plans in store for you. With events and teams for over 30 sports moving in and out as fast as a trip on Space Mountain, speed and efficiency are as natural as breathing for Disney crews. Expect some "on the field" demonstrations of ideas you can take home to shine up your field's image, save time, save money or maybe all three.

And speaking of shining — there's still time to get your materials ready to enter the Field of the Year competition in the baseball, softball, soccer or football categories. Deadline for

entries is November 30, 1997.

And, if you know someone on your staff — or maybe someone else's staff — who does a great job of meeting the challenges of field maintenance, but seldom gets any public recognition for doing so, consider nominating him or her for the special award in honor of George Toma that was announced at the STMA conference last January. As I said then, George Toma has been a personal mentor to many of us and a marvelous example to all of us — proving that starting from the ground up it's possible to achieve your highest goals — if you love what you do and give it your all — and then some. This award is to be issued annually to someone who is on the quest to meet his or her goals and is demonstrating that "and then some" spirit along the way.

So, if you have someone in mind for the George Toma Award, or think your field is tops, or even if you are just curious about these awards and want more information about the specific criteria involved, give headquarters a call at 800/323-3875.



Get Serious With STMA

Application for Membership

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 institutes and conferences; support for sports turf research; facilities tours; a national awards program; access to the STMA National Conference and Exhibition; complimentary subscriptions to Sports Turf Manager and sportsTURF Magazine; and much more.

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

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"Promoting Better and Safer Sports Turf Areas"

New Natural Turf of Iowa State's Jack Trice Field Captures College Gridiron of the Year Award

By Bob Tracinski

Jack Trice Field, the playing surface at Cyclone Stadium and the home of the Iowa State University Cyclones, was converted from artificial turf to a sand-based natural grass surface prior to the 1996 football season. By the end of the year, the field had earned both the praise of the media and STMA's 1996-1997 College Football Field of the Year honors.

Before the conversion, the existing artificial turf had reached the point of necessary replacement, and Athletic Director Gene Smith, Associate Athletic Director Elve Everage and football coach Dan McCarney felt natural grass was essential to strengthening the football program, especially as a recruiting tool.

Assembling the Pieces

For the position of athletic turf manager, Mike Andresen was hired and came on board April 12, 1996, bringing an extensive background. He graduated from Grand View Junior College in Des Moines, Iowa, with a major in health and recreation and holds an AAS in horticulture from the Des Moines Area Community College. After spending five years as a manager for a turf and landscape firm, Andresen, a former baseball player, was ready to get back to the playing

fields. He accepted a position at Sec Taylor Stadium, home of the Iowa Cubs, and soon moved up to head groundskeeper. He pulled that field through the 1993 "flood of the century" and earned the American Association Groundskeeper of the Year Award in both 1993 and 1995. The challenge of the multiple fields at ISU and the field conversion drew him to the ISU position.

At that point, the old field rug and underlying base had been removed.

Four-inch perforated drain pipes

were being installed in gravel-filled slits cut into the clay base on 15-foot centers in a herringbone pattern. This was covered with a 4-inch layer of gravel.

The irrigation system was installed at a 12-inch depth. It consists of Toro 640 series heads, a Vision controller and TRC remote controller.

A rootzone was created with a 12-inch base of 95 percent sand, 5 percent peat. A local sand source was used, with consistency ensured by pre- and post-mix batch testing.

Sod with an 84 percent sand-base



Popular with fans, players and the media, the new turf field at Jack Trice has proven better than its artificial predecessor. Photo courtesy: Chris Gannon.



Crew members prepare a post-game mix of pre-germinated seed, Turface, Milorganite and Subdue. Photo courtesy: Mike Andresen.

was secured from a growing field. It was "the best match to the rootzone we could find within a manageable distance," Andresen says. "We felt washed sod wasn't a workable option for a bluegrass football field. The debate was between needing the soil layer for stability and hurting the drainage capabilities by capping off the sand."

Having the sports turf manager on hand during the entire construction process allowed for vital input on decisions that affected post-construction maintenance and provided a hands-on understanding of the field's sub-surface components.

"We're fortunate," Andresen says, "because the architect's 'as-builts' are very accurate, but we also have photos of all steps of the construction process and our own set of notes to back them up. We put them to use even during the construction to repair an irrigation pipe break."

To avoid the extra stress of paint in the heavy-use zone of mid-field, Andresen sold the concept of end zone logos along with two logos centered on the 30-yard lines, one facing each stand.

"As a fan," he says, "I felt cheated when the field logo faced away from me. The new concept is more work. We installed in-ground field markers on the outside edge of the 3-foot border, 1-inch below grade for the measuring points."

Countdown to a Nightmare

With Iowa State's Troy Davis in the running for the Heisman Trophy, Media Day, the field's first official activity, drew a big crowd. Comments about the field were favorable, but as Andresen notes, no real test had taken place yet.

The football team scrimmaged on the field for 2 1/2 hours one week prior to the season opener. Coach McCarney then followed his standard pre-game routine, two hours of on-field practice on Thursday with a Friday on-field walk-through.

Dedication ceremonies for Jack Trice Field and the new Jacobson Athletic Building on September 7 put 450 student-athletes from all the university's sports programs out on the field, along with major donors to the athletic program, and the band — 900 people in all. The Wyoming game, televised on the Big 12 network, put the field in the spotlight that night.

"We applied a wetting agent prior to the Wyoming game to control dew," Andresen says, "and came out looking pretty good. We played Missouri for our second televised game. Rain the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday before the game was threatening, but the 378 rushing yards by Troy Davis proved the turf was fine."

Band activity is big at ISU. Each game day includes pre-game, half-time and post-game shows. The band practiced on the field twice in the pre-

Rug to Turf Maintenance

Pre-sod — application of Sand Aid at 4#/M (lbs./1,000 sq. ft.), 8-24-16 fertilizer at 12#/M, Pro-Mag at 9#/M and gypsum at 20#/M incorporated to a 4-inch depth.

May 4, 5 and 6 — sod laid.

May 7 — mowing with triplex reel mowers began and continued every other day until September 1, when daily mowing was initiated. Height of cut maintained at 1.75 inches through August; 1.5 inches after September 1.

May 7 — fungicide (Banner) began to be applied on 30-day cycles for summer patch preventative. Minor leaf spot disease treated with contact fungicide on May 15. No insecticides or herbicides were needed. The few broadleaf weeds that appeared were pulled by hand.

May 9 — root stimulator (Pana-Sea) applied, also on June 10 and July 8.

Turf seams were topdressed by hand during the early grow-in period. Irrigation heads were set to grade.

Fertilization began with lean fertility and irrigation programs to work the roots hard, forcing them to grow deeper for the elements applied before sodding (10 1/2 inches of rain in May did not help). From May through June, 0.5# N and K every 2 to 3 weeks. July to September, 0.5# of N and K every 7 to 10 days. Micro-nutrients added according to soil and tissue test results.

June 4 — field aerified to 1-inch depth. Cores collected. Broadcast seeded with blend of four aggressive, wear-tolerant bluegrasses at 3#/M between hash marks. Filled aeration holes and topdressed with 1/2-inch layer of rootzone mix.

July 11 — slice aerification program began to tighten the top 3 inches of root mass and stimulate rhizome activity. Sliced four separate times with noticeable results. By August 10, turf showed the desired tightness and stability, and had roots to the bottom of the sand profile.

August 29 — iron and Agri-Strep combination began to be applied every 14 days as color booster.

season and three times in-season. Three bands from visiting teams also performed on the field. Band Day, an

Post-Game Maintenance

Sweep field.

Fill divots by hand with mix of pre-germinated seed, sand and Milorganite — Subdue added if disease conditions exist.

Seed between hash marks with pre-germinated seed, Turface and Milorganite spread at a rate of 10 lbs./1,000 sq. ft.

Topdress with 1/8-inch layer of sand, then brush it in.

Aerify (solid-tine) the Sunday or Monday after a Saturday game.

annual event that draws top high school bands from across the state, put 2,000 musicians on the field for the morning practice and the performance, and included a show from the Texas A&M band.

As temperatures cooled toward the end of the season, Andresen incorporated perennial ryegrass into the field and sideline areas to supplement the bluegrass.

"We cut down on sideline wear with tarps," he notes, "using a thick Turf Armor product, with safety flaps on each of the long edges. The tarp is pinned and the front edge taped, pre-game."

Field performance was excellent. Then came the ultimate challenge: game day with Tom Osborne's University of Nebraska Big Red wrecking crew and rain, rain and more rain.

Osborne, whose teams have ranked consistently in the Top 10 due to the prowess of their running game, is one of artificial turf's strongest proponents. Media in Nebraska, Iowa and across the nation focused

on the new-turf and heavy-rain combination that might create "terrible" conditions, perhaps turning the field into a mud pit.

Concerns increased during a pre-game walk-through, when Andresen noted "a slight layer of water hanging up at the sod line." A pre-game topdressing of 750 pounds of Turface between the hash marks, made in the pouring rain, provided an extra 5-minute cushion, absorbing and holding the excess water so the field's excellent infiltration and percolation rates could hold their own against the driving rains.

"So the nightmare that could have been was not to be," says Andresen. "Davis ran for 138 yards, a Nebraska player racked up 214 rushing yards, and even Coach Osborne registered no complaints about the field."


Actually, the field required only the normal divot repair and standard post-game maintenance procedures.

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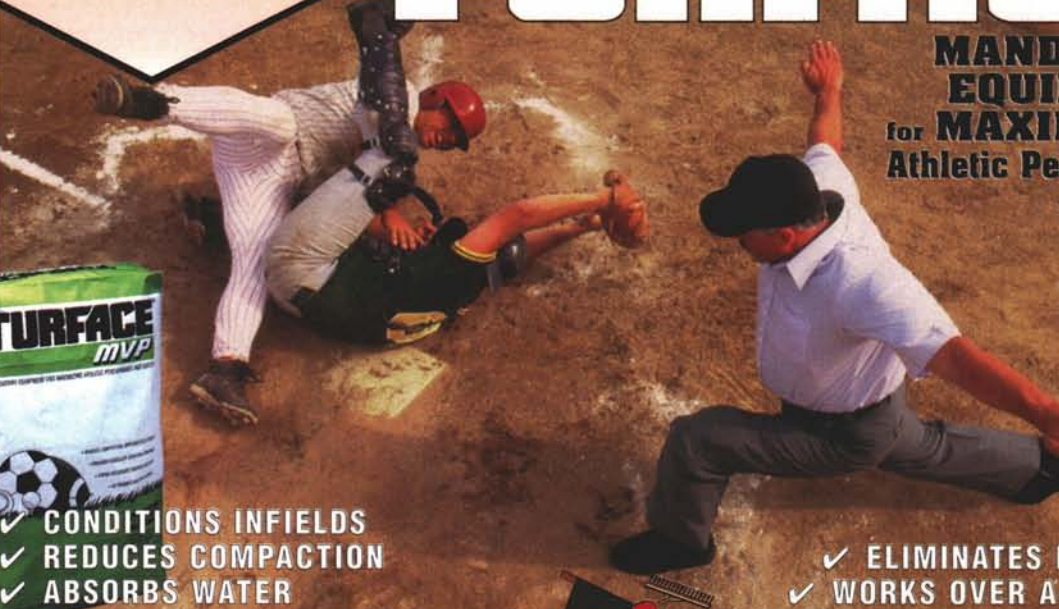
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