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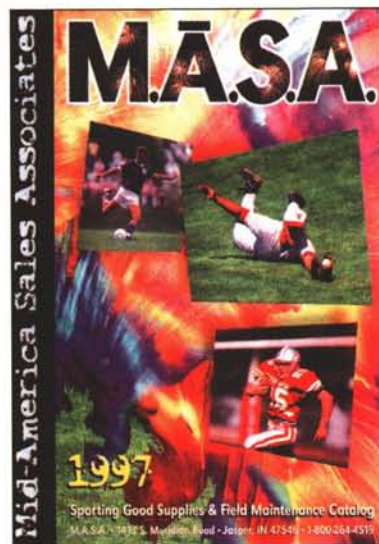
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ROOKIES

Vigoro and UHS Form Alliance

IMC Vigoro has formed a business alliance with United Horticultural Supply (UHS) of Tampa, Fla., to represent IMC Vigoro's turf fertilizer products throughout Florida.

The alliance calls for UHS to market and sell Par ex fertilizers, containing IBDU slow release nitrogen and V-Cote controlled release nitrogen and potash, to golf course superintendents and landscape companies.

Steve Jackson, Gulf States division manager for UHS, will head up the UHS sales team.

UHS has sales offices in Delray Beach, Ft. Pierce, Hastings, Immokalee, Parrish and Waverly, Fla. IMC Vigoro is headquartered in Winter Haven, Fla.

Chiefs Choose Magnum and Fairfax

For Arrowhead Stadium, the Kansas City Chiefs have "drafted" Royal Seeds' Magnum Perennial Ryegrass Blend: three improved perennial ryegrasses featuring Omni, Royal's wear-tolerant, endophyte-enhanced perennial rye. A bluegrass blend featuring Fairfax Kentucky bluegrass will be used with it. According to a Royal Seeds press release, "Fairfax is the top-rated bluegrass for wear tolerance and sod strength."

The turf areas outside Arrowhead Stadium are being planted with Royal's Turf Tall Fescue Blend, which features Bonanza II.

For the third consecutive year, the Kansas City Chiefs have chosen Royal Seeds of St. Joseph, Mo., as its exclusive supplier of grass seed for all Chiefs facilities, including Arrowhead Stadium, practice fields and the training camp facilities in River Falls, Wis.

Lofts Joins Rescue of Giants Stadium

The turfgrass sod being used for the state-of-the-art, transportable natural field at Giants Stadium contains two Lofts Seed varieties, Ram I and 1757. The innovative field is necessary because one of the stadium's tenants, the New York/New Jersey MetroStars, requires a natural turf for their major league soccer games, but Giants Stadium is fitted with artificial turf.

The project involves covering the artificial surface with 6,100 turfgrass modules, each 48 inches square.

"We are excited to be involved with this project. My hope is that the Giants and Jets will give up the artificial turf and decide to play on Lofts turfgrass varieties, too," says **Ken Budd**, president of Lofts Seed. The Giants and Jets are evaluating the performance of the transportable field this year and may consider converting to the natural grass system next year.

Toro Devises Green Scale

Turf managers have been known to agonize over the color of their turf. Healthy grass has not always translated into the greenest in the eyes of all those scrutinizing the turf. From owners to spectators, everyone has a different opinion of green.

For more than three years now, The Toro Co.'s Diagnostic Services have been using near infrared reflectance spectroscopy (NIRS) to analyze grass nutrients and provide turf managers with specialized prescriptions for growing healthy turf. During the Florida Turfgrass Association's annual show, Toro introduced turf analysis equations for bermudagrass, known as the Universal Green Turf Scale (UGTS), to scientifically monitor and measure nutrition levels that result in green grass.

With UGTS, Toro can analyze the greenness of the grass and prescribe nutrient applications, based on Toro's equations, to bring turf to a healthy green.

Rice Tries Latest Technology

Rice University's new football practice field has a rootzone that includes 90% sand and 10% Fieldschoice, a soil amendment from Premier Environmental Products. The field was sodded with Texas-certified Tifway 419 bermuda.

Jim Eagle of Eagle Turf in Fort Worth, Texas, was a consultant to the project for Lamb & Barger Engineers of Houston. "Lamb & Barger wanted a rootzone mixture that incorporated the latest technology for growing ... grass," said Eagle. "By using Fieldschoice, the practice field will drain well and the problems associated with compaction will be ... reduced. We anticipate fast growth of the rootzone — within two to three weeks, the roots will be three to five inches deep."

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FRONT LINES

Just Another Crisis

By Steve Guise

In his 55 years as a sports turf manager, George Toma has dealt with a lot of crises. Barry Mohon, long-time construction supervisor for West Coast Turf in Southern California, remembers one in San Francisco's Candlestick Park in January 1993 after a rain-soaked divisional playoff

Also plaguing the work was a labor shortage, and matters were only getting worse. The existing crews were exhausted, tempers were short, and conflicts had arisen among the men.

Running further and further behind schedule, Mohon finally turned to Toma to see if he could provide the extra help it would take to get ready for the game.

When asked, Toma looked at Mohon and said, "Give me one hour and I will get you the help." With that, Toma left



A storm dropped an average of two inches of rain per day on the field.



A rain-soaked divisional playoff game between the 49ers and the Redskins had left Candlestick's field mangled. Photos courtesy: George Toma.

game between the 49ers and the Washington Redskins. The teams had mangled the field, and Mohon was called in to help repair it for the next game, the NFC championship.

Getting the Job Done

The "scariest experience I've had in my 33 years in the business" is how Barry Mohon describes the resodding of Candlestick for the NFC title game between the 49ers and the Dallas Cowboys.

Many people may remember the photos in newspapers around the world showing the resodding of the field for the big game. Mohon headed the team from West Coast Turf that worked hand-in-hand with George Toma's crews, which included stadium personnel.

Mohon sums up the conditions that week as they attempted to strip the field and cover it with thick-cut sod: "We had so much water on the field that they had to dig a hole in the end zone to collect and pump it out of the stadium. We pulled a tarp behind us as we laid the sod."

The water came from a weather system that had stalled over Candlestick Park and was dropping an average of two inches of rain per day on the field.

the stadium.

Mohon had no idea what Toma would do in the next 60 minutes. Waiting the results, he pulled his troops together under a tarp to get away from the rain and to pump coffee into their water-soaked bodies. As they sat there contemplating how they would provide the "services as promised" that West Coast Turf is



For his "what it takes attitude" in preparing Candlestick for the January 1993 NFC title game, George Toma became the first groundskeeper to be named to football commentator John Madden's "All-Madden Team."

known for, they heard the sound of a helicopter approaching.

Appearing through the clouds and fog, the helicopter landed on the parking lot. Out of the haze walked three men — the mayor of San Francisco, the owner of the San Francisco 49ers, and Toma.

Rain was now coming down in buckets as Mohon watched the two businessmen walk onto the muddy field with Toma to observe the dilemma. The men stood there for a moment, and turned to Toma, who was speaking.

"I couldn't hear what was being said," Mohon remembers, "but George was waving his arms, and these two guys in suits were standing listening to George explaining the solution. As the two men left, their helicopter circled the stadium for one last look. George walked back to us with a smile on his face and that bright inner glow in his eyes."

The problem had been solved. The mayor agreed to send in a park-and-rec crew to alleviate the labor shortage so the job could get done on time. The field on game day was rough around the edges, but the playability was excellent, earning Toma a spot that year on sports commentator John Madden's "All-Madden Team." □

Stephen H. Guise, president-elect of the STMA, is sports turf manager for the Sports Turf division of Valley Crest, Calabasas, Calif.

If you have a story or anecdote you would like to share, call (562) 425-2449 or write it down (include your name and phone number) and mail it to Ashman & Associates, 3164 North Greenbrier Road, Long Beach, CA 90808.

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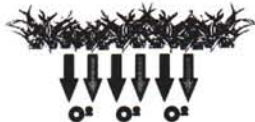


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ADVERTISER INDEX

AerWay/Holland Equipment.....	27
Aquatrols.....	19
Beacon Ballfields.....	35
Covermaster, Inc.....	15
Cygnat Turf & Equipment.....	21
Delta Bluegrass Company.....	3
Diamond Pro.....	7
Excel Industries, Inc.....	35
First Products, Inc.....	31
GCSAA.....	17
Goossen Industries.....	42
Hadeka Slate Co.....	41
Jacobsen, div. of Textron.....	5
Jaydee Equipment Company.....	25
Kifco, Inc.....	29
Level Best.....	25
M.A.S.A. Athletic Products.....	41
Parker Sweeper Company.....	33
Partac/Beam Clay.....	27
Spartan Industries/Tru-Mark Line Marker.....	29
The Toro Company, Commercial Products Div.....	48
Premier Environmental.....	2
Turf Producers International.....	16
West Coast Turf.....	10
World Class Athletic Surfaces.....	31
Zeke's Athletic Paint & Design.....	33

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