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# sportsTURF

## PROGRAM

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 7

JULY 1998

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The summer sun may be beating down, but the fall sports season is just around the corner. Are your fields ready?

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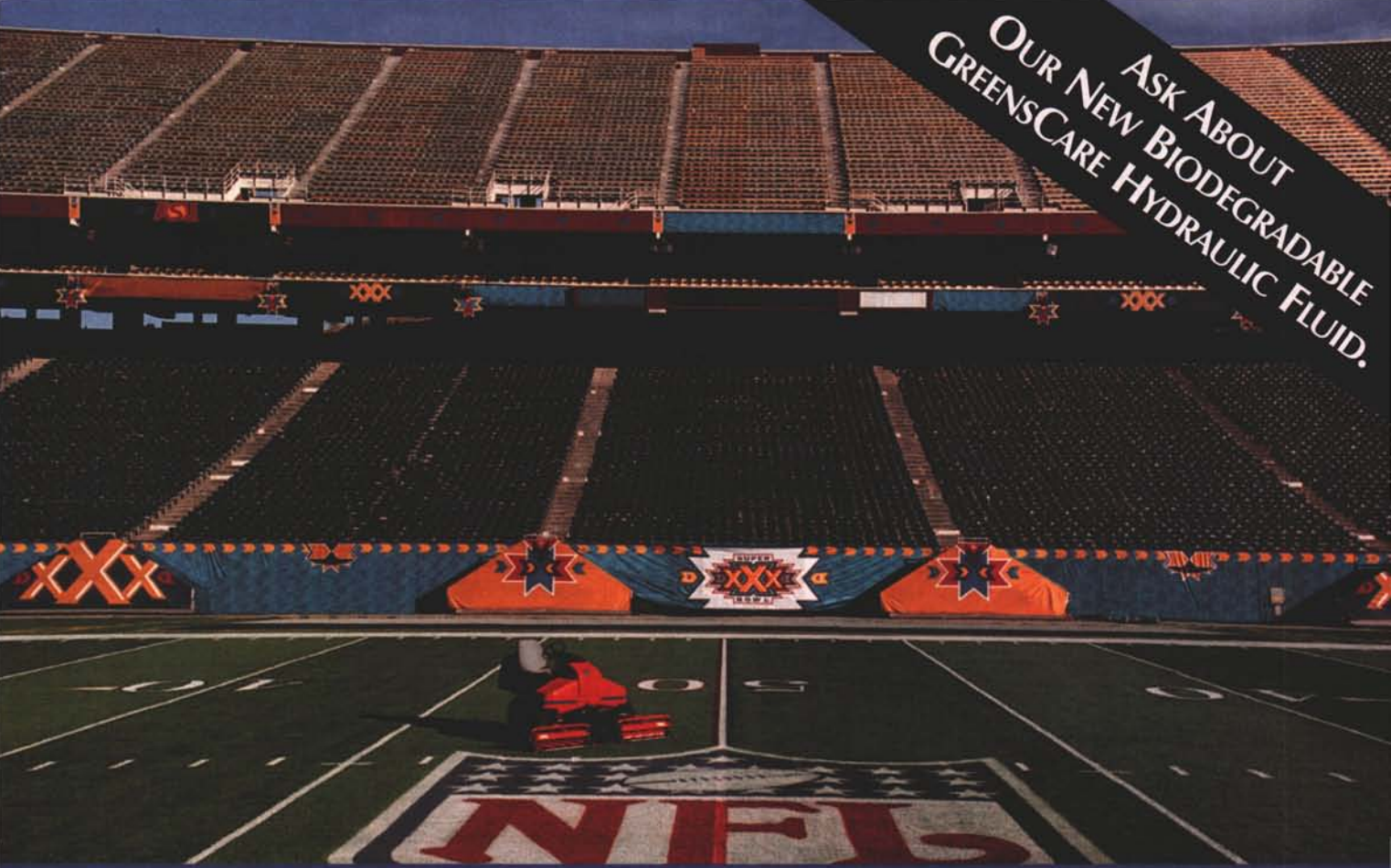


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# THE FRONT OFFICE



## sportsTURF

### Finds Religion

**C**ongratulations to Bellevue Baptist Church for taking home STMA's award for Softball Field of the year (see pg. 40). The victory should come as no surprise—the church had a pretty powerful benefactor in its corner.

In all seriousness, Director Robert Bodi and his staff have established an impressive standard with the Joy Christian Athletic Complex, and with all of their athletic facilities. They certainly deserve the recognition for a job well done.

I'd like to join STMA President Steve Guise in urging you to submit your facility to be considered for next year's Field of the Year Awards. Competition for these honors can be just as great as the competition that takes place on the field. The program can give your team an extra goal—one that takes hard work and dedication, but one that's certainly attainable. So who wants to step up to the plate?

Like the rigors of competition, every sports turf manager can relate to the problems of heavy wear and compaction. In this issue, Dr. Coleman Ward offers insight on how to assess and attack these problems (see pg. 28). For more information on the subject, refer to Steve and Suz Trusty's article, "Battling Compaction," in the March 1998 issue of *sportsTURF*.

In recent years, an inventive technique has offered a means of reducing compaction, while benefiting the environment in the process. The idea makes use of the millions of tires that are discarded every year, turning them into a topdressing material that has proven to be beneficial on heavily used turf. Instead of adding to our already crowded landfills, these tires find new life by protecting turfgrass from wear.

In an article printed in the November 1997 issue of *sportsTURF*, Rogers and Vanini explain, "The theory is that the crumb rubber particles introduced to the turf/soil system will increase turfgrass wear tolerance, reduce soil compaction, and subsequently reduce turf system inputs." Their study at Michigan State University put this theory to the test during the 1993 and 1994 seasons.

Results show this creative approach to compaction relief to be a very promising option. The rubber increased rebound in the test turf, and provided a softer, more resilient surface. It also increased the turf's surface temperature, which further improved playing conditions.

Another study conducted recently at Iowa State University supports these positive results. The April 1998 edition of *ISTMA Newsletter* reports, "results indicate that topdressing with rubber particles, when compared to a non-treated control, will result in significantly better quality, density, and percentage living turf cover of turfgrass."

Topdressing with recycled rubber is just one example of an environmentally sound maintenance practice. Michael Depew presents another in this month's Applicator's Log (see pg. 36). He introduces humates as a natural alternative to chemical field applications, citing the potential polluting effects of some of these products.

These strategies respond directly to growing concern for the environment in our communities. It's extremely important that we continue to develop these environmentally friendly techniques in our industry.

Steve Berens, Editor  
(847) 427-3005

## Tip o' the Month

### Attack Compaction

**O**n heavily used fields, calcined clay soil amendments can help eliminate long-term compaction by maintaining a high level of moisture and air migration through the soil.

The highly porous, extremely hard material holds essential moisture and nutrients that are normally leached out of the root zone. During dry periods, the calcined clay lifts this stored nourishment to thirsty roots.

These amendments create a loose, aerated environment to promote healthy growing conditions within turf. The pore spaces increase root density and depth, and promote vigorous development.

Calcined clay soil amendments are completely inorganic. The chemically inert particles retain their structure under extreme traffic and environmental conditions. They withstand both physical and chemical forces. The clay's high percolation and infiltration rates allow the root zone to be "flushed out," reducing toxin buildup.

In new field construction, calcined clay soil amendments can be used as part of the root zone mix. Rice University recently built a new practice field with a 90-percent sand / 10-percent calcined clay mixture.

On established fields, these products can be used to fill core holes following aeration. □

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*Have a tip you'd like to share? Send it to sportsTURF, 2101 S. Arlington Heights Rd., Ste. 150, Arlington Heights, IL 60005, or send an e-mail message to sberens@mail.aip.com.*



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## Pressing Issues

I think you'll all enjoy Coleman Ward's article this month on reducing field compaction. As many of you know from my past experience, compaction in sports turf is my favorite subject. I promise not to bore you with all my theories and remedies—I'll leave that to Dr. Ward. But remember that compaction is a critical condition. Cultural practices must be employed to reduce or alleviate the problem. Used correctly, these techniques will benefit your fields ten-fold. Whatever the methods, whatever the budget, whatever the level of play, the goal is always that dynamic duo—safety and playability.

Speaking of goals, our Certification Committee continues to burn the midnight oil, working hard to complete its goals. We met in June, in Providence, RI, and accomplished a great deal. The committee members express their thanks to all of you who have taken the time to provide input on certification through in-person and telephone conversations, letters, faxes, and e-mail messages to Headquarters, to Certification Committee members, and to STMA Board members.

During this fine-tuning process, committee members have given thoughtful consideration to your input. We've tried to select meeting locations that pull together as many of the committee members as possible for these face-to-face working sessions. This tends to be a complex task—you need only refer to your own packed schedule to relate.

When Providence was chosen, I had to take advantage of the chance to return to my home state, and to take the group to my old stomping grounds to sample the local Quahog Chowders and Coffee Milk. Man, that was great stuff.

Executive Director Steve Trusty, Technical Committee Co-Chair Mike DePew, and I will be presenting the STMA to the National Recreation and Park Association at its national convention September 24. Our 3-1/2-hour presentation will include an overview of the STMA, a technical review session, and a systems spotlight. We would love to have STMA members come along for support and fellowship. Let STMA Headquarters know if you are planning to attend so we can arrange to get together.

**SPECIAL REMINDER:** It's not too early to submit your Field of the Year Award entry to Headquarters. This month's issue features STMA's 1997 Softball Field of the Year: the Joy Christian Athletic Complex of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, TN. The three softball/baseball fields within the complex are a major part of the extensive sports program the Church has developed for its 23,000 members and its surrounding community.

Each Field of the Year entrant has a sports turf program with unique attributes, but similarities among the award winners are even more striking. Whether catering to players that are four or 40, amateur or professional, the sports turf manager strives to make the best possible use of existing resources, and to achieve that ultimate goal—safety and playability.

Stay in touch; the larger we grow, the more we know.

**Stephen Guise, STMA President**  
(714) 704-0403



### August 5-7

Professional Grounds Management Society's (PGMS) seventh annual Summer Grounds Maintenance Conference, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI. Contact PGMS: (410) 584-9754.

### August 12

Wisconsin Turfgrass Association's Field Day, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Facility, Verona, WI, 8:00 am-3:30 pm. Contact Audra: (608) 845-6536.

### August 12-13

Penn State Turfgrass Field Days, Joseph Valentine Turfgrass Research Center and Landscape Management Research Center, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA. Contact Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council: (814) 863-3475, or George Hamilton: (814) 865-3007.

### August 17-21

Floyd Perry's Groundskeepers Management Academy, Bethel, CT. (800) 227-9381.

### August 19

Michigan Turfgrass Field Day, Hancock Turfgrass Research Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI. Contact Kay Patrick: (517) 321-1660.

### August 24-28

Floyd Perry's Groundskeepers Management Academy, Colonial Heights, VA. (800) 227-9381.

### August 26

Ohio Turfgrass Foundation's (OTF) Field Day, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH. Contact OTF: (888) OTF-3445.

### August 31-September 4

Floyd Perry's Groundskeepers Management Academy, Kissimmee, FL. (800) 227-9381.

*continued on page 27*

# STMA 10th Annual Conference & Exhibition

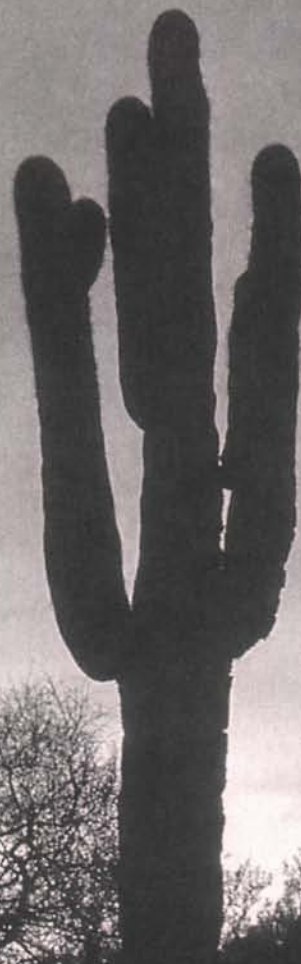
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