installation/building of landscaping and irrigation.

He's quick to cite the Irrigation Association (IA) and its certification programs as instrumental influences in his educational process. He's an IA Certified Irrigation Auditor (CLIA), Contractor (CIC), and Designer (CID), and is certified with Rain Bird for Maxicom systems.

Bodi put this background to work by developing a master irrigation system for the main campus. The system incorporates a 1,200-gallon per minute, variable-frequency drive pump station, and a 6,800-foot long, 8-inch mainline loop of piping, all controlled by a computerized Maxicom system.

All buildings use potable, county-supplied water, but landscape and field irrigation

water is drawn out of the main lake. Bodi asserts, "In four to six years, the water savings alone will cover the cost of the system components



From left to right: Facility Director Robert Bodi, Supervisor Clifford Smith, and Floyd Perry of Grounds Maintenance Services presenting the Field of the Year plaque at a Mid-South Chapter STMA meeting. Courtesy: Chip Houmes

and the labor costs." Bodi also developed the field, landscape, and irrigation system designs. Grounds department per-

sonnel handled the irrigation installation, sodding, sprigging, and finishing of the playing surface. Contractors installed the Musco lighting system, most of the hardscape features, and the fencing.

Each of the three new fields is 285 feet deep in every position and has a turfgrass infield, a warning track, lighting, and bleacher seating for approximately 100 spectators. During construction, workers skimmed the area soil and filled it to develop a level surface. They augmented the native claybased soil with composted chicken manure and a whitewashed sand. The fields have no underlying drainage systems. A crown of approximately

one foot per 100 feet provides surface drainage.

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The Joy Christian Complex stands adjacent to another of the Church's excellent facilities. Grace Family Life Center houses four basketball courts and a running track. Courtesy: Robert Bodi

Workers cultivated the skinned surface with four tons of Pro's-Choice soil amendments per field, and topped each with a crushed-brick Crimson stone. They topped the warning track with Crimson stone as well.

"The fields have a high-performance Rain Bird irrigation system consisting of R-70. Falcon, and T-Bird heads controlled by the Maxicom Central irrigation system," says Bodi. "The separate skinned or turf area zones also can be cycled in the field from hand-held digital phones. Hose outlets are strategically placed for quick water access."

In late August 1996, the grounds crew sprigged the fields with Mississippi Choice, a new hybrid bermudagrass that features thick, growth characteristics.

vigorous Supervisor Smith says, "We finetuned the fertilization and irrigation to get good sprig establishment. We then overseeded with perennial rvegrass at two to three times the nor-



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mal rate to prevent winter kill. The fields looked great in early spring of 1997, but cool weather kept the perennial ryegrass active through summer and fall. We didn't need to overseed.

"Following the cool, wet spring of 1998, the bermudagrass finally kicked in well. Because the fields. are in play by April, we want the extra top growth, and will overseed again this fall."

The crew sodded areas surrounding the new fields in early April 1997. They topped the warning track and skinned areas with red stone at the start of the 1997 season. but the skinned surface was softer than desired during wet periods. Smith says, "This spring we worked in some Pro's Choice, but didn't remove the old material. We're finetuning the mix there and on the mounds to find the right combination to withstand our level of play."

Fertilization is based on soil tests, and granular applications are made at three- to four-week intervals. Smith explains, "We spike aerate at a four- to six-inch depth, covering the field twice. Our first aeration occurs about mid-May. This year we plan on monthly aeration during the playing season. We're topdressing following aeration with approximately a 1/4-inch layer of the same sand used in the field construction."

The 10 older fields have skinned infields and common bermudagrass turf. Maintenance is less intensive, and includes twice-a-week mowing and game-day grooming with the field rake. The outfield lines are painted and the batter's box chalked.

"We control field use in bad weather, which helps keep the low-maintenance fields in safe, playable condition," says Smith. "We meet with our activities director at around 2:00 pm. make the decision, and put the play or no play message on a team hotline."

Though maintenance schedules incorporate IPM practices, both preand post-emergence herbicide applications may be needed on the new fields. Non-selective controls are used around the warning tracks and fence lines. In 1997, the grounds crew applied Primo to control growth on the new field turf and the surrounding turf areas.

Regular maintenance

The in-house crew mows the playing surfaces approximately every other day using a ride-on reel mower. Turf is maintained at a one-inch height from March through May and in October and November, and at a 3/4-inch height June through September.

The grounds crew works from 7:00 am to 3:00 pm, so no crew member is on hand for post-game maintenance. This presents a maintenance challenge, especially during rainy conditions.

Smith says, "Another major challenge is the constant changing of the pitching rubber and base pads to accommodate the wide range of leagues that play on a single field. With softball and baseball pitchers and coach-pitch ball, we have a throwing distance variance from 30 feet to 54 feet. We reset the mound according to who is playing that day.

"To counteract 1997 turf damage at the front of the traditional mound, we borrowed a tip from BOB (Bank One Ballpark in Phoenix, AZ) and cut out a strip of turf from the mound to home plate, converting it to skinned area material on two of the three fields."

Standard excellence

Bodi and Smith have found that the high standards set for the complex have helped raise the level of field care. "Parents see the conditions here and ask for the same kinds of fields at home. Earning the award increased that exposure," says Bodi.

Each spring, the Church rededicates the playing fields in prayer. All the teams' members turn out in uniform, along with coaches, supporters, youth band, banner carriers, and parents. They all march from the church to the fields for prayers of dedication, and then each team plays an inning of ball.

Bodi says, "Seeing those 4,000 people coming in joy to our ball fields made all the work worthwhile. I just started to cry—for these kids, these families, and most of all, for the Lord." Bob Tracinski is manager of public relations for the John Deere Company in Raleigh, NC, and is public relations co-chair for the national Sports Turf Managers Association.

Game Day Preparations

- Trash patrol and clean restrooms at fields
- Spruce up flower beds
- Repair mound and home plate area by hand
- Mow (every other day or as conditions warrant)
- Use sprinkler system to lightly irrigate skinned area
- Use field rake to groom skinned area
- Hand rake skinned surface in two-foot border around turf
- Sweep off turf edges with broom
- Use irrigation system again to lightly irrigate skinned area
- · Smooth out warning tracks
- Paint foul lines; chalk batter's box
- Clean up and prepare dugouts

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Athletic Directors

Sports Turf Managers

l'Edin Up

by Connie Rudoph

eamwork does make a difference. This definitely turned out to be the case when the Minnesota Sports Turf Managers Association joined forces with the Minnesota Athletic Directors Association for a spring workshop May 6. The joint meeting was billed as "Turf Day."

Seventy-five attendees gathered at 9:00 am at the high school campus in Farmington, MN, eager to cash in on the promise of quality field-care information. That promise was fulfilled in presentations based on practical, down-toearth information, and in demonstrations packed with ideas to take home and put to use.

John Hopko of Professional Turf & Renovation opened the program by discussing how to get the most out of fields on a tight budget. He focused on the practical aspects of preparing and maintaining nativesoil fields to withstand today's typical heavy-use schedules. Hopko combined examples from his company's renovation experience with questions from attendees.

Next, Mike Kelly of the Glenn Rehbein Company covered examples of field renovation projects. He included information on the costs of building different types of fields. Dr. Don White from the University of Minnesota closed the classroom portion of the workshop. He used slides to illustrate different types of fields,



Pictured left to right: MSTMA joint workshop attendees Tom Rudburg, University of St. Thomas (seated); Lori Gislason, University of Minnesota; and Shannon Hendrickson, Farmington Independent School District. Courtesy: Connie Rudolph

showing both good and bad examples and explaining the details of each. He used the examples to help attendees work through the basics of diagnosing soil-related problems and developing strategies to combat them.

The workshop proceeded with demonstrations of field-care equip-

ment. Attendees saw groomers, mowers, and aerators in action on the Farmington High School baseball field.

The groups were buzzing as the networking and idea exchange continued during a great lunch.

This joint event grew from our chapter's annual spring membership drive. Shannon Hendrickson, our immediate past president, had suggested that we contact Pete Veldman, executive secretary of MADA, about the possibility of including an advertisement or a flyer promoting our spring workshop in the organization's newsletter. Once Hendrickson explained the type of event we were planning, he and Veldman began discussing common problems, and Veldman suggested bringing the two groups together in a joint workshop.

Hendrickson had already offered his school's facilities for the spring workshop. The MSTMA Board agreed to come up with the speakers, recruit companies for the demonstra-



tions, and make arrangements for lunch. We put together the promotional flyer, included it in our newsletter to members, and sent it to our extended mailing list. All of this was standard procedure for organizing a regular chapter workshop.

MADA covered the costs of copies and the mailing costs of including the flyer in its newsletter. MSTMA handled the registration duties, and the chapter retained the funds generated by the workshop.

This successful outreach to one of our targeted groups was far easier and

more successful than we'd anticipated. The enthusiasm was so great that plans were already brewing for the 1999 joint workshop before the end of the session.

Connie Rudolph is groundskeeper for Midway Stadium, St. Paul, MN.

Chapter news

Colorado Chapter: The Colorado Sports Turf Managers Association will "Mountain hold its Seminar" July 17, at Springs. Steamboat CSTMA's annual golf tournament, "Lawnmower Man Open," will be held Monday, July 13, at West Woods Golf Course in Arvada.

For more information on these events, the Colorado Chapter, or other upcoming activities, call the 24-hour CSTMA chapter hotline/fax: (303) 438-9645.

Minnesota Chapter: The Minnesota Sports Turf Managers Association will hold its "Workshop on Wheels" July 15, starting at Midway Stadium in St. Paul. Events begin with groomer demonstrations. The tour then moves to Canterbury Park, a horse racing facility. Following lunch at Canterbury Park, the group heads to Lakeville for a tour of the high school athletic fields, including the new football field. A tour of the Apple Valley Park Sports Complex follows. The group then heads to Turf Supply for the last tour of the day. The workshop wraps up back at Midway Stadium for tailgating, networking, and a St. Paul Saints game.

The chapter is also planning a workshop in September. For information on the "Workshop on Wheels", the September event, the Minnesota Chapter, or other pending activities, contact Connie Rudolph: (612) 646-1679.

KAFMO Chapter: Keystone Athletic Field Managers Organization joins PGMS, the Penn-Del Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture, Westtown School, and Penn State Cooperative Extension in sponsoring "Grounds



Attendees take advantage of field demonstrations at MSTMA's joint workshop. Courtesy: Connie Rudolph

Managers Field Day" July 15, at Westtown School in Westtown, PA. Registration and trade show both open at noon.

A triple offering of grounds, tree, and turf tours run from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm. Attendees choose one of three selections: a grounds walk with Dr. Jim Sellmer, horticultural specialist at Penn State; an arboriculture program with Penn-Del ISA Chapter leaders, which will feature a discussion of lightning protection for large trees; or a focus on athletic field management topics with Multi-County Turfgrass Agent Nancy Bosold and KAFMO members.

Following the tours, attendees return to the trade show for more browsing, refreshments, and door prizes. The traditional picnic supper will be held from 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm.

For information on this event, other upcoming activities, or the KAFMO Chapter, contact Dan Douglas of the Reading Phillies Baseball Club: (610) 375-8469 ext. 212.

Iowa Chapter: The Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association will participate in the "Iowa Turfgrass Field Day" July 16, at the ISU Horticulture Research Station in Ames. ISTMA will also participate in

> the "Iowa Turf Institute (ITI) Golf Tournament" September 14, at Glen Oaks Country Club in West Des Moines, IA. Further details will be announced soon.

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

> Midwest Chapter: The Midwest Chapter will hold its "Athletic Field Construction Seminar" July 29, at the Carol Stream Park District, Carol Stream, IL. The seminar will highlight Panther Football Field.

For information on this event, the Midwest Chapter, or other pending activities, call the chapter hotline: (847) 622-3517.

Southern California

Chapter: The chapter is planning its annual community service project for early August at Mount San Antonio College in Walnut, LA County. Further details will be announced soon.

For information on the service project, the Southern California Chapter, or pending activities, contact the chapter hotline: (888) 578-STMA (toll free in Southern California).

Mid-South Chapter: The Mid-South Chapter STMA is planning a tour of the new Redbird Stadium now under construction in Memphis.

For more information on this event, the chapter, any of the regions, or other pending activities, contact Chip Houmes: (901) 377-5081, or Jim Calhoun: (901) 755-1305.



Nor-Cal Chapter: For general information about the Northern California Chapter STMA, contact Sal Genito, UC Davis: (530) 752-1691.

Florida Chapter #1: For information on the Florida Chapter or pending activities, contact John Mascaro: (954) 938-7477.

MAFMO Chapter: For information on the MAFMO Chapter or upcoming activities, contact the hotline: (410) 290-5652.

Chapters on the grow

Wisconsin Chapter: The newly forming Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association will meet July 22, from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. Registration opens at 8:30 am.

The program includes: Mike Schiller, STMA Immediate Past "The President, Benefits of the National STMA"; Rich Riggs, "The Benefits of WSTMA"; John Stier, University of Wisconsin-Madison, "Sports Turf Research Update"; Chris Brinkley, University Wisconsin-Stevens of Point. "Equipment for Sports Turf Management"; and a training session on equipment used to maintain facilities at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

For information on this meeting, contact the O.J. Noer Turf Grass Facility: (608) 845-6536.

For more information on the forming chapter, contact Rich Riggs, R. H. Rettler & Associates, Inc.: (715) 341-2633.

Arizona Chapter: STMAAZ is planning a July meeting in Show Low. For information on this meeting, the Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona, or upcoming events, contact Bill Murphy, City of Scottsdale Parks and Recreation Department: (602) 994-7954, or Kris Kircher, City of Chandler Parks & Recreation Department: (602) 786-2728.

Great Plains Chapter: Plans are moving forward for a fall workshop and for a workshop with Floyd Perry of Grounds Maintenance Services. More details will be announced soon.

For information on these events, the Great Plains Chapter, or other upcoming activities, contact Mark Schimming, City of Wichita: (316) 337-9123.

Indiana Chapter: Plans are moving forward on the formation of a new chapter in Indiana. For information on this developing chapter, contact Terry Updike, B & B Fertilizer: (219) 356-8424, or Pat Hickner: (800) 672-4273.

Michigan Chapter: The newly forming chapter is planning a July event at Michigan State University. It will include a presentation on field marking, and a tour of the athletic facilities. An August event with presentations on football field compaction is also in the planning stages. More details will be announced soon.

For information on these events, the developing chapter, or other pending activities, contact Rick Jurries, West Ottawa Public Schools: (616) 395-2364.

Great Lakes Chapter: Great Lakes Sports Turf Managers Association is planning an August golf outing at Carleton Glen Golf Club, and a November meeting in Toledo, OH. Executive board meetings are scheduled for July 28, August 25, September 29, and October 27.

A call for 1998 GLSTMA Sports Facility Awards entries has been issued by direct mail and in the GLSTMA Newsletter. The deadline is September 1.

For information on these events, the awards program, or the newly forming chapter, contact Joe Zelinko: (800) 897-9714, or Boyd Montgomery: (419) 885-1982.

Nevada Chapter: For information on the forming Nevada Chapter STMA or upcoming events, contact Ibsen Dow: (702) 649-1551, or Alan Paulson, Clark County School District: (702) 799-8724.

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In the News------

Toro and Disney host Sports Turf Pro Club

Turf managers from across the nation recently gathered at Disney's Wide World of Sports in Orlando, FL, for the first-ever Sports Turf Professionals Club. The three-day conference, sponsored by the Toro Company, allowed sports turf managers to learn and share the latest techniques in the industry.

Steve Cockerham, superintendent of agricultural operations at the University of California-Riverside, acted as the keynote speaker for the event. He's chiefly responsible for developing and growing turf for Bank One Ballpark, the new retractable-done stadium in Phoenix. His presentation discussed the work that went into researching and designing the project, and the installation itself.

The Sports Turf Managers Association sent several members to Orlando to participate in the event. Executive Director Steve Trusty explained, "Events like Toro's Sports Turf Pro Club help bring the industry together and raise awareness of how professional the industry and the STMA have become, and create opportunities for our members' future growth."

According to STMA officials, that growth has been extraordinary of late. Membership has doubled over the past two years, and there's no sign that that trend will slow down anytime soon. The demand for professional sports turf managers has never been higher.



In the News

Jody Gill, grounds manager for Blue Valley School District in Overland Park, KS, tests the turf at Disney's Wide World of Sports NFL Challenge. *Courtesy: Toro*

Sports turf contractors launch new association

A the recent Sports Turf Managers Association Conference in Orlando, FL, a group of 12 people representing eight sports field contractors met to discuss the feasibility of establishing a new association specifically directed to sports turf contractors. Discussions went well, and the Sports Turf Contractors Association (STCA) was born.

The group determined that it would continue to take an active role in the STMA, and that it would compliment rather than compete with its parent organization. STMA Board members threw their support behind the initiative, and the new STCA appointed a committee to act as a liaison between the organizations.

The following will serve as the STCA's initial board of officers:

- Aaron McWhorter; Sports Turf Company, Inc. *President*
- Paul Franks, S.W. Franks Construction Co. Vice President
- Charlie Hendricks, Woerner Sports Turf Secretary / Treasurer

The STCA will work to promote sports field construction standards, and to improve the overall construction quality and safety of fields at all levels. A mission statement is currently in the works, and the organization is actively seeking prospective members.

Initial annual membership dues have been set at \$500, and the STCA will most likely hold its annual meeting in conjunction with the STMA Conference.

For more information, call Aaron McWhorter or Dan Wright: (800) 273-8608.



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