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Web Site Content www.sportsturfonline.com

STMA Newsletter

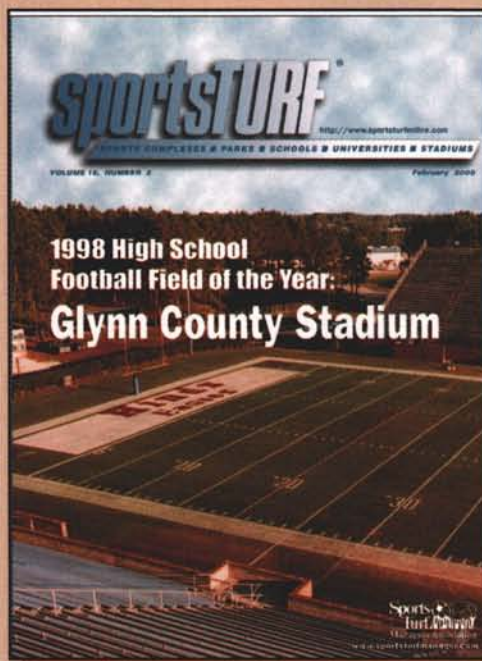
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On the Cover:



Glynn County Stadium
Brunswick, Ga.



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Spirit in St. Louis

From what I heard, St. Louis experienced fantastic weather between Jan. 12-16.

Personally, I wouldn't know. Not because I wasn't in the "Gateway to the West;" I was. I just didn't get out much.

Almost all the features of the 11th Annual Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) Conference and Trade Show were held in the Regal Riverfront Hotel. Registration, meals, educational sessions, workshops, the trade show and the awards ceremony were all held under one roof. Overall, there were more than 500 registered attendees at the convention, plus 245 exhibiting personnel from the 88 companies participating in the trade show.

Many of you were with me in St. Louis for this event, and I had a great time meeting several of you, finally putting names and faces to people I had known only as voices on the telephone or pictures in a magazine. From talking with you—either formally in sessions, conferences, discussions and workshops, or informally at meals and in elevators—I learned a wealth of invaluable information about the sports turf industry.

The highlight for me was the STMA Annual Awards Banquet, held on Friday evening. The air of formality was lifted from the banquet when, after Steve Trusty gave his invocation, four large, bearded men wearing leather and denim stormed the hall, shouting out as they marched between the tables. There was nervous laughter as Steve called out for security, but it soon became obvious that these men were part of the show. The four men, members of a musical group called "Expanded Sound," mounted a small stage and cracked jokes in between humorous songs sung in the style of a barbershop quartet. They returned after dinner, this time in golfing attire, to do their act again and received another great response from the crowd.

The round table discussions held on the last full day of the conference showed me the true spirit of the STMA. I listened to Steve Wightman, stadium turf manager of QUALCOMM Stadium, share tips, secrets and stories with turf managers from minor league, college and recreational ball parks across the country. There was no hierarchy to the discussion, no sense that because Steve works at a Major League facility he had a higher standing among those seated around him. They were just men and women talking turf, pure and simple, and it was very encouraging to see.

Business

It wasn't all talk in St. Louis. The board met on Saturday for its annual meeting, where Stephen Guise handed the (enormous) presidential gavel to Rich Moffitt, who addressed the crowd for the first time as Association President. Check the masthead on page 40 for an updated listing of STMA officers and board members.

All in all it was a great week in St. Louis, filled with laughs, learning, networking and some moderate drinking in the Dugout Bar. And while I never was able to experience the great weather outside, I can say this much: The temperature in the hotel was just fine.

Michael SanFilippo
(847) 427-2083

Calendar of Events 2000

February 8-12

Turfgrass Producers International (TPI) Midwinter Conference & Exposition: "Turfgrass Sod Production for the New Millennium," Adam's Mark Hotel, San Antonio, Texas. Feb. 8: Inaugural Al Gardner Memorial Golf Outing, The Quarry Golf Club, San Antonio, Texas. Contact Tom Ford: (800) 405-TURF (8873)/(847) 705-9898, or Turf-Grass@msn.com.

February 9-11

Western Pennsylvania Turf Conference & Trade Show, Pittsburgh Expo Mart/Radisson Hotel, Monroeville, Pa. Contact PTC: (814) 863-3475.

February 15-16

Rutgers University (RU) continuing education course: "Successful Identifying and Effectively Managing Turf Weeds," RU, New Brunswick, N.J. Contact Kurt Martens: (732) 932-8451.

February 21-25

Cornell University's Turfgrass Management Short Course, Holiday Inn and Conference Center, Fishkill, N.Y. Tuition: \$600. Contact Joann Gruttadaurio: (607) 255-1792 or jg17@cornell.edu.

February 22-24

Ohio State University Professional Grounds Maintenance Short Course, Holiday Inn on the Lane, Columbus, Ohio. Cost: \$190. Contact Barb Bloetscher: (614) 292-7457.

STMA MESSAGE



www.sportsturfmanager.com



Gateway to the Future

Welcome to the new millennium. It's fitting that we started this new century in our nation's Gateway City—St. Louis—with STMA's 11th Annual Conference & Exhibition, "Gateway to the 21st Century." My wish for all of you is that this new century will be filled with exciting challenges and positive outcomes, and with peace, joy and prosperity.

I thank you members of the Sports Turf Managers Association for the pleasure and honor of allowing me to step up to the office of president of the Association. I look forward to serving you. I've been privileged to hold several different positions while serving as a member of your board of directors: membership chair, treasurer, conference chair and president-elect. In each of these positions, I've gained experience in the many aspects of STMA as an organization and I've had the opportunity to learn about the needs and wants of our members.

I initially became involved in STMA because of a need of my own. As director of grounds and materials management for Saint Louis University, I'm responsible for all the grounds, including the athletic fields. In 1990, the university had only one turf sports field, a baseball field, and I was to take charge of rebuilding it. During a bull session with a colleague of mine, Dr. Dave Minner, I mentioned the project as one more thing added to my already crowded schedule. Dave, who was at that time on the STMA board of directors, noted that STMA was filled with resources I could tap into, urged me to get involved and supplied me with the names of several members to contact.

I started calling those people and they all connected with me, and they also led me to still other people. I basically built a baseball field over the phone thanks to all these people sharing so much of their time and expertise. I was impressed.

So I became a member and attended the next STMA Conference, and it was like my phone experience all over again. There I was, a new guy, with what at that time was a small sports field base, and everyone treated me like one of the group, welcomed me to conversations and answered my multiple questions.

Through all this, I've built a nationwide network of people I can connect with to talk, to share ideas and to exchange information. Many of these contacts have developed into good fellowships and friendships over the years.

Now, as I look ahead for STMA, while we clearly want to retain the important networking factor, to continue to expand our membership and to retain the strong financial position we've achieved, another prime goal is to develop a strategic plan that will allow the association to expand our services to members in areas of communication, recognition, research, scholarships and more.

We've already made tremendous strides with the certification program. Working together, we can elevate the status of the sport turf manager in the United States and around the world.

Rich Moffitt
STMA President
(314) 977-2956

February 29

New York State Turfgrass Association's (NYSTA) Southeast Regional Conference, Holiday Inn, Suffern, N.Y. Contact NYSTA: (800) 873-8873 or (518) 783-1229.

February 29-March 1

Southern Illinois Grounds Maintenance School, Gateway Convention Center, Collinsville, Ill. Contact Ron Cornwell: (618) 692-9434.

March 6-9

New England Regional Turf Conference & Show (NERTCS), Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence, R.I. Pesticide re-certification credits available. Contact NERTCS: (401) 848-0004.

March 9

NYSTA's Western Regional Conference, Radisson Hotel & Suites, Buffalo, N.Y. Contact NYSTA: (800) 873-8873 or (518) 783-1229.

March 9-10

Ohio State University Sports Turf/Athletic Field Short Course, Camp Cheerful, Cleveland, Ohio. Cost: \$190. Contact Barb Bloetscher: (614) 292-7457.

April 5

NYSTA's Adirondack Regional Conference, Hilton Lake Placid Resort, Lake Placid, N.Y. Contact NYSTA: (800) 873-8873 or (518) 783-1229.

July 22-24

Outdoor Power Equipment Institute's (OPEI) 17th annual International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo (EXPO 2000), Kentucky Exposition Center, Louisville, Ky. Contact Sellers Expositions: (800) 558-8767 or (502) 562-1962.

October 4-5

Southern California Turfgrass Council's (SCTC) Turfgrass Landscape and Equipment Expo, Orange County Fairgrounds, Costa Mesa, Calif. Contact SCTC: (800) 500-SCTC (7282) or (818) 764-5016, or expo@turfCouncil.org.

Glynn County Stadium Earns Top Honors as STMA 1998 High School Football Field of the Year

by Bob Tracinski

STMA's 1998 High School Field of the Year, Glynn County Stadium, Brunswick, Ga., is in the heart of serious football territory. Coaches and players are dedicated to the game, and fans love it. It takes a high quality field to meet—and exceed—a community's lofty expectations, and this field has done it.

The stadium is located two blocks off U.S. Highway 17 on the Atlantic Coast, just one hour south of Savannah, Ga., and one hour north of Jacksonville, Fla. Marsh land and the ocean lie on one side of the field; a long-closed, sealed landfill, now used for the stadium's overflow parking, lies on the other.

Field Construction

Funding to build the facility came through a publicly-approved \$1.875 million bond issue in the fall of 1985. Actual construction took place in 1986. Seating capacity is 12,013 including 2,300 reserved seats and 20 wheelchair spaces. There is a two story press box on the home side and a field house with full locker room facilities for both home and visiting teams, plus public restrooms and a concession area. Night lighting consists of four poles, each 98 feet tall, with a total of 72 metal halite fixtures.

Part of the land that now holds the stadium was once a small airport. The remainder was acquired from Coastal Georgia Community College and, as part of the original agreement, the complex was to be available for the college's use should they ever institute a football program. Pine trees, planted in rows, covered much of the land acquired from the college.

"When the trees and stumps were removed, what was left was decomposed organic matter mixed with the very sandy native soil," Don Skeens, grounds and sports turf director, says. "It was used to provide an excellent profile for



STMA President Steve Guise (right) presents the Field of the Year Award to Don Skeens, Glynn County Stadium.

our field. We'll still pull up some pine pieces during aeration, but that's a minor problem.

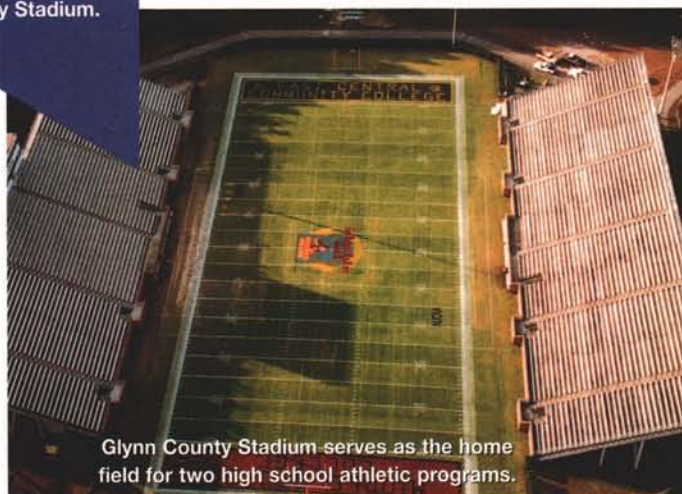
"The field was constructed with an 8-inch crown from center field to sideline. Over the years, that crowning had diminished. Starting in 1995, we've brought in a verti-drain unit in early June to deep aerate the field. We use this in two directions, covering the field lengthwise and widthwise. We then apply between 110 and 120 tons of topdressing sand. The sand is laser graded after having been strategically placed to fill in low areas and gradually rebuild the crown. We spend approximately \$4,000 for each summer's process, but the payback is a

tremendous improvement in the drainage, turf quality, condition, color, root production, rapid growth and overall appearance of the field.

"A six-inch drain tile is buried in the swale along the sidelines of the field. Catch basins located along the tile catch any excess water and channel it to a holding basin. The field can handle most downpours and remain playable without any wet or 'mushy' spots."

Rush Hour Traffic

Handling play is an understatement for this heavily-used facility where football reigns from Aug. 15 into December. The varsity football teams of the two district high schools, Glynn Academy and Brunswick High, each play five or six home games in the fall. For the last four years, there have been at least two playoff games on the field, starting the week before Thanksgiving. In 1999 there



Glynn County Stadium serves as the home field for two high school athletic programs.

were three consecutive Friday night playoff games, running into December.

The freshmen and junior varsity teams from each school use the district's older stadium for their regular game field, but play each other at Glynn County Stadium for the last game of their season. Every third year, the field

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4300	32HP
4400	35HP
4500	39HP
4600	43HP
4700	48HP



hosts a round robin jamboree of four teams (two outside teams and the two home teams), with each team playing a quarter and a half.

There's also the high school football spring training season. That brings two weeks of practice culminating with a game between the two teams at the stadium, usually on the last Saturday of May. Then there is the Golden Isle Bowl, a season-ending junior college

game that raises money for the area's middle school athletic programs.

"The bowl game is always on the first Saturday of December and involves junior and community colleges only," Skeens says. "One of the two junior colleges in Georgia always is invited. We try to select the highest ranked team available as the opponent. This past year, Georgia Military played Montgomery Junior College out of

Montgomery, Md., with the game going back-to-back, Friday and Saturday, with our third high school playoff game. The Golden Isle Bowl has been called "The Only Junior College Bowl Game East of the Mississippi River."

As if that weren't enough, for two years, a local semi-professional team from the Southeastern League had leased the field for five additional games, plus a potential of up to three playoff games. That team disbanded after the 1998 season.

The soccer season begins in early February and runs through the end of April. Each school has both boys and girls freshman, junior varsity and varsity teams and each of them play about eight to nine games on the field, for a total of approximately 48 games. The playoffs come on top of that.

The middle school now plays both football and soccer. Their game field is located inside the outdoor track on site. So during football and soccer seasons, there generally are home games on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights at the other game fields and on Friday nights and some Saturdays at Glynn County Stadium. There are also nine practice fields and a lighted baseball field.

"Our crew of three groundskeepers and their supervisor have the responsibility of painting and lining all the game fields along with handling the maintenance on all the fields," Skeens says. "They do a great job."

Maintenance Challenges

The region's mild weather produces another set of challenges in the form of insect and disease infestations. Skeens notes mole crickets are the toughest and most consistent pest, with controlling them being an issue of not if, but when.

"Mole crickets can ruin an athletic field in a week, so continual monitoring is essential," Skeens says. "Insecticide applications must be made at just the right stage of their cycle to get the best results, and products must be alternated to avoid developing resistance. Application timing also must be coordinated with field use schedules. IPM practices are essential in keeping the upper hand."

Any major field work must take place between the last week of May and Aug. 15 to accommodate football "walk throughs" and band on-field positioning practices once or twice for each school before the season kicks off.



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