

and consistently an individual puts their knowledge and experience to work. Most individuals who invest the time and effort to reach certification status will have both the ability and the management skills to successfully fulfill the most demanding positions.

Certification Benefits for the Industry

Certification will benefit the industry as well. Study of the competencies and the resultant discussion of the competencies among industry professionals are sure to result in a solid knowledge base and perhaps in some degree of standardization of practices. Because of the broad scope addressed in the competencies, it becomes necessary for each certified sports field manager to demonstrate understanding and mastery not only of agronomics and turfgrass physiology, but also of such factors as the maintenance of baseball field skinned areas and the principles of irrigation management.

As knowledge is accumulated and skills are honed, the level of professionalism rises not only in individual programs, but across the industry. Just as great sports accomplishments raise the bar for all competitors, excellence in field care raises the level of expectations for all sports turf managers. The results are better fields and safer fields at all levels of sports competition.

Challenges arise as well. Where budgets and staffing levels aren't adequate to meet the level of expectations within the parameters at the existing level of field use, the site's sports turf manager is faced with informing and educating the facility owners, user groups, athletes and coaches. While sports turf managers are highly effective at doing the most with the least, there are limits to what can be accomplished. STMA will need to continue an aggressive program of education within the green industry, the sports community and the general public to help get this message across. Information about the certification program and the combination of knowledge and skill required to achieve certification will be a part of this message. The Certified Sports Field Manager status as designated by the logo and the initials CSFM after the name of a certified individual on business cards, stationery and other correspondence will constantly reinforce that message.

Certification Benefits STMA and Its Membership

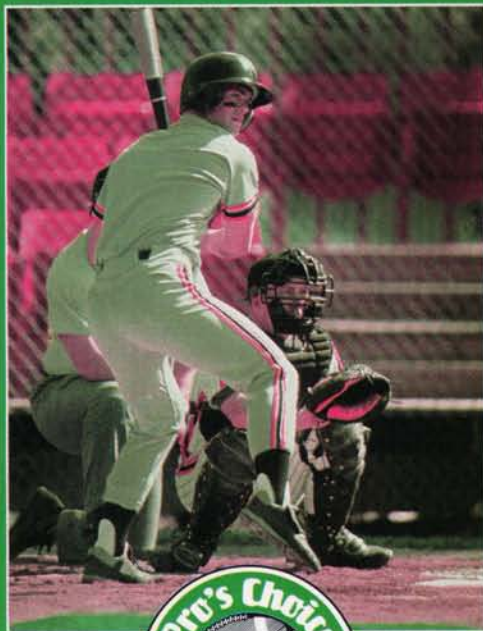
Greater awareness of STMA and of the certification program will help to increase STMA membership numbers. With increased membership, we build a greater base of brain power and human resources. This impacts areas of education and research as well as networking opportunities. It also attracts more financial power to the association, expanding the funding available for educational opportunities, scholarships, internships and research.

The certification program also will increase STMA's level of recognition within the green industry and the sports community. STMA becomes the agency certifying a specified level of competency and at the same time helps gain acknowledgment of both the complexity of the profession and the need for adequate funding for field development and maintenance.

The rising professionalism of the STMA membership will translate across the association in the commitment and dedication within board positions, committee positions and overall member involvement. This will extend to the chapter level and from there to the community level.

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The Upward Process

In effect, the certification program has kicked off a huge upward spiral, with a growing level of professionalism extending from individual to individual across the industry.

Now that the certification program is in place, updating it will be an ongoing process. Sports turf management is a complex and multi-faceted profession, and new technology is continually being introduced and demands for field use are increasing. The STMA anticipates the need for the certification program to reflect, and be responsive to, industry progress. The three-year certification renewal cycle is designed to keep certified individuals responsive to industry progress as well.

There's no better position to be in as we enter the new millennium.

Dale Getz is Athletic Facilities Manager for the University of Notre Dame and co-chair of the Certification Committee.

Editor's Note: If you haven't received an applicant packet and would like one, please contact STMA Headquarters: phone (800) 323-3875; fax (712) 366-9119; or e-mail SportsTMgr@aol.com.

Appendix 1. The Certification Process

In order to apply for certification, an applicant must achieve a minimum of 40 points earned through a combination of education and experience. (This is outlined in the criteria in Figure 1.)

The certification applicant packet contains a credentialing information booklet which outlines the basics of the program and the procedures to follow in making the application. The application forms and education worksheets are in the packet.

Also included is a "Competency Outline" and a "List of Competencies" in the areas of agronomics, pest management, administration and sports specific field management. The List of Competencies was developed by the Certification Committee in "need to know" areas that relate to the four defined segments of study and of testing. Each segment is introduced by the statement, "In order to qualify for the designation Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM), you should be able to," and followed by the specific competencies in that area.

A Resource List for the Sports Turf Manager, a general educational tool which is available from STMA Headquarters, also is in the certification applicant packet.

Once all the qualifications for application are met, the qualified applicant will be scheduled for a written multiple choice test developed for the four major sections pertinent for a sports turf manager. These will be proctored tests con-


ducted at accepted assessment centers so that each qualified applicant can sit for the test as it fits their schedule.

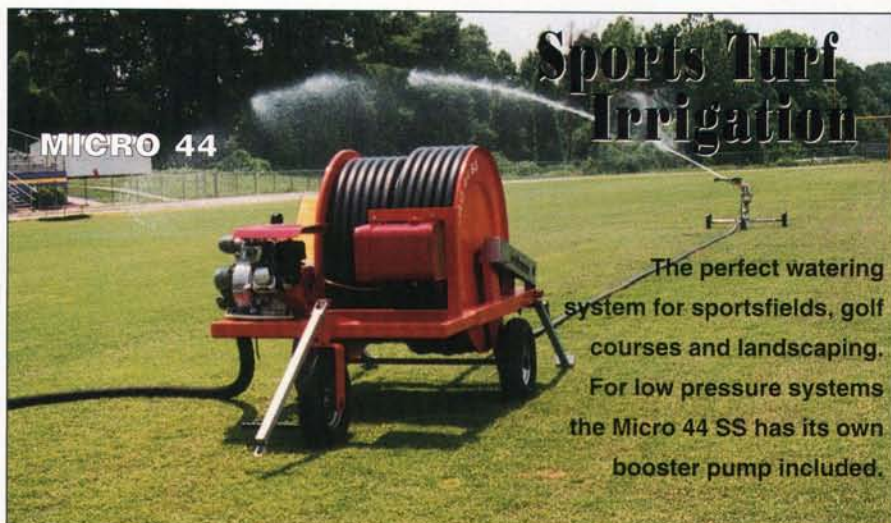
In addition, the test will be offered under similar supervised conditions in conjunction with each STMA Annual Conference, beginning with the 11th Annual Conference and Exhibition held Jan. 12-16, 2000, in St. Louis. Testing for those who have submitted their applications and have been pre-approved to sit for the test will take place on the morning of Jan. 16 at the Regal Riverfront Hotel, beginning at 8 a.m.

Each section of the test must be passed to achieve certification. A passing grade is 80 percent. If an individual does not receive a passing grade in any section of the test, that part of the test will need to be retaken within the parameters outlined in the credentialing booklet. If an individual fails to pass that portion of the test, or fails to complete the testing process within the established time limitation, they will need to start over. A review process has been established within the certification program to handle individual's questions on specific issues related to qualifications and testing.

Once an individual becomes certified, they keep their certification status active through a certification renewal process by meeting specific standards within a three year cycle. These standards will include Continuing Education Units (CEUs), as defined and accepted by national educational accreditation standards and, as with the awarding of most CEUs, requiring pre-approval and proof of participation.

Unique to the STMA certification renewal process is meeting the specified level of Industry Service Points (ISPs) within the same three year cycle. These will be earned by participation in such activities as sports field related service projects and by contributions to the sports turf industry by such activities as providing articles for newsletters, magazines or other publications; coordinating, hosting or speaking at chapter or green industry events; or by serving as an officer, board member or committee chair within the sports turf industry.

A list of ISP opportunities and their point values is included in the certification packet. The specific CEU and ISP requirements also will be provided to newly certified individuals, along with the appropriate forms for reporting them. STMA Headquarters will serve as the hub for information on certification and the certification process. 



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STMA 2000— Looking Forward

By Rich Moffitt

As we enter the New Year, the future looks bright for the STMA. We have a solid financial base, an active, growing membership, and many strong programs in place. We're now able to build on that solid foundation. While there will be challenges, STMA has proven it has the attributes of a great team: the ability to tackle challenges and come out the winner.

Strategic Planning

With organizations, as with individuals, it's tough to get anywhere if you don't know where you want to go. A key part of my vision for STMA's future is the development of a comprehensive long-term strategic plan. By developing a strategic plan we will be

able to provide more and better services and educational opportunities to the sports turf manager. As part of the STMA Strategic Planning Steering Committee, I'm pleased to report this process is moving forward. The goals as outlined by the Steering Committee are as follows:

- Clarify our mission statement.
- Clarify our vision.
- Establish a strategic plan to focus on those objectives.
- Build a stronger team.
- Set goals, standards and values that move us forward toward achieving our mission.
- Establish ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes to maintain the forward motion.

The STMA's current Mission Statement states: "To be the leader in the sports turf industry, to enhance, promote, and improve professionalism through excellence in communication, training, research, education, and services." Within the strategic plan, this statement will be defined in specific terms with three- to five-year goals established for achieving the objectives in communication, training, research, education, and services.

During the Category Sessions at STMA's 11th Annual Conference in St. Louis, attendees will be asked to provide input on what they see for STMA and the industry in the future and what services and benefits they want. The results of these discussions will be incorporated into the strategic planning sessions.

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As insiders in this industry, your ideas and opinions are important. Please contact STMA Headquarters (800-323-3875) or any board member with issues you believe should be addressed within the strategic planning sessions.

Continued Financial Strength

Implementation of the strategic plan, continuation of existing services, and expanded services all take money. STMA will continue to exercise fiscal responsibility and maintain our financial strength as we move forward to achieve our objectives.

Continued Membership Growth

STMA has grown at a rapid pace during the last several years. Membership on September 30, 1999, (the official close of the 1999 membership year) was 1,579. That compares to 711 in 1996. While this is an excellent growth rate, our numbers represent just eight to 10 percent of our potential. Our strategic planning must consider long-term projections

with future membership reaching or exceeding the 15,000 to 20,000 mark.

As STMA becomes larger, we gain more recognition within the green industry for who we are, what we do, and the impact we make on sports fields at all levels of play. Our product and service needs specific to field construction, renovation, and maintenance become better defined, better recognized, and ultimately, better served.

More members provide a greater networking base for that extremely important one to one interaction that was a key to the formation of STMA.

More Educational Opportunities

Expanded educational opportunities will be an increasingly important factor as technological advances and field performance expectations both increase.

Self-improvement, long demonstrated by sports turf managers, will be enhanced by the Certification Program and its requirements for continuing education to retain certifica-

tion status.

Our network of affiliated Chapters will continue to grow and to offer even more education and training sessions on the regional and local levels. With the continuation of the Chapter Officers Training Sessions (COTS) in conjunction with STMA annual Conferences will come greater coordination of services for the Chapters and better communication and exchange between the Chapters.

In addition, the STMA Education Committee will turn ideas to reality in such areas of resource sharing as a speakers bureau. Multiple offerings at the STMA Annual Conference will continue to address the expressed wants and needs of the membership.

Funding and Research

Looking forward, the STMA Board has approved the formation of a Steering Committee to do the research and set the guidelines for the formation of Sports Turf Foundation. Sports field specific research will be a huge issue in the future and funding will be needed to support it.

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Scholarships - Internships

STMA will provide greater encouragement and assistance for those entering the field. STMA's current scholarship program is attracting extremely well-qualified applicants who already are making a positive impact on the industry. More funding will be needed to support expanded scholarship programs both for those whose education focuses on the profession of sports turf

management and for those whose education centers on the teaching and research segments of the industry. We want to establish more scholarship opportunities and at higher levels of funding.

Also on the horizon are more and better internship programs. Our future will include a coordinated network of internship opportunities to allow a dedicated student to acquire

hands-on experience on warm and cool season turf on multiple types of sports fields and on the infields of baseball and softball fields.

This two pronged package will benefit not only the students, but also potential employers and the industry as a whole.

Marketing

The future will include an aggressive program to elevate awareness of the profession: both within the green industry and to the general public. Much of this is a continuation of the educational process already in action. STMA will continue to spread the message of the complexity of the task facing the sports turf manager, the role of the field in the game, the knowledge and experience level required for superior field maintenance, the reality of weather-related challenges, the multiple management skills required to coordinate between field owners, field user groups, athletes, coaches, spectators, and the general public.

As a by-product of the elevated awareness, and the continued forward strides taking place within the industry, will come increased compensation for sports turf managers.

Rich Moffitt is Director of Grounds & Materials Management for Saint Louis University, St. Louis, MO, and President-Elect of the STMA.



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Sports Turf Presence Increasing at State and Regional Turfgrass Conferences



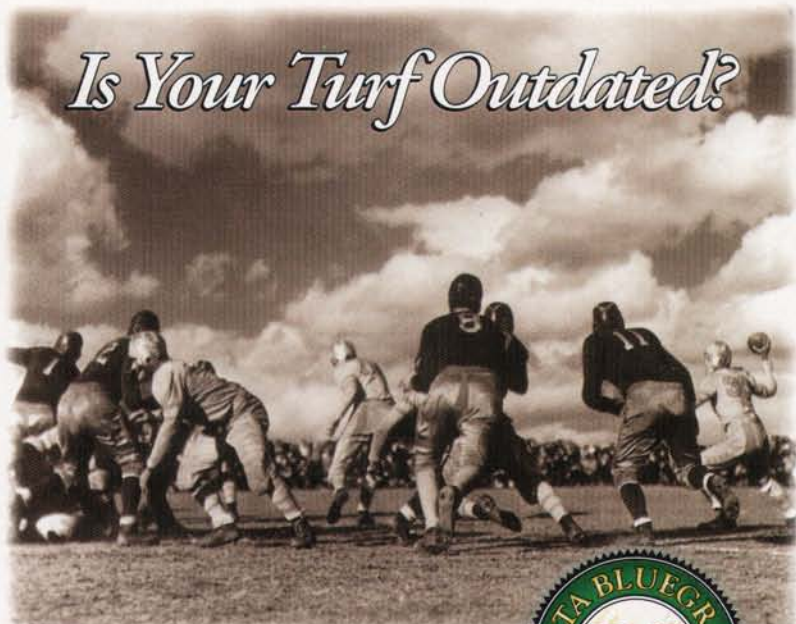
The STMA Annual Conference and Exhibition is our industry's BIG SHOW. This year's conference, held Jan. 12-16 in St. Louis, is a great example of the growth in sports turf management—in STMA membership, in participation, and in the interest and attention focused on sports turf management throughout the green industry.

The sports turf presence also is spreading across state and regional turfgrass conferences. In some cases, this is evident by one or two educational sessions covering specific aspects of sports turf management. In other cases, there is one full day of educational sessions focusing on sports turf management. Some turfgrass conferences have made the big step, offering a sports turf management "track" that extends for all the breakout sessions of the conference.

Many of these state and regional events have been included in the Chapter News segments previously and several more are included in this listing. The sports turf educational focus has covered educational sessions, workshops and round-table discussions. Trade show exhibitors have included the specialized needs of sports turf managers in their displays.

Some STMA Chapters have scheduled their annual meetings and election or installation of officers and board members in conjunction with their state or regional conference.

The point is, sports turf management has stepped up to the plate in its rightful role as one of the heavy hitters in the green industry. Congratulations to all of you who have played a role in making this happen. Whether you have been the Chapter representative on the turfgrass organization board or part of the program planning committee, served as a speaker, provided input for a speaker, coordinated pre-conference details or assisted with logistics at the conference, THANK YOU. The more visible



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the presence of sports turf management in such events, the greater the recognition of its importance in the green industry

Chapter news

Northern-California: The Northern-California Chapter of STMA will be co-sponsoring a sports turf program in conjunction with the Northern California Turf and Landscape Conference from 9 a.m.- noon on Friday, Jan. 21 at the Santa Clara Convention Center.

Bob Milano, University of California, Berkeley, will open the program with an overview of the STMA and introductions. Included in the program are: Jay Beals, of The Beals Group, presenting, "How Clients, Users and Funding Determine a Product Outcome;" Jim Mendenhall, of SporTech, Inc., presenting, "Field Turf, A New Generation of Synthetic Surfaces;" Skip Stevens, of Valley Crest Landscape, presenting, "Pac Bell Park, the Excitement Is Building Toward Opening Day;" and John Donhauser, of Enviaible Greens, pre-



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STMA members participate in a round table discussion.

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