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ON THE COVER: Folsom Field of the University of Colorado. Courtesy of Jason DePaepe.
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from the sidelines

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Football season is coming. The Street and Smith's are in the stores, season tickets are in the mail, and college presidents are huddling with their accountants.

Only the Pollyannas still believe that money is not the driving force behind most decisions that relate to college football programs—not only with the "evil cabal" of schools eligible for the Bowl Championship Series (BCS), but with schools at the mid-major level and in Division III. Just look at the effort the University of Connecticut is making to become a major player in big-time football, to the extent that it is building a new stadium to help it compete in the Big East.

Of course, the Huskies were "counting" on filling that new stadium with games against—among others—the soon-to-be former Big East members Miami and Virginia Tech. Since the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) bumbled its way into inviting those schools to join it, and they greedily accepted, fans more likely will be seeing Louisville or Tulane or Kent State or Toledo. There is nothing wrong with those schools, of course, but they are just not a part of the Big East as we have come to know that conference. (Yes, saying Notre Dame is "east" is stretching the imagination about as far as the stretch of Interstate 80 from New York to South Bend, Indiana.) Change can be good, but this is one change that is not.

Virginia Tech president Charles W. Steger gets my vote for "Fish on the Dock" for 2003. First, he joins in a suit with other Big East schools against the ACC, then when Tech is invited to join "the club," he flops and takes the money.

It may be that the Big East blew it 20 years ago, when Penn State's Joe Paterno urged Syracuse, West Virginia, Boston College, Pittsburgh, and other major Eastern schools to form their own conference. They said "No." The BCS, and the television money associated with it, accelerated this grab for dollars. (The BCS was the brainchild of ACC commissioner Jim Swofford.) There is plenty of money to be had in college sports these days and, yes, some of it is used to pay for better salaries, benefits, and working conditions for turf managers. This is as it should be. But there is also enough money so that the charade of "student-athletes" should be abandoned and the players—especially those at BCS schools—should be paid. My complaint about "progress" will, of course, not be remembered this fall at tailgate parties, when the brats are hot and the beer is cold. College football, no matter at what level, is competitive, colorful, and wonderful, and no matter what else they do, college presidents can't change that.

Comments always welcome. Call Eric at 717-805-4197. email eschroder@aip.com. or write PO Box 280, Dauphin, PA 17018.
How good are your management skills?

Managing sports turf is tough. Managing people can be even tougher. I came across this quiz in a magazine and picked up some good ideas from it. Perhaps it will prove helpful to you, too. Ten points for each correct answer:

1. As a new manager, one of the first things you should do is:
   a. Get to know each of your direct reports personally.
   b. Learn to delegate.
   c. Bring employees into your office for one-on-one meetings.

2. When your department is under fire from upper management:
   a. Act as a buffer.
   b. Find the problem and fix it.
   c. Stay cool.

3. Managers should recognize that people:
   a. Thrive on praise and recognition.
   b. Get bored if there is not enough work to do.
   c. Will rise to the occasion if there is financial incentive.

4. As a manager, it is not acceptable to:
   a. Show empathy to employees.
   b. Lose your temper.
   c. Write personal notes of appreciation.

5. A manager’s primary responsibility is to:
   a. Perform above expectations.
   b. Set and meet yearly goals.
   c. Accomplish tasks through other people.

6. Good managers spend most of their time:
   a. Checking on employees’ performance.
   b. Clarifying expectations from the boss.
   c. Teaching.

7. Good managers:
   a. Make decisions.
   b. Spend social time with employees.
   c. Argue their point of view.

8. People easily lose commitment when managers:
   a. Change their moods.
   b. Leave work early.
   c. Keep the office door closed.

9. When teaching someone a skill:
   a. Accomplish the training off-site.
   b. Reward their efforts.
   c. Use a variety of teaching tools.

10. After implementing a major change, be aware that:
    a. 30 percent of your employees will resist the change.
    b. Your company may be taking an unnecessary risk.
    c. Most people will get onboard quickly.

(Cont’d on page 35.)
Folsom Field of the University of Colorado earned the 2002 Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) Football Field of the Year Award in the College/University division. Folsom Field is on the University's main campus in Boulder.

Football is huge in Colorado. The tradition of the 2001 Big 12 Champions football program began with Gamble Field, the original home of the Colorado Buffaloes. The 10,000-seat stadium was home for 20 years before the opening of the 30,000 seat Colorado Stadium in 1924. The stadium was renamed Folsom Field in 1944 after the death of legendary coach Frederic Folsom. In 1956, the addition of the upper deck increased seating capacity to 45,000. In 1991, the Dal Ward Athletic Center was built in the North end of the stadium housing coaches and administrative offices, locker rooms, training rooms, and weight room. In 2002, construction began on the east side of the stadium, adding skyboxes and club seating, with lights, which will bring seating capacity to over 53,000 by this month's opening.

Before the 1971 season, the playing surface was a native soil topped with natural grass. AstroTurf was used from 1971 through 1998. In 1999, Folsom Field underwent a $1.2 million renovation, installing a sand-based natural grass field.

Field renovation and new field construction are a nearly continuous process in today's sports environment. It's very beneficial for the sports turf manager to be a part of the pre-construction decisions and the construction project process. Neither Jason DePaepe, athletic field manager, nor any of his three full-time employees were with the University for the 1999 renovation.

DePaepe came to Colorado in June of 2000 as the assistant field manager. He had earned his BS degree in the turf program at Iowa State University and worked in both the turf research program and on Iowa State's athletic facilities. In May of 1999, he joined the Baltimore Ravens where the practice facility was his primary responsibility. He assumed his position at CU in February 2001.

DePaepe says, "Prior to the Folsom Field reconstruction, the decision was made to use SportGrass to provide stability for the new field. SportGrass con-
The four varieties selected for the woven backing. The turfgrass is fibers and roots down through the artificial fibers tufted into a tem. DePaepe says, "Four inch drain pipe on 16 foot centers was laid in 4 horizontal backing. Graff's Turf Nuglade and P-I05."

blend were SR 2100, Award, tem was installed consisting of seven and 8 percent peat. An irrigation sys-

of a soil profile of 92 percent sand in the Kentucky bluegrass blend. of the greatest venues to watch college football. The Flatirons at the base of the Rocky Mountains that overlook the University of Colorado provide outstanding views and the short distance from the field to the fans helps them feel more involved in the game."

The new surface brought a new set of challenges. DePaepe says, "The benefit of SportGrass is stability, especially in the first couple of years for a new field. The drawbacks are slow sod establishment, poor rooting, slow recovery from damage, a requirement of special equipment for aerification, and the inability to topdress on a regular basis. The stabilization fibers would be buried by topdressing and thus would be too deep to provide the footing for which they are designed. Raising or lowering an irrigation head requires cutting through the backing of the SportGrass with a saw and cutting a new hole for the head to come up through after adjustment." Field usage is another challenge facing the CU staff. There are events on Folsom Field every month of the growing season. Activity starts in April with soccer games plus the annual 4th of July race is on Memorial Day. This event requires Terraplas over the entire surface for 4 days and culminates with 50,000 people finishing the race on

requires the use of a Soil Reliever or Vertidrain," says DePaepe. "Smaller machines just bounce off the SportGrass backing instead of penetrating it. We began aerification in March of 2001 using 3/4-inch hollow tines with 4-inch spacing. We traveled the field in two directions and removed the cores. We repeated the process in April, May, June, July and August, always varying our starting points to begin creating a 'Swiss cheese' pattern of holes in the back-

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SPORTSTURF 9
The biggest advantage is the safety factor, keeping the soil temperature warm greatly easing water restrictions. It allowed us to pre-maintain the turf while relying heavily on the raw water supply. Having two sources of water has been much better in 2003, bringing reservoirs closer to normal levels and providing some melting, and deal with the aftermath of practice in those conditions. Now we only plow snow from the synthetic turf field. The coaches also hold practices on that surface rather than the natural grass practice fields during other potentially damaging weather conditions. This gives our players an acceptable place to practice and allows us to keep the natural turf in better condition on the other practice fields. I'm still a strong supporter of natural turf in most situations, and especially for the stadium game field, and our coaches and players prefer the natural turf.

DePaepe says, “I was against the practice field synthetic turf installation at first, but our coaches wanted it especially to prepare for play on similar systems during inter-conference games. Since then, I’ve come to see it as an advantage in the practice facility situation. Before that installation, we would plow snow from all three practice fields, hope for sun to dry it out, and turn off the heating system. Now we only plow snow from the synthetic turf field. The coaches also hold practices on that surface rather than the natural grass practice fields during other potentially damaging weather conditions. This gives our players an acceptable place to practice and allows us to keep the natural turf in better condition on the other practice fields. I’m still a strong supporter of natural turf in most situations, and especially for the stadium game field, and our coaches and players prefer the natural turf.”

DePaepe and crew work directly for the athletic department, concentrating mainly on outdoor sports facilities, but also helping move equipment or whatever else is needed to support the indoor sports programs.

Construction and renovation continue. The four-acre soccer practice facility and the outdoor track facility are both undergoing renovations this summer. Upgraded tennis courts also are under construction. Field security has been another challenge at Folsom Field. DePaepe says, “This year has been especially challenging with the skybox construction project. At night, the only barrier to the field is an eight-foot temporary construction fence. This has allowed several night football games on Folsom Field by trespassers. We look forward to the completion of the construction project and take heart in knowing the stadium addition will be a great benefit to our athletic department as a whole.”

With this project, as with all the other elements of DePaepe’s turf management program, it’s a given that he and his crew will Make It Work!

**Field of the Year**

“We debated the effects topdressing would have on the artificial fibers, both for maintaining footing and for protection of the grass plant crown.”

**After 27 years of AstroTurf, Folsom Field underwent a $1.2 million renovation in 1999, including a sand-based natural grass field.**