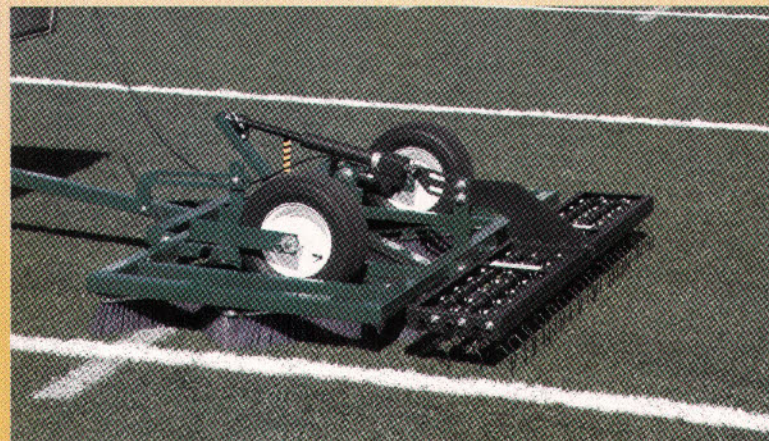




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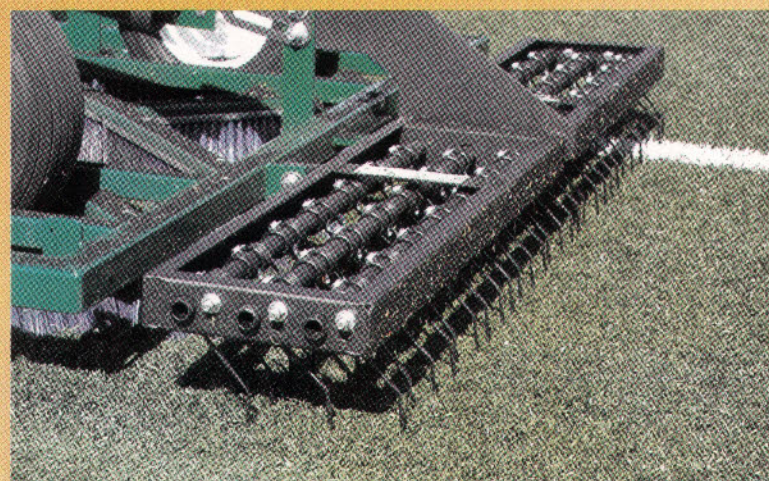


### FEATURES and BENEFITS

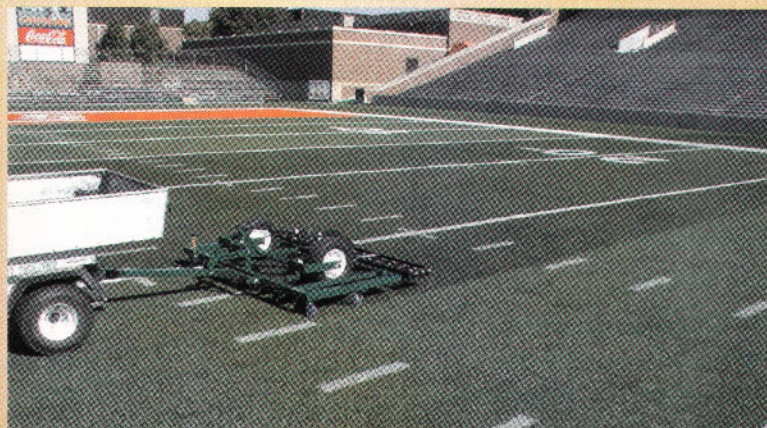
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**GreensSlicer Spring Tine Rake**  
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cover story

**High School/Parks & Rec Softball Field of the Year**

**08** Designated simply as Oran Good 5, the fifth field of the Oran Good softball complex in Farmers Branch, TX, northwest of Dallas, is the Sports Turf Managers Association 2003 Softball Field of the Year.

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We asked several turf managers who have been recognized for their work on softball fields to share how they care for their infields.

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Today irrigation of sports playing fields is becoming more and more prevalent and necessary because of competition, turfgrass quality, and liability issues.

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Just a little rain used to flood the University of Mississippi women's softball field, but not any more thanks to recent renovations.

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Unlike you and your significant other, a reel and bedknife should NEVER touch. Contact causes friction and heat buildup, resulting in rollover, dulled square edges, and distortion.

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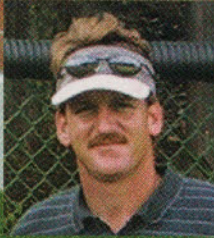
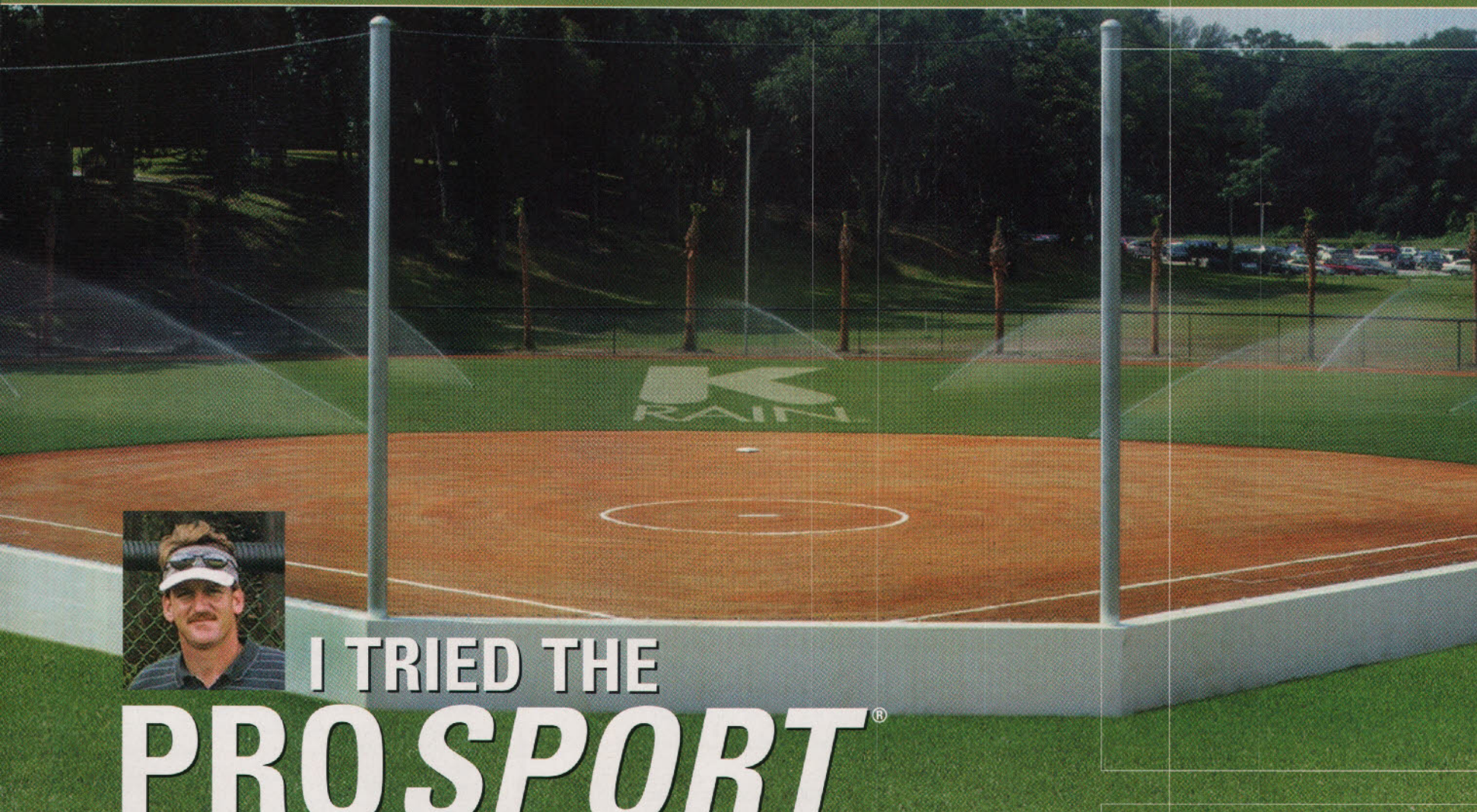
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**ON THE COVER:** The championship field at Oran Good complex, Farmers Branch, TX. Photo by Mark Rutledge.

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# I TRIED THE **PROSPORT**<sup>®</sup> AND I'M GLAD I DID!

Troy English - Jacksonville University Grounds Manager, Jacksonville, Florida

"We recently renovated all common turf areas, the football field and installed a new women's softball field. We did a lot of research looking for the best irrigation equipment as well as innovative turf products. Our goal was evenly green, beautiful turf everywhere and, we wanted maintenance to be a breeze," said English.

"I was sold on the K-Rain ProSport rotor after seeing the ease of adjustment, variety of settings, incredible warranty and service as well as durability. All of these are important factors in choosing a product. I've got kids using the rotors as golf tees sometimes – so durability is a must on a college campus!"

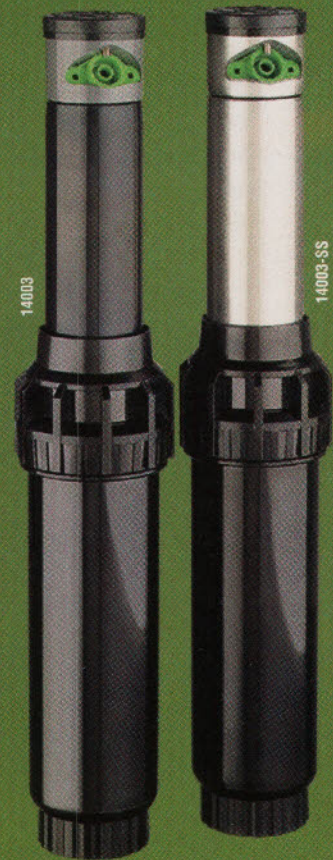


"The field looks awesome and plays great all the time!"  
Jeff Franquet, Jacksonville University Head Softball Coach (left)

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from the sidelines

# SALMAGUNDI II

If the NFL can use Roman numerals for their annual Big Party, I should be able to use them for my annual "Salmagundi" column. (Salmagundi means "a mixture or medley"; it also means, "clearing off the editor's desk.")

The First Annual Aquatrols Scholarship Essay Contest is open to children of turf management professionals who will be attending an accredited college or university during the 2004-05 academic year. Entrants will compete for a grand prize of \$2,000 and two runner-up prizes of \$1,000 each. Full instructions, rules, and eligibility requirements are posted on [www.aquatrols.com](http://www.aquatrols.com). Deadline for submissions is March 1. For more info, call 800-257-7797.

Bachtold Brothers Inc. has recalled their weed and brush cutters. The company says operators can come in contact with the rotating blade, even when disengaged, by pulling on the front of the mower deck while the engine is running. The recalled units have an orange or green body and include the W-24 models, sold under the Bachtold Whipper, DR Field & Brush Mower, and B-800 (with a 77-100 deck) brand names. The brand name is printed on the drive box between the engine and the left wheel. DR All-Terrain Field & Brush mowers manufactured by Country Home Products are not included in this recall.

Do not use the units and contact Bachtold if you have the Whipper or B-800 models or contact Country Home Products if you have the DR Field & Brush model to receive a free repair kit. Call Bachtold Brothers at 877-784-5161 or Country Home Products at 877-595-3668.

Last month's college football "national championship" game won by Louisiana State over Oklahoma was the first-ever Division I championship contested on a filled synthetic surface. SRI Sports installed the rubber/sand infill mixture last fall in New Orleans' Superdome. That gnashing of teeth you hear is from both Southern Cal fans, who think their team was the best in the country, and plenty of turf managers, who aren't thrilled about the inroads "next generation" artificial surfaces are making on America's playing fields.

I would like to see the college president\$ forget their allegiance to the money (and VIP trips for themselves) that the bowl system represents and put in a national playoff system. It's laughable that the hypocritical, all-money-all-the-time NCAA put the kibosh on a computer company's paying USC and LSU \$10 million each to play for a real title. The presidents' excuse of "student-athlete" is insulting, since most Div I football players don't graduate, and most universities are between semesters from mid-December to mid-January. I won't hold my breath waiting for a change.



ERIC SCHRODER, EDITOR

In Boston, a clerk magistrate found probable cause to charge not only two Yankees with assault and battery for the playoff bullpen fight with a Bosox groundskeeper, but also ruled there was enough evidence to go forward with a cross-complaint against the part-time turf man and schoolteacher, Paul Williams.

The magistrate said the lack of defensive wounds on the groundskeeper's hands could suggest the possibility that Williams was the aggressor.

We'll keep you posted.

Comments always welcome.  
Call Eric at 717-805-4197,  
email [eschroder@aip.com](mailto:eschroder@aip.com), or write  
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## CIRCLE OF SERVICE

**Volunteering for any** worthy cause requires a willingness to give of yourself. Serving on the National STMA Board requires considerable time and dedication. As our organization has grown, the level of commitment for STMA Board Members has grown proportionally. Last month, we acknowledged four truly special individuals who have contributed greatly to STMA during their years on the Board. From my standpoint, they are special friends who will continue to work to make this a better organization.

Eric Adkins, CSFM, stepped up to Board Service to fulfill the year remaining of Mike Andresen's term when Mike was elected as Secretary. Eric served as the Networking Committee chair, where his main focus was "tag-teaming" with George Trivett to co-chair the Membership Committee, working with the mentoring subcommittee, the student subcommittee, and the New Member Mania campaign. Eric is leaving his current position at Michigan State and his departure is a loss to our profession.

Monty Montague served from 2000 through 2003, first as a board member representing STMA's commercial members, followed by 2 years as Commercial Vice President. Monty's major focus was the trade show at the annual conference. He was instrumental in developing the priority point system for booth selection, in trade show promotion and marketing. Monty also served on the SAFE Foundation Board, chairing the Scholarship Committee. Always willing to tackle any difficult task, Monty wouldn't let go until he had all the answers and got the problem solved.

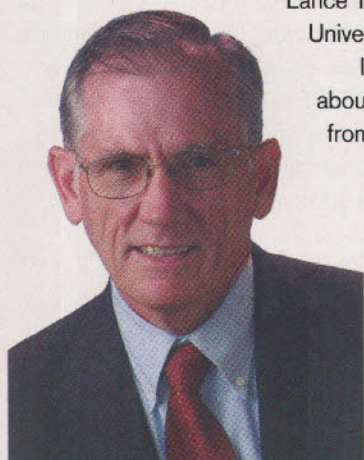
Dr. Tony Koski served on the Board from 1999 through 2003. As the representative of those involved in teaching, research, and extension, Tony chaired the Education Committee and from 1999 through 2002, chaired the conference Education subcommittee. Tony also served on the Certification Committee during the development of the program, including the competency-related testing component.

The Board tenure of Tim Moore, CSFM, stretched from 1998 through 2003. Tim first served as Board Representative for sports turf managers of park and recreation facilities, then served 2 years as Secretary, followed by 2 more as Treasurer, where he chaired the Finance & Audit Committee. Tim also has served as the Chair of the Awards Committee the past 6 years. He was instrumental in developing the awards criteria and the structure of the judging program. Tim also has taken the Awards presentations into the new century with his prowess in PowerPoint presentations. We joined the Board at the same time and over the years, I noted that when he spoke, thoughtful people listened and acted. I always valued his insights.

Given the rich history of dedicated individuals, I'm proud to welcome another four individuals to the STMA Board. These folks have stepped up to the challenge of filling the spots vacated by such a great group.

Please join me in welcoming Jimmy Rodgers, CSFM, University of Virginia; Lance Tibbetts, City of Westbrook, Maine; Dr. Dave Minner, Iowa State University; and Tra DuBois of World Class Athletic Surfaces, Inc.

I know they all have much to give. I also know they are passionate about this profession and their role in it and know great things will come from their service.



BOB CAMPBELL, CSFM

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# ORAN GOOD 5 IS MORE

BY SUZ TRUSTY

**D**esignated simply as Oran Good 5, the fifth field of the Oran Good softball complex is a softball field truly worthy of the Sports Turf Managers Association 2003 Softball Field of the Year honors in the High School/Parks and Recreation division.

Oran Good 5 is the championship level softball field of the City of Farmers Branch, located at the northwest corner of the Dallas Metroplex in north central Texas.

The growing City of Farmers Branch has a population of approximately 27,000, which nearly triples during the business day. The city's governmental entities and its residents want and expect the entire park system, including the athletic fields, to be maintained to very high standards. A strong tax base and a supportive City Council provide the funding necessary to do so. In addition, the Parks and Recreation Department has developed a highly interactive program of coordination with the city's local hotels and motels to generate room use for tournaments. This provides a positive impact on the city's economy thus further aiding the athletic program.

F. Jeff Fuller, Director of the Parks and Recreation Department, says, "Oran Good 5 is just one example of our concentration on excellence. Our entire system operates on the standard that mediocrity is intolerable, which puts us on track for continuous improvement. The softball complex was improved through the implementation of the 1985 Oran Good Athletic Field Improvements bond program. The original site was little more than four red clay softball fields in a pie configuration and one additional remote field, all with few amenities for the field patrons. A concession stand on wheels and a makeshift portable restroom facility located within an area of worn, abused, and uneven turf invited guests to 'enjoy their experience' as they entered the complex.

"The major field construction started in 1985 and wrapped up in 1986. Contractors were responsible for the majority of the initial construction including field layout and



grade work, installation of utilities and infrastructure, as well as the overhead metal halide lights surrounding the perimeter of the field, permanent seating behind the backstop and a high tech electronic model scoreboard in the outfield," says Fuller.

"City staff was responsible for installing a state of the art irrigation system consisting of rotor heads in the outfield and high-speed rotor heads around the perimeter of the clay infields with a state of the art controller completing the system. In addition, in-house staff built and installed the dugouts, backstops, and perimeter fencing complete with cantilevered gates to provide easy access for maintenance equipment and a 150 foot by 150 foot field tarp."

Beginning in 1990, with the construction and completion of the concession stand and storage for the team, a restroom facility, stadium styled seating and parking lots, Oran Good 5 began to take the shape as it appears today.

Fuller adds, "In 2001, the dugout tops and backs were installed by City staff, and a new shade structure was installed by the material supplier. These are covered with a royal blue fabric to reduce heat and sun exposure and to provide additional safety measures for the players in the dugouts and the patrons throughout the concession, restroom, and adjacent spectators areas. The outfield fence fabric also is covered with a royal blue windscreen and topped with a bright yellow fence cap installed to visibly warn players when they are approaching the barrier.

"The current softball field is designed to accommodate Women's College softball tournaments with its 200-foot outfield fence. It is the complex's Championship field and the shared home of the Carrollton/Farmers Branch Girls' Softball League as well as the R. L. Turner High School's Lady Lions. As such, this field is part of a cooperative agreement between the city of Carrollton, the local school district, and the City of Farmers Branch to best use the limited areas and resources of all entities. The two cities began their alliance in the early 1980s, deciding to set up the joint league and work together. Over the past 10-15 years girls' softball just exploded with more than 100 teams now involved in the League. The school district added a girls softball and soccer program about 10 years ago and became part of the cooperative agreement, using the existing facilities rather than developing a softball or soccer complex of their own. This is a fiscally sound move for all



# THAN GOOD- IT'S GREAT!

involved as well as giving the high school varsity and junior varsity teams a premium facility on which to develop their skills," Fuller says.

Despite the financial requirements necessary to provide the equipment, materials, labor, and associated maintenance of the field, Oran Good 5 is provided free of charge for local league and tournament games.

Play is extensive. The softball complex is used 10 months of the year, with at least nine major tournaments occurring during that period. Activity begins at the end of January, with the start of the girls high school program. Both the varsity and junior varsity teams use the field for practices and games. Typically practices will run from 3 PM to around 6 PM each afternoon games are not scheduled. On the 2-3 game days each week, the JV takes the field around 4:30 PM with the varsity games beginning around 6 PM. This schedule runs until the end of April culminating with the tournament of champions statewide high school softball tournament. In May, college-level state and national tournaments come to Oran Good 5, including the NAIA regional and sectional games. This involves teams from Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. During these series, about 10-12 games are played on the field. League play also begins in May and runs to the end of July, with a major tournament, involving 50-75 teams, taking place each month.

During the Texas summers, when temperatures spike to over 100 degrees and drying winds are a daily occurrence, there's a lull in play lasting throughout August until early September. Then the Girls' Softball League play starts up again, with practices and games running into December. Fall also brings the opening ceremonies and softball games of the Special Olympics Fall Games. In 2003, the Carrollton/Farmers Branch Girls' Softball League's Santa Softball Tournament, serving the Metrocrest Social Service Center, brought 50 teams to the complex on December 5. The locally based Metrocrest serves the needs of four major cities: Addison, Coppell, Carrollton, and Farmers Branch. This annual fund-raising tournament has the backing of the league, and the support of and appearances by the Mayor and City Council. It traditionally brings from 500-700 toys and about \$500 in cash, plus stacks of canned goods, for distribution by the Metrocrest Social Service Center.

Robin Edwards, Park Maintenance Supervisor, says, "The Oran Good 5 field is maintained by a staff of four full-time athletic field specialists, including Russell Coe, Athletic Field Specialist II, and one tractor operator. This crew also is responsible for the 4 additional softball fields, 5 baseball fields, 9 soccer fields, 1 football field and are partially responsible for 2 practice facilities consisting of 23 acres of various softball, baseball, soccer and football fields.

"All of the fields have schedules similar to Oran Good 5. We often have every baseball and soccer field in use as well as all of

the fields of the softball complex. The athletic field crew will go to all of our sites every day. They've done extensive cross training, so all can handle any part of the field maintenance and game preparation. There also is excellent cooperation and communication between our people which gives Russell the option to call in personnel from any of the other five crews to assist with specific tasks or pull tarp on or off when it rains," says Edwards.

Obviously, an extensive and well-designed maintenance program is essential to support all the on-field activity. The outfield soil profile is the native heavy, black gumbo clay. Surface drainage is achieved by a one-percent grade. The outfield turf is common bermudagrass and is mowed at 15/16 of an inch three times per week using a 5-gang reel mower pulled behind a tractor. Finish mowing and trimming is performed with a rotary mower and a variety of hand held power tools.

With the only downtime occurring during the height of summer heat, there's little

## THE CREW IS RESPONSIBLE FOR 20 FIELDS AS WELL AS WORKING ON TWO PRACTICE FACILITIES THAT TOTAL MORE THAN 23 ACRES OF FIELDS







opportunity for extensive turf renovation. The field use schedule also prohibits core aeration. Coe says, "We compensate with an aggressive program of aerifying every 2 weeks with a slicing aerator. Mowing as close and as frequently as we do with the reel mower coupled with the frequent slicing helps us to keep a good strong lateral growth

## Inspections

**Fields:** Daily, year round  
**Irrigation:** Monthly, November through February; weekly, March through October  
**Bleachers:** Weekly, year round  
**Lighting:** Weekly, year round  
**Cut lines:** Monthly, November through March; weekly, April through October  
**Litter:** Daily, year round  
**Restrooms:** Daily, year round

in the Bermuda.

"We also oversee the field in late September with perennial ryegrass for good turf cover for early and late season play. This year, we've adjusted the overseeding rate up to 15 pounds per 1,000 square feet, rather than the 4 pounds per thousand we've used in the past, attempting to get a good stand of rye, but somewhat weaker plants. We're anticipating that will give us a smoother transition back to Bermuda. At the lower rate, we've had times when cool springs and early summers spurred the rye and it didn't transition out until the weather hit 100 degrees or so.

"Additional routine maintenance includes fertilizing once per month during the bermudagrass active growing season with 46-0-0 slow-release nitrogen at the rate of 1 pound of Nitrogen (N) per 1,000 square feet," says Coe. "We adjust the rate from October through March to .25 pound of N every two weeks to maintain the perennial ryegrass. The first spring application and the final application in the fall are complete fertilizers applied to encourage disease resistance and nutrient uptake and storage. Soil testing and tissue testing are conducted at least once each year and the results analyzed in order to make any necessary adjustments in our fertilization program. The fields are relatively weed-free due to strong turf conditions. This is maintained through diligent inspection and infrequent use of various postemergence herbicides for spot treatment following standard IPM practices.

The fields and adjacent areas are baited in spring and fall to eliminate any fire ant problems. Timing of these applications depends on weather conditions. Cool tempera-

## Maintenance Program

### January - March:

Mow two times per week at 1 to 1.5 inch height  
 Irrigate as needed  
 Fertilize with 46-0-0 at the rate of .25 pound of N per 1,000 square feet every two weeks

### April:

Mow three times per week at 15/16-inch height  
 Irrigate 3 to 5 times per week, depending on conditions  
 Fertilize with 24-8-16 at the rate of 1 pound of N per 1,000 square feet  
 Slice aerify every two weeks

### May:

Mow three times per week at 15/16-inch height  
 Irrigate 3 to 5 times per week, depending on conditions  
 Fertilize with 46-0-0 at the rate of 1 pound of N per 1,000 square feet  
 Slice aerify every two weeks  
 Topdress with # 9 sand  
 Monitor for weeds and apply spot control if needed for nutgrass, grassy or broadleaf weeds  
 Bait for fire ants (timing varies depending on weather conditions)

### June:

Mow three times per week at 15/16-inch height  
 Irrigate 3 to 5 times per week, depending on conditions  
 Fertilize with 46-0-0 at the rate of 1 pound of N per 1,000 square feet

Slice aerify every two weeks

Monitor for weeds and apply spot control if needed for nutgrass, grassy or broadleaf weeds

### July:

Mow three times per week at 15/16-inch height  
 Irrigate 3 to 5 times per week, depending on conditions  
 Fertilize with 46-0-0 at the rate of 1 pound of N per 1,000 square feet  
 Slice aerify every two weeks  
 Monitor for weeds and apply spot control if needed for nutgrass, grassy or broadleaf weeds

### August:

Mow three times per week at 15/16-inch height  
 Irrigate 3 to 5 times per week, depending on conditions  
 Fertilize with 46-0-0 at the rate of 1 pound of N per 1,000 square feet

Slice aerify every two weeks

Topdress with # 9 sand

Monitor for weeds and apply spot control if needed for nutgrass, grassy or broadleaf weeds

Resod any bare areas in outfield

### September:

Mow three times per week at 15/16-inch height  
 Irrigate 3 to 5 times per week, depending on conditions  
 Fertilize with 24-8-6 at the rate of 1 pound of N per 1,000 square feet  
 Slice aerify every two weeks  
 Overseed with 10 to 15 pounds of perennial ryegrass per 1,000 square feet  
 Topdress  
 Bait for fire ants (timing varies depending on weather conditions)

### October - December:

Mow two times per week at 1 to 1.5 inch height  
 Irrigate as needed  
 Fertilize with 46-0-0 at the rate of .25 pound of N per 1,000 square feet every two weeks