

MIDWEST CHAPTER'S FIELD DAY BETTER EVERY YEAR

BY MIKE SCHILLER, CSFM

A crisp and clear Friday greeted attendees gathered at Alexian Field, home of the Schaumburg Flyers of the independent Class A Northern League. Eric Fasbender, Director of Field and Stadium Operations for the Flyers, hosted this Midwest STMA Chapter event.

First off, the attendees broke into groups, with each assigned a different starting point of the demonstration/presentation stations, which were strategi-

cally placed around the field and covered aspects of baseball field maintenance, including game day preparations.

Eric covered game day preparations and maintaining the areas around home plate. Connie Rudolph, CSFM, head sports turf manager for the St. Paul Saints of the Northern League, covered details of mound building and maintenance. Jeff Eckert, head sports turf manager of the Northern League Joliet Jackhammers, covered maintenance of the skinned infield portion of the field. Jeff Salmond, CSFM, agronomist for Northwestern University, and Dr. Dave Minner, Iowa State University agronomist (see page 54), covered the turf maintenance segment of field care. Ryan Nieuwsma, head sports turf manager for the Kane County Cougars, Class A affiliate of the Oakland As, covered all aspects of mowing ballfields, including how to make those intriguing patterns that have become a point of aesthetics in many ballparks.

During the lunch break, keynote speaker Mike Veeck, promotions and public relations specialist for the Detroit Tigers and joint owner of several minor league baseball clubs, took the floor. Mike, the son of baseball innovator Bill Veeck, is equally innovative if not more so. The Veeck family practically invented the concept of "fan-friendly" with such ideas as Bat Day and post-game fire-



Attendees spread across infield of Alexian Field, home of the Schaumburg Flyers Class A Baseball team



Connie Rudolph, CSFM, discusses mound building techniques

MIKE VEECK ENTERTAINED WITH HIS "TOP 10 REASONS FOR TURF MANAGER SUICIDES."

works. Mike was the creator of the infamous "Disco Demolition Night" staged with disastrous results many years ago at the old Comiskey Park.

Mike is a long-time supporter of STMA and gave a humorous and very entertaining presentation on "The Top Ten Reasons for Turf Managers Suicide," with #6 on this list being "Stupid (Damaging) Field Promotions - A Veeck Specialty." Mike is well known for his thinking "out of the box" and his talk had the group laughing at his wit and wisdom. He wrapped up the presentation on a more serious note with his list of "Ten Attributes of All Good Grounds Experts."

The last session of a great day was "Quiz the Experts" with all the speakers on the spot to field questions from attendees. The day ended with the staple of all STMA chapter activities, The Raffle!

ST

Mike Schiller, CSFM, is with Van's Enterprises, Mundelein, IL, and has been a member of STMA for more than 20 years.

chapter news

Congratulations and Welcome to our newest affiliated Chapter, the South Carolina Chapter of STMA. Chapter Officers are: Alan Wilson-President; Bruce Suddeth-President-Elect; Bruce Viehman-Commercial Vice President; and Mike Burgess-Secretary-Treasurer. Serving as Executive Director is Dr. Trent Hale, a Research and Extension Turfgrass Specialist in the Department of Horticulture for Clemson University. He is located at the Pee Dee Research and Education Center in Florence. For more information contact Dr. Hale at 843-662-3526, x206 or at thale@clemson.edu or on the chapter's page on www.sportsturfmanager.com.

Keystone Athletic Field Managers

Organization (KAFMO/STMA): The 8th Annual KAFMO Athletic Field Conference will be held in Grantville February 20. Speakers include: Bob Campbell, CSFM, University of Tennessee; Dr. Andy McNitt, Penn State University; Jim Koontz, Jr., Cumberland Valley School District; Mike Boekholder, Philadelphia Phillies; and Tony Leonard, Philadelphia Eagles.

For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, contact Dan Douglas, Reading Phillies Baseball Club, at tel. 610-375-8469, ext. 212; or e-mail kafmo@aol.com.

Kentucky Sports Turf Managers

Association: The KySTMA's Annual Conference will be held in Louisville in late February. More details will be announced soon.

For information on the chapter or upcoming events, contact Tom Nielsen at TNielsen@batsbaseball.com or Aaron Boggs at AVBoggs@netscape.net.

Florida Chapter # 1: The Chapter will take part in the IFAS Field Day in Davie, FL, March 18. The Chapter will meet at Pro-Player Stadium in Miami March 25. For information on the Chapter, or pending activities, contact John Mascaro at 954-341-3115 or STMA@Turf-Tec.com.

Minnesota Chapter STMA: The Chapter is planning a Spring Workshop the week of March 22. More details will be announced soon.

For information on the Chapter, or upcoming events, contact Jeff Hintz, Bethel College & Seminary, St. Paul, at tel. 651-638-6075 or e-mail j-hintz@bethel.edu or check out www.mstma.com.

Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona: For information on the chapter, or upcoming events, contact Chris Calcaterra at e-mail: chrisc@peoriaaz.com or tel. 623-412-4231 or Bill Murphy, at e-mail: bmurphy@ci.scottsdale.az.us or 480-312-7956.

The Greater LA Basin Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Chapter or pending events, call Steve Dugas, California State University - Fullerton, at 714-278-3929 or email sdugas@fullerton.edu.

Northern California Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Nor-Cal Chapter, or pending events, call Janet Gift at 530-758-4200.

Southern California Chapter: For information on the Southern California Chapter, or pending activities, call Michael Tarantino at 858-679-2526 or MTarantino@powayusd.com.

Chesapeake Chapter STMA (formerly called Mid-Atlantic Athletic Field Managers

Organization - MAFMO Chapter STMA): For information on the Chapter, or other pending activities, call the Hotline at 866-818-8873 or email Nick Gammill, CSFM, at ngammill@american.edu.



Colorado Sports Turf Managers Association:

For information on the Chapter, or upcoming activities, visit www.CSTMA.org or call the Chapter Hotline at 303-346-8954, or contact Chapter President Phil McQuade at 303-237-7188 or pmcquade@jeffco.k12.co.us.

Gateway Chapter Sports Turf Managers

Association: For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, call Mike Krone, Missouri Baptist College, 314-392-2328 or email krone@mobap.edu.

Georgia Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the chapter or upcoming events, contact Skip Kirby at 770-928-1580 or email skip@sportsturfmanagement.com

Indiana Chapter: For information on the Chapter, or pending activities, contact Stan Moscrip, Indiana University, at 812-856-2256 or smoscrip@indiana.edu.

Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Chapter, or upcoming activities, contact Jeff Wendel of The Turf Office at tel. 515-232-8222, or fax 515-232-8228, or e-mail Jeff@iowaturfgrass.org.

Michigan Sports Turf Managers Association (MiSTMA): For information on the Chapter or pending events, contact MiSTMA Headquarters at 517-712-3407, or email Amy Fouty, Michigan State, at fouty@ath.msu.edu, or go to www.mistma.org.

Midwest Chapter STMA: For information on the Midwest Chapter, or pending activities, visit the

Chapter's website, <http://mcstma.org/>, or call Libby Baker at 847-263-7603 or email Bake60ft6in@aol.com.

MO-KAN Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Chapter, or upcoming events, call Jody Gill at 913-239-4121 or JGill2@bv229.k12.ks.us.

Nebraska Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Chapter, or upcoming events, call Loren Humphrey at: 402-461-2324 or email to lhumphrey@cityofhastings.org.

Sports Field Managers Association of

New Jersey: For information on the Chapter, or upcoming events, call SFMANJ at 908-730-7770 or Eleanora Murfitt at 908-236-9118, or e-mail HQ@sfmanj.org.

Ohio Sports Turf Managers Association

(OSTMA): For information on the Chapter, or upcoming events, call OSTMA Headquarters at 888-824-9805 or 419-824-9805 or Boyd Montgomery, CSFM, at 419-885-1982; or visit www.ostma.org.

Pacific Northwest Sports Turf Managers

Association: For information on the chapter or upcoming events, contact Jay Warnick at JayW@Seahawks.com or Mike Wagner, MWagner@Oregon.UOregon.edu.

Tennessee Valley Sports Turf Managers

Association (TVSTMA): For information on the Chapter, or upcoming events, call Chapter President, Bob Elliott, Tiece, at 800-239-9547 or Glenn Lucas at 800-837-8062; email to Glenn@tvstma.org, or visit www.tvstma.org.

North Texas Sports Turf Managers Association:

For information on the Chapter, or pending activities, contact Kathy Cassmeyer at 972-603-2869 or Katherine.Cassmeyer@lmco.com, or visit www.ntstma.org.

South Texas Sports Turf Managers Association:

For information on the Chapter, or upcoming events, contact Tim Loesch at 210-207-3734 or TLoesch@alamodome.com.

Virginia Sports Turf Managers Association:

For information on the Chapter, or upcoming events, contact Bob Studholme, Fairfax County Park Authority at Robert.Studholme@FairfaxCounty.gov or 703-324-8590.

Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association:

For more information on the Chapter, or other pending events, contact Chris Brindley at 715-346-3622 or cbrindle@uwsp.edu.

Chapters on the Grow:

New York: For information on the chapter forming in Central New York, contact Kevin Meredith, National Soccer Hall of Fame, at e-mail: Kevin@wpe.com or at 607-432-2953.

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Midwest/Southeast: **Tonya Przybylski** 913-897-4158

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RYEGRASS ON SOUTHERN ATHLETIC FIELDS

I am an assistant athletic director in Mesquite, TX, a large suburban school district outside of Dallas. We have five high schools and seven middle schools. The pressure on our grass practice fields is very high. Can you discuss the pros and cons of planting rye grass on the practice field in the off-season vs. allowing the bermuda to go dormant and doing nothing other than regular maintenance. Several of our fields are used extensively for soccer in the winter. Some have no use outside of football season. Please share your thoughts. Thanks,

Scott Luce

This information will be printed too late to be beneficial this season but will be helpful in fall 2004. To overseed or not may be a personal preference decision unless the field is getting moderate to heavy play during the period of time when bermudagrass is dormant. If that is the case then the overseed can almost justify itself from a "protection" point of view. The decision may also be based on economics.

PRO OVERSEED:

If the pressure on your field is high (as you mentioned) then the overseeded ryegrass can protect the bermudagrass (to some extent) from traffic damage. The heavy foot traffic will excessively wear the dormant bermudagrass and you may lose some of the plant crowns. Bermudagrass will typically regrow in the spring from the rhizome (below ground stem), but it makes regrowth slower. Worn dormant grass introduces bare ground which is more subject to wear and erosion, plus increases weed incidence come spring/summer. Overseeded fields have a nice blue-green color, different from bermudagrass, that stripes very well. Many fans and some players like this look. It holds line and logo paints very well. In some cases an overseeded field may be more consistent (for ball roll) than a worn bermudagrass field during dormancy. If your non-overseeded field would be worn to bare ground it could potentially be less expensive to overseed than to re-establish your field the following year.

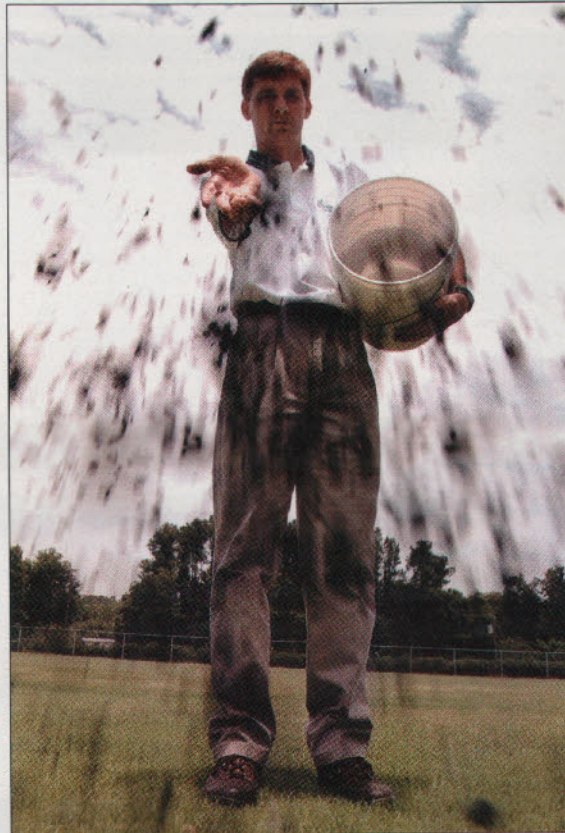
CON OVERSEED:

Overseeding is disruptive to game fields two times during the year. First, when the field is prepared for overseeding it is disruptive (cultural practices to plant). This is during a time when the field is usually about to come into play. Second, during transition the field may go through a period of time when the ryegrass is dying and looks unsightly. The bermudagrass is also trying to regrow and to fill in bare areas which may give the field a mottled look. There are chemical aids and cultural techniques for transition to try and "smooth" this transition, but

they do not ensure a good transition. There is no doubt that overseed grass competes with bermudagrass. With careful management and a warm spring, transition may not be a problem. If we have a cool/wet spring then the bermudagrass can really suffer. One also has to consider the increased cost of overseeding: seed, additional fertilizer, additional water, additional labor (mowing), and additional fungicides most years.

From a player's perspective, I have been told that grass stains can be a significant problem on light-colored uniforms if annual ryegrass is used and to a lesser extent with perennial ryegrass. Ryegrass tends to be a little slick, especially when covered with dew. Coaches have probably overemphasized this point.

With overseeding, you are more limited on preemergence herbicides for annual bluegrass control and you may have to time your last summer annual preemergence program so as to not interfere with overseeding. Winter annual weed control will also be much more difficult if not impossible with overseeded fields. Overseeding is time consuming. Overseeded fields have poorer traction than dormant bermudagrass fields as long as there is bermudagrass in place.



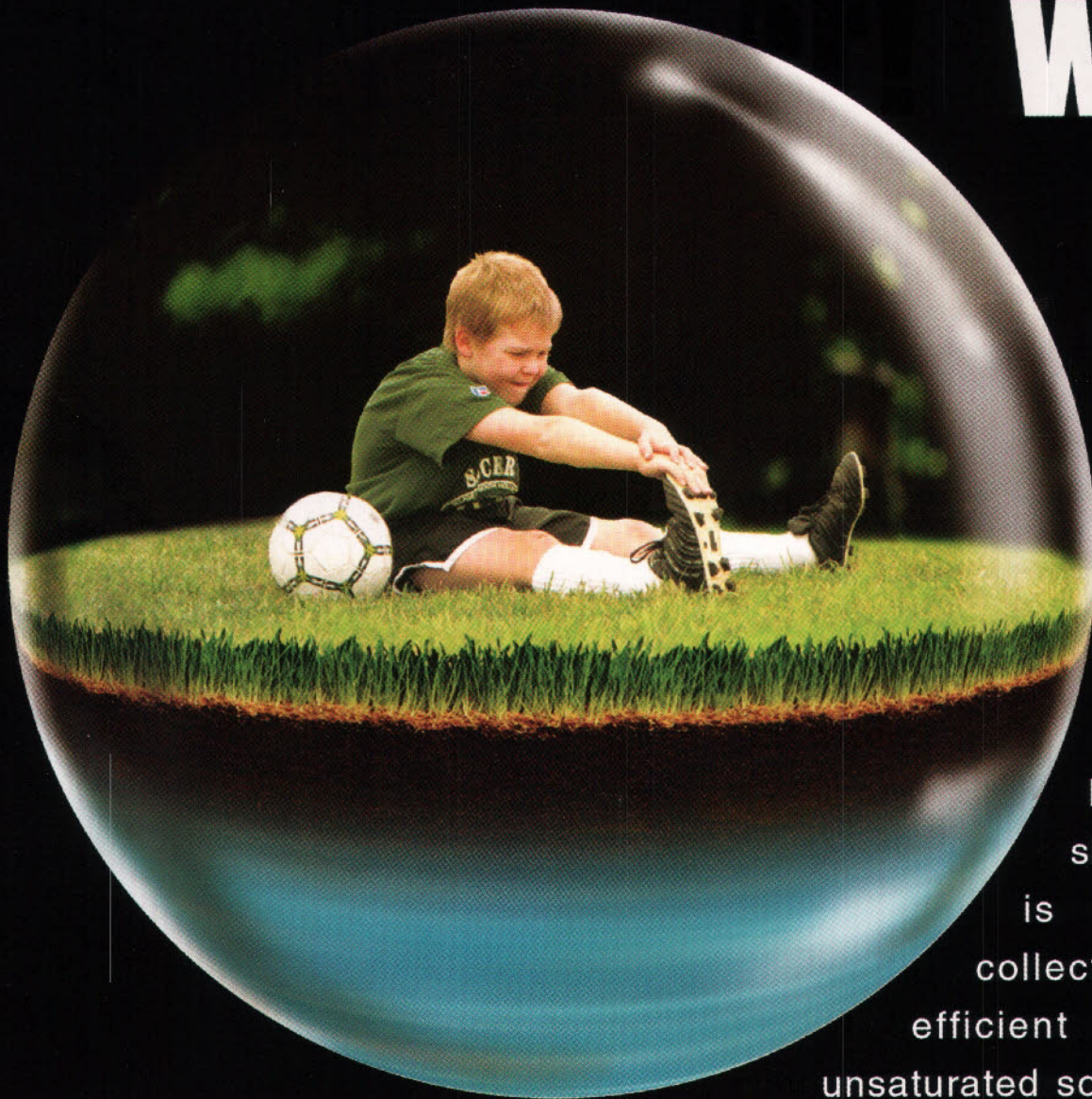
If your season ends (and field use is curtailed) around the first frost date (plus or minus a few weeks) then I would not overseed that field. Low-use fields during the winter will always look better the following spring/summer if they are not overseeded. That may or may not be true of higher use fields. If the field will be used heavily after the frost date and before spring green-up, then you may not have a choice if the wear cannot be tolerated. If the wear is excessive the worn areas may have to be replaced with sod after the season. If replacement needs are extensive the sodding cost and downtime may justify the upfront cost of overseeding.

If you decide overseeding is necessary for aesthetics or for protection, consider adjusting your seeding rates to meet your situation. If you can get by with lower rates you will typically have a better transition than when using higher rates. For instance, we often use 6 to 7 pounds perennial ryegrass seed per 1000 square feet on football (season almost over when bermudagrass goes dormant) versus about 12 to 15 pounds per 1000 sq ft on baseball (entire season played during time when bermuda is 50 to 100 percent dormant and has poor color). I would check with your state's turf specialists to find seeding rates appropriate for your region.

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QUESTIONS? Send them to Grady Miller at the University of Florida, PO Box 110670, Gainesville, FL 32611, or email gmiller@mail.ifas.ufl.edu. Or, send them to Dave Minner at Iowa State University, 106 Horticulture Hall, Ames, IA 50011, or email dminner@iastate.edu.

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