

STMA 16TH ANNUAL Conference & Exhibition

January 19-23, 2005 - Phoenix Civic Plaza
Phoenix, Arizona *Get in the Game!*



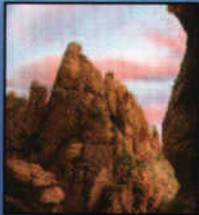
The STMA Conference & Exhibition is the place to be this January. The Trade Show boasts extensive exhibits with a vast selection of products and services to meet your needs. The Educational Program offers exciting and informative sessions and discussions. Plus an MLB hands on outdoor seminar.

- Round table discussions
- Hands on workshops
- Tours to local facilities
- Inspirational speakers

Get in the Game... Join your team in Phoenix and network with other industry professionals at Show Receptions, and on the Trade Show floor. Enjoy Live and Silent Auctions where you can bid on valuable sports memorabilia.

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OPTIONAL EVENTS:

Wednesday Seminar on Wheels to regional sports venues

Wednesday SAFE/Jacobsen Golf Tournament

Wednesday late Afternoon Sports Turf Jam Sessions

Sunday Seminar on Wheels to area sports complexes

Sunday Tours to Phoenix area attractions

and more!

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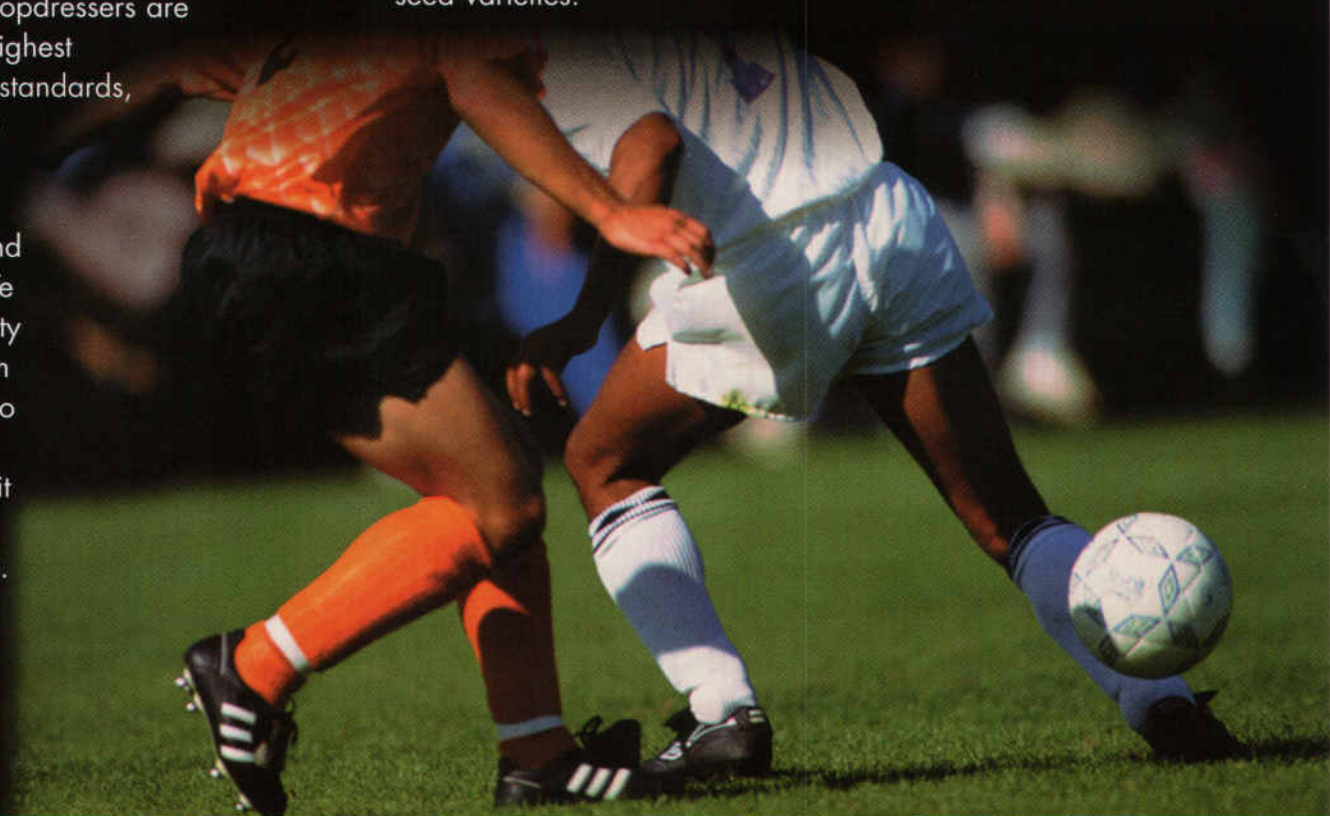
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Cultivating and maintaining horseracing turf is, like horse racing itself, both a science and an art that keeps evolving over time.

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Lance Tibbetts and Mike Didonato won this STMA 2003 Field of the Year category for Olmsted Soccer Field of the City of Westbrook, ME.

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ON THE COVER: Thoroughbreds spin out of the turn at Saratoga. Courtesy of New York Racing Association.

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from the sidelines

Green industry fighting back

With recent pesticide bans in Canada, New York and Minnesota, and regulations to control water usage and noise restrictions for equipment becoming more common, it's getting tougher to save and manage our green spaces. But now a group of green industry professionals are fighting back against activists' efforts through an organization called Project EverGreen.

This dedicated alliance of green industry end-user associations, suppliers, distributors, media companies, and other organizations are spreading the word about the many benefits of healthy landscapes and green spaces. Project EverGreen will use the resources and influence of a national green industry alliance to create a national marketing campaign to consumers throughout the U.S.

"Our mission is simple: raise the awareness of the environmental, economic and lifestyle benefits of landscapes and promote the significance of those who preserve and enhance green spaces at home, work and play," said Den Gardner, executive director of Project EverGreen. "The consumer marketing campaign that we are developing is designed to support that mission statement while defending the green industry from unwarranted attack."

Currently, more than \$450,000 has been raised from companies, associations, contractors, and suppliers. Project EverGreen continues to seek financial commitments from all facets of the industry. "Project EverGreen was created in response to unfavorable regulations in many parts of the U.S. and Canada," said Gardner.

"Green industry employees both big and small are the stewards of the environment and need to step forward and help to educate consumers. If the services our industry offers are restricted, regulated or made illegal, we will all lose revenue and customers. Every facet of the business is at stake here in the U.S."

The consumer campaign will feature grassroots tactics including the development of messages and educational materials for green industry companies, professional research, public relations efforts and an in-depth consumer Web site to educate consumers about the importance of green spaces.

Through the development of the consumer campaign, many of Project EverGreen's messages will clear up the misinformation among consumers and focus on the positive healthy landscapes and other green spaces.

Project EverGreen needs additional help in proactively promoting the green industry to everyone. To make a donation or share your ideas and support, please contact Den Gardner at dengardner@projectevergreen.com or call 877-758-4835.

The Turf Research Center at the University of Massachusetts has been named in honor of Joseph Troll. Troll was a long-time faculty member who led the expansion of university's turf program, which began in 1927 making it the first turf program in the U.S. Plans are proceeding to build a new 3,300-square foot building at the Joseph Troll Turf Research Center. Those wishing to donate to the \$1 million fund-raising effort should contact Rick Robar at 413-577-1692.



ERIC SCHRODER, EDITOR

Comments always welcome.
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president's message

Schedule of benefits

For many of us, fall brings a change of seasons, a full schedule of games, and the daily challenges life in the world of sports turf brings.

For those of us in STMA, fall means scholarship and awards deadlines, finalizing our annual conference program, and, most importantly, a strong focus on our annual membership drive. This is always a time to "show the flag" for STMA and be proud of what we do to ensure the games are played on the best surfaces possible.

I have asked many members why they join STMA. The answers never vary. The number one reason is **networking**, which members use in a variety of ways. Many use the on-line membership directory to locate peers who have similar work environments and face similar challenges.

Others use their chapters to troubleshoot the local challenges of sports turf management. Our conferences and shows provide a variety of face-to-face learning opportunities. Establishing a strong network of peers can also provide employment information.

Since a high percentage of job openings are never publicized, the STMA network is the way to learn about advancement in the industry. All of our members believe in giving back to the profession they love by sharing their knowledge with those who might be less experienced.

Access to career enhancing **resources** is the second reason sports turf managers join STMA. Our website www.sportsturfmanager.com has a wealth of information that will help you do your job better. Through the electronic newsletter, "Sports Turf Managers E-Digest," you can keep current on the ways the association is working on your behalf.

You are reading the profession's leading monthly magazine, providing practical and relevant information on new products, turf maintenance, and field management practices. Educational opportunities afforded during conferences and shows and through chapters combine hands-on learning and problem solving. STMA is the only organization offering certification as a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) to validate your skills.

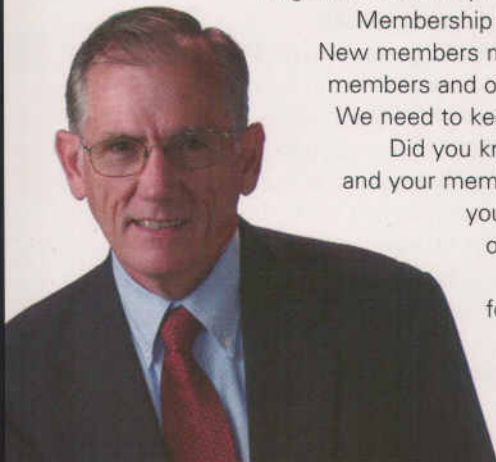
One of the most important tools members receive is access to TGIF, the Turfgrass Information File from Michigan State University Libraries' Turfgrass Information Center and the USGA. An easy-to-use database, this compendium of technical articles brings the latest research to your fingertips. Having your field management programs supported by the green industry's leading scientists brings credibility to your decision-making process. As a member, full access to TGIF is included in your dues. If you were to purchase the use of TGIF separately, its \$100 cost is more than the \$95 in annual dues STMA charges its sports turf managers.

Finally, STMA membership provides **recognition** of your commitment to continuous learning and professionalism. Use the formal and informal education you receive through STMA to document your capabilities and promote your abilities to your employer. STMA will continue to promote the knowledge, skills, and expertise of all of its members to the sports industry.

Membership in STMA is good for you and equally good for our organization. New members mean new ideas and new ideas help our organization serve our members and our employers better. As in any organization, we can't stand still. We need to keep moving forward to make our profession stronger and better.

Did you know that you may pay for your conference and show registration and your membership dues on your conference registration form? That allows you to submit one invoice to your accounting office to pay for two of the most important learning opportunities you have this year.

I am asking for your continued support of STMA. Stay at the forefront of your profession by being a member of STMA.

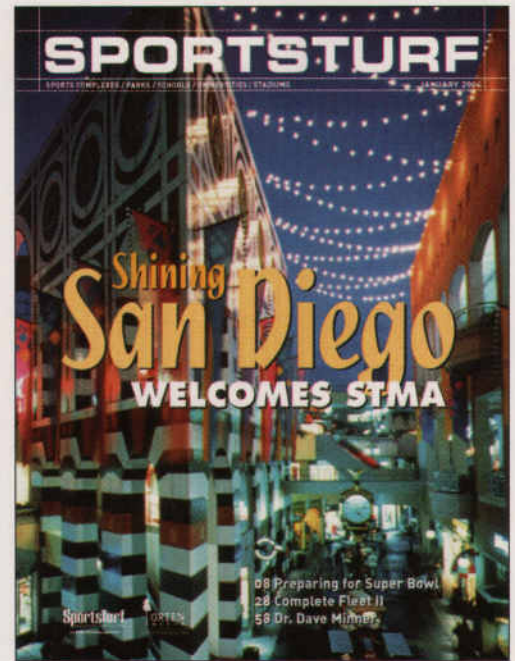


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Overcoming adversity:

BY SUZ TRUSTY

Dedication to excellence in field management plus an aggressive approach to adversity earned Olmsted Soccer Field of the City of Westbrook, ME, the 2003 STMA Soccer Field of the Year Award in the High School/Parks and Recreation division. Olmsted Soccer Field is part of the 22 acres of playing fields within the city of Westbrook located not only at the high school site, but also at the elementary and middle schools and in city parks.

In the late 90's, Westbrook undertook a major field construction/renovation project for its high school fields. Olmsted Soccer Field, along with practice fields for football and field hockey, and combination game and practice fields for softball and baseball were constructed in the surrounding woods on an upper level of the school property. At the same time, the original native soil Olmsted Field, constructed in 1965, was completely renovated to be used as the football game field, varsity soccer game field, and track complex.

All of these fields share common construction elements. They were excavated to the native clay sub-base. This was topped by a gravel layer that contains a series of perforated drainage pipes covered with landscape fabric which channel excess subsurface moisture away from the fields. This was covered with a sand-based soil profile. Olmsted Soccer Field has a Toro automated inground irrigation system with seven zones and five series 2001 heads per zone. For surface drainage, this soccer field has a 1-percent pitch toward a drainage swale between it and the field used for field hockey. The turf is a combination of Kentucky bluegrass and perennial ryegrass varieties. The dimensions of the playing surface are 360 feet by 225 feet with additional room on the sides to shift the field layout to spread the wear. The portable bleachers can hold up to 500 spectators. There's enough space for another 200 attendees to bring their own chairs and stake out a viewing spot along the sidelines. There currently is no lighting on this field.

From April of 1999, as these fields were being prepared for the first season of play, through early July of 2004, the City's athletic fields were under the maintenance program of Sports Field Manager Lance Tibbetts. Tibbetts has "worked with turf" since his graduation from Southern Maine Technical College with an AAS in Plant and Soil Science in 1991. He had previously served as Parks and

Facilities Manager for the Town of Brunswick overseeing their athletic fields as well as the parks. Before that, he worked as a lawn technician and then a branch manager in the lawn care industry. This July, he moved to the position of Supervisor of Grounds and Facilities for the Town of Windham, ME, focusing on the School Department fields.

His replacement at Westbrook is Mike Didonato, who had worked with Tibbetts during the summers for four years. Tibbetts says, "Mike knows the programs and knows the fields. He is dedicated to what had always been our prime focus, providing safety and playability for the athletes while preserving and protecting the city's investment in its fields."

Didonato says, "The fields were looking great for the start of the school year. Lance had worked hard to get it all into shape before he left. We also have continued the great working relationship we'd developed, so I have a resource whenever I need it. The fall season is moving forward according to plans, so far with no bumps in the road." As Sports Turf Manager, Didonato, like Tibbetts before him, works directly for the City Public Services Department and plans and implements the field maintenance programs for all of the athletic fields within the city, including those on school grounds. (Before May of 2004, the position was within the Recreation Department.) During the school season, the fields on school sites are used primarily by the student athletes under the direction of the Athletic Director, with other uses coordinated by the Sports Turf Manager. During the summer months, he coordinates the field use schedules for all the fields, spreading the usage to the school sites as well. This arrangement provides the central control that allows flexibility in field use scheduling and for the maintenance procedures and rest periods so critical to preserving safety and playability in heavily used fields.

"Heavy use is an understatement," says Tibbetts. "The field originally handled soccer practices and games for the boys and girls varsity, junior varsity, and freshman teams, all fall programs. It also hosted the fall youth soccer league, with games on Saturday and Sunday. To reduce wear in the goal mouths, we scheduled the younger players on that field, setting up two game fields, running across the field, perpendicular to the layout of the high school field. The youth league stored their goals onsite, for easy access. Occasionally, the older youth players would be scheduled for a Saturday game, or a high school coach would schedule a scrimmage or make up game for a Saturday. Activity began with practices in mid-August

and ran into the first part of November.

"Lacrosse was added to the high school sports program 2 years after the field construction. It's a spring sport, beginning as soon as the snow clears way, usually in April, until the end of the school year in June. Practices and games are held on the Olmsted Soccer Field, generally Monday through Friday. So far there are no youth lacrosse leagues seeking weekend field use," says Tibbetts.

The spring schedule now puts 60 lacrosse practices and 22 lacrosse games on the field. Fall soccer has 72 practices, 20 high school games, and 48 youth soccer league games. That's a total of 132 practices and 90 games. In addition, there are 74 possible days of Physical Education classes on the field, weather permitting. The PE teacher is also the golf coach. Those players occasionally hit some practice shots from the common areas, next to the field.

"We've done a few sessions teaching students the fine art of divot repair because of that," laughs Tibbetts. "Actually, the PE instructors and the coaches have been great. They're willing to shift areas of a field, or switch fields if necessary for practices or classes. They'll even check in to see which field we prefer them to use if we haven't prescheduled adjustments."

Lacrosse does add more abuse to the field. Tibbetts says, "We didn't object to this addition because that the facility has no summer soccer activity. That allowed time for maintenance procedures and a rest period to bring the surface back to top condition for fall soccer. In fact, the players from the last lacrosse game are just leaving the field when we start ripping down the goals for renovation. A lot of the larger municipalities have more user groups to accommodate. If Westbrook had soc-

cer on the field all year, I'd probably have sought a different site for lacrosse.

"Preserving field quality at the high school site requires vigilance. Most of the upper level fields are unfenced and a walking trail, open to the public, winds through the property. All of the high school fields are posted with field use by permit only signs and we were pretty aggressive in policing that the first year especially. We don't mind the occasional dad and kid throwing a ball around, but we direct any larger, pick up games to one of the lower maintenance public-use fields within the city park system."

The 2003 season presented some severe challenges for Tibbetts and his crew. He says, "I was recovering from back surgery in the fall of 2002 when the city contracted for construction of a new concession building that would include four restrooms and an improved irrigation pump room. During demolition of the old concession building all of our existing irrigation wires were severed and the irrigation pump was damaged though we didn't detect the pump damage until late June 2003.

"Construction began in late April of 2003. The contractors poured the slab, established eight-foot block walls, and then abandoned the project. We watched with horror as our field hit each stage of drought stress and no work was taking place on the building. Our soccer field went from April until the middle of July without an operational irrigation system. Without irrigation, I couldn't mark heads in the spring to allow for any aerations or slice seedings. During the entire spring lacrosse season we were limited to spreading seed in the goals and other heavy play areas to limit the wear damage. Then, just as the season was winding down, Mother Nature abandoned us too, and the rains stopped."

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As field conditions worsened, Tibbetts instituted protective measures. "We gradually raised the mowing height of cut to 3 inches and mowed only as needed. Toward the middle of June, we stopped all mowing and banned all equipment and all foot traffic from that field. Though baseball and softball summer programs were fully scheduled on those fields, for player safety and field preservation, we closed the entire complex at the same time. By then, over 60 percent of the soccer field surface had been lost to drought and disease.

"With the city still in dispute with the original contractor in the second week of July, Alan Bickford, Director of Maintenance for the school district, came to our rescue. Even though the building still had no doors or a roof, he directed the district's plumber to run the pipe for our irrigation systems. My brother-in-law, Dana Pickrell of Pickrell Electric, traced and spliced all the severed wires, snaked them into the partially constructed building, and installed a new 48-zone waterproof irrigation panel. With this completed, we had 29 days to get all the fields in the complex ready for the fall double sessions."

To accomplish this, Tibbetts and his summer crew of Mike Didonato and Jeremy Gardiner aggressively attacked the situation. He says, "In 8 days, we double aerated all the fields, followed by double aerating with 3/4-inch tines and slice seed-



Maintenance Program for Olmsted Soccer Field

August

- Fertilize entire field according to soil test results at the rate of 1 lb of N per 1,000 square feet
- Shatter tine entire field in two directions
- Apply perennial ryegrass to goalmouths
- Apply Merit insecticide if needed for grubs, following standard IPM procedures
- Apply weed controls as needed following standard IPM procedures
- Lay out soccer field
- Paint field twice a week (Tuesdays and Fridays)
- Mow field with reel mower at height of 1.5 inches
- Irrigate as needed (Usually every other day at 20-minute cycles)

September

- Fertilize entire field according to soil test results at the rate of 1 lb of N per 1,000 square feet
- Shatter tine goal areas
- Aerate goal area and overseed with perennial ryegrass
- Paint field twice a week (Tuesdays and Fridays)
- Mow field with reel mower at height of 1.5 inches
- Irrigate as needed

October

- Last fertilization before winter a 1 lb of N per 1,000 square feet
- Paint field twice a week (Tuesdays and Fridays)
- Shatter tine entire field
- Mow field with reel mower at height of 1.5 inches
- Apply bluegrass/perennial ryegrass mix to worn areas

November

- Mow field with rotary mower due to debris from trees
- Winterize irrigation system
- Make dormant seed application to goalmouths with Bluegrass
- Allow field to go dormant
- Paint fields as needed (depends on playoff game schedules)

December - January - February - March

Field dormant - Monitor periodically for adverse conditions, act if necessary

April

- Take soil test to determine nutritional needs
- Fertilize entire field except goalmouths with 24-5-11 w/Dimension at 1 lb. N per 1,000 square feet
- Apply bluegrass/perennial ryegrass mixture to goalmouths
- Fire up irrigation system
- Mow field with rotary mower at 2-inch height

May

- Fertilize entire field according to soil test results at the rate of 1 lb of N per 1,000 square feet
- Shatter tine entire field in one direction
- Apply bluegrass/perennial ryegrass mix to worn areas
- Paint field for lacrosse twice a week (Tuesdays and Fridays)
- Mow field with reel mower at height of 1.5 inches
- Irrigate as needed to supplement natural rainfall

June

- Fertilize entire field according to soil test results at the rate of 1 lb of N per 1,000 square feet
- Aerate entire field
- Apply bluegrass/perennial ryegrass mix to goal areas
- Apply insect control as needed following standard IPM procedures
- Apply weed control as needed following standard IPM procedures
- Paint field for lacrosse twice a week (Tuesdays and Fridays)
- Late June - Post field as closed to use and shut down for the summer
- Mow field with reel mower at height of 1.5 inches
- Irrigate as needed (Usually every other day at 15-minute cycles)

July

- Fertilize entire field according to soil test results at the rate of 1 lb of N per 1,000 square feet
- Double aerate entire field
- Topdress entire field with 70 tons of compost
- Overseed entire field with bluegrass/perennial ryegrass mix
- Apply insect control as needed following standard IPM procedures
- Apply weed control as needed following standard IPM procedures
- Mow field with reel mower at height of 1.5 inches
- Irrigate as needed (Usually every other day at 20-minute cycles)