STMA Field of the Year Program: Take Pride in Your Profession

ow is the perfect time to prepare your STMA Field of the Year Application. The deadline for materials to be received at STMA headquarters is October 15, 2007. STMA's prestigious Field of the Year program is in its 16th year and is getting stronger every year. With record numbers of applicants the past two years, competition is stiff! But with hard work and diligence, each and every STMA member has a field that could become Field of the Year. STMA presents awards in baseball, softball, football, and soccer categories at High School/Parks and Rec, College and University, and Professional levels.

Each Field of the Year Award winner is presented with a special plaque at the STMA Awards Banquet, held each year at the STMA Conference and Exhibition. This year, the Awards Banquet will be the evening of Friday, Jan. 18, in Phoenix. In addition to the plaque, each STMA Field of the Year winner will receive free conference registration, up to \$500 towards lodging at the conference, STMA signature apparel, and a feature article in the official publication of STMA, SportsTurf magazine. These awards are generously supported by STMA's official awards sponsors Carolina Green Corp., CoverMaster, Hunter Industries, Scotts TurfSeed, Turface, and World Class Athletic Surfaces.

Take pride in your profession and submit your application for STMA Field of the Year and get recognition for your field and respect from your peers. For more information or to download an application, please log on to www.STMA.org or call (800) 323-3875. Remember the deadline for materials to be received is October 15, 2007. ■



Penn State's award-winning Jeffrey Field, with Beaver Stadium and famed Mount Nittany in the background

Answer: from page 14



John Mascaro's Photo Quiz

The irregular brown arrow shaped I area on field was caused by running over a firework with a mower. The firework was not a little one that you buy at the store, but one of the big booms that are in the sky after a typical minor league game. According to the sports turf manager, the fireworks guy scouts the area for any extra, unexploded shells but apparently he missed one. The mower operator was mowing the multi-use park field behind the stadium when he hit a 3-inch shell (or "salute" as the fireworks guy called it) and it exploded, leaving this nice arrow shaped pattern in the grass.

The sports turf manager thinks the

"stem" of the arrow shape comes from the discharge chute on the zero turn rotary mower with a 60-inch deck. The mower was not damaged but the operator received a concussion and was put on the disabled list for 15 days. All things considered, it could have been worse. The mower operators also usually do a thorough check before they start mowing this particular area. I bet these guys on this crew do not need coffee in the morning to keep on their toes.

Photo submitted by TJ Brewer, Head Groundskeeper for the Burlington Bees in Burlington, IA, the Class A minor league affiliate of the Kansas City Royals.

If you would like to submit a photograph for John Mascaro's Photo Quiz please send it to Turf-Tec International, John Mascaro, 1471 Capital Circle NW, Suite # 13, Tallahassee, FL 32303 or email to john@turf-tec.com. If your photograph is selected, you will receive full credit. All photos submitted become property of *SportsTurf* Magazine.



Capture your history now

apture Your Chapter History NOW is one of STMA Chapters' Best Management Practices. As the STMA affiliated chapter network grows, chapters are sharing ideas with each other on what is working for them in membership, sponsorship, administration - virtually any activity with which chapters are involved.

The Gateway Chapter has a unique idea that goes beyond preserving its history to making certain it captures history as it happens. Of course, the 8-year old chapter is safeguarding all of its historical documents to-date, i.e. original bylaws, meeting minutes, newsletters, etc., but it is adding an element to that stockpile. The chapter is having each President detail in writing the key events, happenings, and milestones during his/her presidency. This "snapshot" of each President's term will become an important historical reference for the chapter. Since the Gateway Chapter is still relatively young, it is having each of its previous presidents "catch them up" so there is a complete record of Presidents' perspectives.

Consider implementing this process and add a new dimension to your chapter's history.

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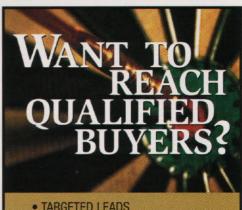


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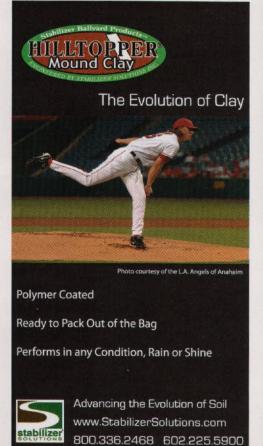
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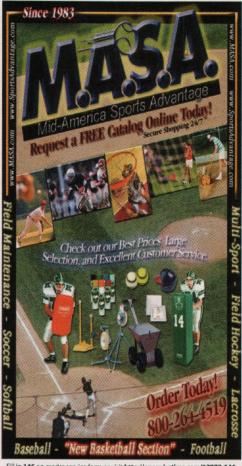
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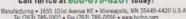
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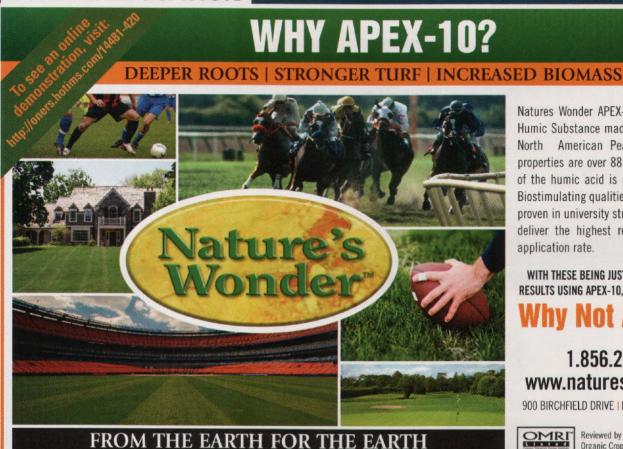
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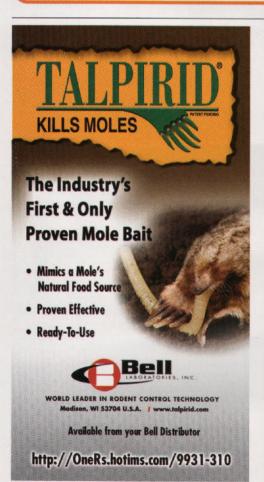
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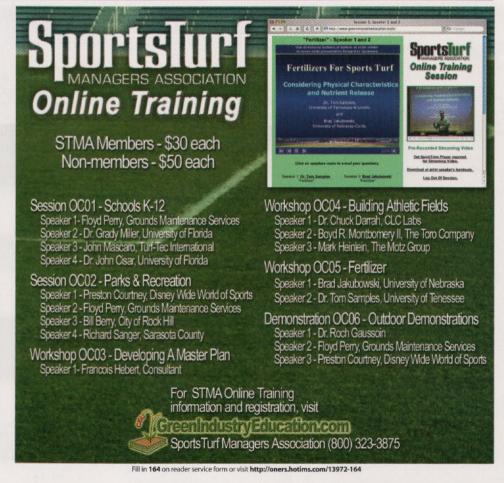
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Clump, clump, clump

BY DR. DAVID **MINNER** Professor, Iowa State

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Questions? Send them to David Minner at Iowa State University, 106 Horticulture Hall, Ames, IA 50011 or email dminner@ iastate.edu.

Or, send your question to Grady Miller at North Carolina State University, Box 7620, Raleigh, NC 27695-7620, or email grady_miller@ncsu.edu.



y fescue soccer/football field is clumping and no one is pleased with the playing surface. Our administrators are considering my suggestions for improving the field but they are requesting outside consultation to develop a renovation plan. Reconstruction is not possible so I have been talking to them about coring, topdressing, and seeding concepts that I have learned through STMA.

We have a dark loamy clay soil over a hardpan and drainage is very slow. Can you give specific renovation recommendations to reduce surface clumping? The field receives high traffic and doubles for youth football and soccer. We have used both a 5-way blend of turf-type tall fescue (finer, denser, darker green, more traffic tolerant, but less heat tolerant) and also K-31 tall fescue (wider bladed, lighter green, and faster growing). We have irrigation so heat stress is less of a concern except for extreme years.

I have suggested to administration that our normal seeding rate of 7 lbs/1000sq.ft. may need to be increased based on newer evidence, but they want more justification. We have a sand plant 30 miles from the field. We would like to do the renovation now (June) to accommodate flag football in September. Specifically, we want information on sand size, timing of the renovation, and seeding rates and methods.

Richard English Beloit, KS

Rich, Here are some specific suggestions for your field renovation project:

Timing. Avoid starting your renovation in mid-summer since this is a difficult time to establish tall fescue in Kansas; anticipate too much heat, disease, and weeds to guarantee successful establishment. On the other hand many high school field managers may be forced to seed in mid-summer when there is only a 2.5-month period starting in June when the field will be idle and renovation is possible.

In your situation I would seed in late August or early September and move flag football to another location. If flag football can't be moved then consider shifting the flag football field set up so that there is minimal traffic on the worn and clumpy areas that you are regrassing. The whole renovation will take about 1-3 days of work that could be spread over a 1-2 week period depending on weather. Plan to scalp mow and aerify during the last week of August followed by topdressing and seeding during the first week of September.

Where the field is clumpy mow as short as possible and remove all of the clippings. Getting it scalped down helps smooth the field when you topdress and drag. If the grass is too tall then you won't have enough loose soil and sand to drag around the surface. I like to use a three-prong approach when your goal is to maximize turf cover in a shortest period of time.

After scalping drill seed in a minimum of 2 to 4 directions, broadcast seed and drag into aerifier holes, and broadcast and cover seed with topdressing. Seedlings will only establish into areas where there is exposed soil; seeding into areas with 100% turf cover does not improve turf density and is a waste of seed. Unfortunately, in a situation with 50% turf cover you will need to seed 100% of the area just to get the proper amount of seed into the bare areas. If funds are limited concentrate your resources such as seed and sand into the high traffic areas only.

Seed. Even though K-31 is a course pasture type tall fescue I have seen it provide a suitable, but unattractive, surface for both football and soccer. The turf-type tall fescues are a much better choice for appearance and playability compared to K-31. In fact, the K-31 may be causing some of the clumps within the finer textured improved tall fescue varieties.

To further reduce clumping consider using the newer rhizome producing tall fescues such as Defiance ('Grande' or 'Grande II') and RTF ('Labarinth'). These first generation rhizome producers for tall fescue are a step in the right direction, but don't expect them to be completely resistant to field clumping. Plan on annual over seeding in high traffic areas of the field.

Our traffic and seeding trials show that a heavy single seeding of tall fescue near 1 September is better than spreading the same amount of seed out over the entire autumn growing season. Seeding rates up to 35 lbs/1000 sq.ft. improved turf cover during autumn traffic and following spring recovery. If you don't anticipate any traffic during the fall 20 lbs/1000 sq.ft. may be your upper limit for a one time seeding in early September.

Topdressing sand. Here is a general specification for topdressing sand that should be incorporated into the top three inches of the field by routine aerification. Ideally you want a sand composed mostly of coarse and very coarse sand because you are trying to create macropores for better water movement. Avoid sands high in fine or very fine sand. Your minimum topdressing target should be a 75% sand content by weight in the top three inches over a 3-year period. Existing soils that have twice as much silt as clay may be impossible to improve. (See http://www.hort.iastate.edu/turfgrass/extension/EGaerifytab.pdf.)

Tall fescue is gaining popularity as a good choice for many athletic field situations because of its relatively low seed cost, good traffic tolerance, and potential for recovery from newer varieties with some rhizomatous growth.

