

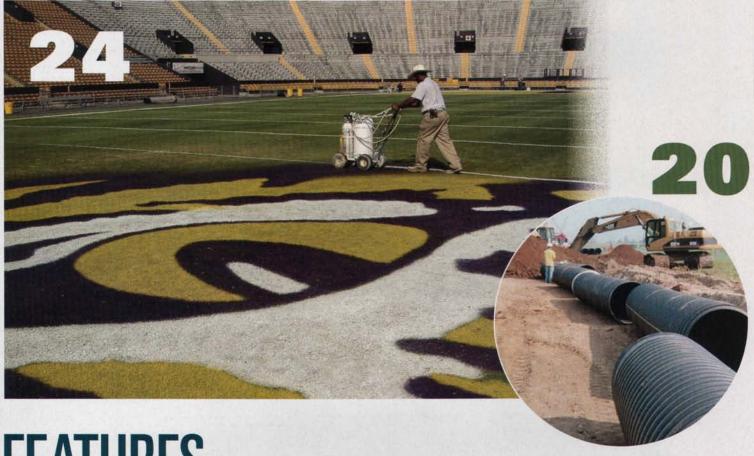
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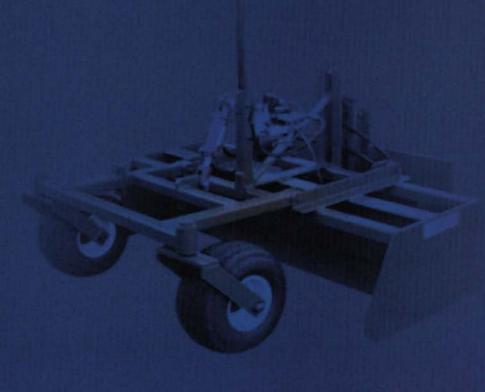
On the cover: An Atlee High Raider makes a play on the STMA's 2006 School/Parks & Rec Football Field of the Year in Virginia.



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## From the Sidelines

# Team loyalty a tough sell



ERIC SCHRODER Editor

eschroder@m2media360.com

717-805-4197 P.O. Box 280, Dauphin, PA 17018 everal years ago two Kansas State marketing professors studied what drives people to identify with one sports team over another. They found four elements that consistently predict identification: mystique, significant others, proximity, and prestige. While proximity and prestige only lead to cognitive identification, mystique and significant others lead to affective commitment. These two factors are what sell sweatshirts, hats, and tickets.

Family and friends affect a fan's identification with and emotional attachment to a team. If you grow up and your parents love Kansas State football, for example, chances are you will also become emotionally vested in the team, the professors said.

That must explain why I, raised by parents who didn't know a linebacker from a comebacker, have at different times in my life rooted for the St. Louis Cardinals AND the Chicago Cubs, which is as absurd as cheering for both the Cleveland Browns AND the Pittsburgh Steelers, of which I'm also guilty.

This capricious loyalty has mutated in my offspring. The 8-year-old, a big sports fan, appears to be headed toward unforgivable territory however: cheering for whatever team is in first place. About 3 years ago when he was first old enough to follow anything he was a Philadelphia Eagles fan, which was fine since we live in Pennsylvania. The "Iggles" just happened to make the Super Bowl that year.

Then a year later he began backing the "Stillers" as they made an improbable run to the big game. How many kids have a McNabb AND a Roethlisberger jersey? And last season he was sporting blue and orange with "Urlacher" on the back when the Bears made it to February!

The young man was born in Chicagoland and responded thusly when I inquired about his changing loyalties, which was a good deflection. But last month when he declared he was now a Dallas Cowboys fan, well that was too much even for this veteran fence-sitter. He got an earful from both his mother and me on front-running, bandwagon-jumping fair weather fandom.

None of this is important of course, and perhaps the youngster has found a key to sports fan happiness. At the rate he's going, he'll never feel the despair and heartbreak of watching HIS team endure losing season after losing season.

Led by Chris Ralston, Lake Elsinore Storm Baseball, a team will build a full-size pitcher's mound inside during the STMA trade show on Thursday, January 17, from 4 to 8:30 p.m. Be sure to stop by and watch the development from a flat concrete surface to a pitcher-perfect mound. Stabilizer Solutions will be donating product to build the mound.





# **SportsTurf**

760 Market Street, Suite 432 San Francisco, CA 94102 Phone 415-839-5060 Fax 415-398-3511 www.greenmediaonline.com

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER Kim Heck

### STMA Office

805 New Hampshire Suite E Lawrence, KS 66044 Phone 800-323-3875 Fax 800-366-0391 Email STMAinfo@STMA.org www.STMA.org

### Editorial

GROUP PUBLISHER Douglas Hebbard
EDITOR Eric Schroder
TECHNICAL EDITOR Dr. Scott McEiroy
ART DIRECTOR Britt Menendez
PRODUCTION MANAGER Sutton Annas
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR Richard Brandes

### STMA Editorial

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# President's Message

# Let your voice be heard

want to thank the Nominating Committee and its Chair, Mike Trigg, CSFM. The committee has accomplished a difficult task paring down the nominations and offering us an awesome slate of candidates for the 2008 Board of Directors. Your turn in the governance process is now, and it's vital.

Please read each candidate's bio on the STMA website and cast an informed vote. I congratulate the committee on producing the impressive slate, and I thank the members who came forward and offered to become candidates. Board representatives are your voice in the boardroom, and they help determine STMA's vision and strategic direction. Identify who you want as your representatives for the coming year and cast your vote.

I'm excited for Conference! You've received the brochure and you've read, and will read more, in this magazine about the tremendous education and exhibit hall waiting in Phoenix.

Part of my excitement comes in realizing how much being in STMA has enriched me. Enrichment has certainly come in the form of education, trusted friendships and business contacts. A huge part of that enrichment has been delivered at our conference. Conference is special because we're able to stay current with the latest research and academic side of our profession. It's also special because we hear about real world experiences from so many colleagues and fellow sports turf managers.

Over the years I've also learned from exceptional presentations on human resources and management. Conference is when we can learn the science and the art of Sports Turf Management all in one place! I'm thankful that attendees, exhibitors and presenters at the STMA Conference are genuinely interested in my success. I don't attend to get simple answers. I attend because colleagues are willing to engage me, understand my issues, and then help identify answers that help our crews and facilities become better managed. It's that simple.

A unique aspect of our profession is that being a great turf manager is probably not our biggest concern. Actually, it's probably a minimum qualification for our employment. We work in the world of sports and recreation as much as in the world of turf. It's imperative to our success that we understand how complex our jobs are becoming. The "grumpy old groundskeeper" rarely succeeds in today's world. Now, the Sports Turf Manager needs to work in an administrative environment and provide great direction to help the entire administrative, programming, and facility team be successful.

Professional development is an investment you and your administration need to embrace as insurance for your facility and your customers. Make attending this conference and other learning opportunities a priority. STMA has some exceptional tools to help you justify conference attendance. Please search the website and take advantage of the help. One-third of conference attendees are first-timers. Let's make them feel welcome in Phoenix. I look forward to seeing everyone in January — it's going to be really good!

Until then, have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season filled with friends and family!

Mike andresen

VP OF CIRCULATION AND COLLATERAL SALES Joanne Juda-Prainito PRODUCTION DIRECTOR Mary Jo Tomei

DIRECT MAIL LIST SALES Cheryl Naughton 770-995-4964 cnaughton@m2media360.com

M2MEDIA360

PRESIDENT/CEO
Marion Minor
VP OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Gerald Winkel

Reader Services
DIRECTOR OF READER SERVICE

Joanne Juda-Prainito Readerservice@m2media360.com

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES
Phone 847-763-9565 Fax 847-763-9569

REPRINTS

Cheryl Naughton 770-995-4964 cnaughton@m2media360.com

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pgarris@m2media360.com

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MIKE ANDRESEN CSFM

mandrese@iastate.edu

# A "sweeping" view of synthetic turf maintenance



### By Rebecca Roach and Chris Harrison

ith their vastly improved durability and playability, the new generation of synthetic turf fields is being built all over the country. In order to keep the field in optimal playing condition, maintenance of the infilled synthetic surface must be done. Organizations cannot think that they can put these systems in and just walk away. The longevity of the fields depends on daily, monthly, and yearly maintenance.

General surface cleaning, grooming, and brushing are the basic requirements for synthetic turf maintenance. The Synthetic Turf Council (STC) has created minimum maintenance guidelines for synthetic turf fields. The STC's intent is to augment the maintenance instructions provided by the manufacturers or initial providers of a new artificial turf field.

The first objective for any field manager is to keep the playing surface clean. STC says the longevity of the field and the effectiveness of the maintenance is quite dependent upon the use of proper tools and equipment and the skills of the operator. No matter what equipment is chosen, it should be able to keep the characteristics of the field, without damaging it.

In 2004 the Cincinnati Bengals had a FieldTurf synthetic playing system installed. Darian Daily, head groundskeeper for Paul Brown Stadium, says that trash pickup requires a huge amount of time with the new synthetic field.

"With the old field we could send out one person, for 45 minutes after a game to clean up trash. The mower would take care of getting the peanut shells, sunflower seeds, etc. off the field. The new field requires debris be picked up by hand. This can take in upwards of six to eight hours."



21 of the National Football League's 32 teams have artificial turf at their stadiums and/or practice complexes.

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### **Myths About Glued Synthetic Turf Seams**



three common methods of seaming, namely: gluing the turf to a wide adhesive coated tape; sewing with thread; and a combination of both gluing

and sewing. All are good provided good workmanship, plus a proven, durable outdoor adhesive and/or strong sewing thread is used.

Appearance, Feel and The Myth. Few argue with the fact that both the appearance and "feel underfoot" of glued seams is better than sewed seams. However, some believe the myth that sewn seams are stronger than glued seams because they do not realize that there is a big difference between sheer strength and peel strength.

Banana Analogy. Hopefully, the analogy that follows will make it easy to see the difference between "sheer" and "peel". It is easy to peel a banana because of the leverage gained by bending back while peeling. Additionally, the bond between the banana peel and the banana itself is broken just one strand at a time while peeling and will not reheal. Oppositely, total bond area is important with sheer. That's why it is impossible to sheer off a banana peel from the banana or the rind from an orange because the entire area of the bond has to be broken all at one time, plus there is no

"...there is a big difference between sheer strength and peel strength.".

"peel back" leverage gained from sheer. The tremendous effect of leverage on peel can also be easily realized by pulling your index finger in sheer vs. bending it back in peel.

Gluing vs. Sewing Seams. Glued seams are superior for sheer because stress is distributed over a wide bonded area instead of concentrated stresses at the thread holes from sewing. Because it is difficult to grab an edge and begin peeling unless the sewing thread is broken or cut, sewn seams have the advantage with peel. However, athletic activities and/or weather changes cause more sheer stresses than peel stresses on synthetic turf seams. Unfortunately because of peel, it's good intentioned human investigators or saboteurs that cause seam failures that would not occur naturally.

Repairs. Both gluing and sewing alone are good and usually sufficient. However, occasionally there will be problems.

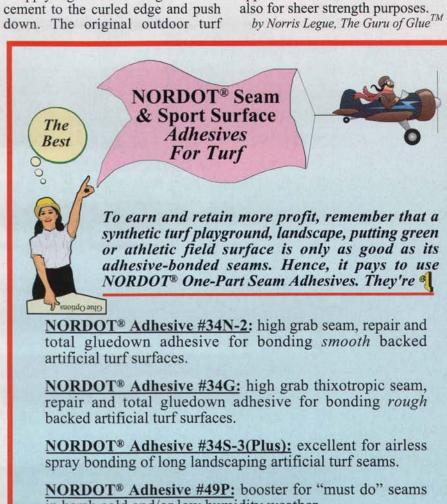
The curled edge of a glued seam is a minor problem that can be easily fixed if someone does not peel it back further. A person investigating an "edge curl" problem often applies enough "peel back" force to further

Seaming Methods. There are separate the primary from the secondary turf backing which does not reheal. This forced separation is often mischaracterized as an adhesive or glue failure even though the glue is still holding down the glued side of the secondary backing. Also, the seam would not fail without "outside help" from one or more investigators.

> Solution. Instead of making a minor separation become worse by "peeling" it back further like peeling a banana, all that needs to be done is to apply a good store bought contact cement to the curled edge and push

adhesive that was already on most of the tape will continue to overcome the sheer stresses while the contact cement's purpose is just to hold down the curled edge. Incidently, broken sewn seams and/or cut turf are usually repaired by gluing.

In summary, the combination of glued plus sewn seams are best because gluing is better for sheer and sewing for peel. However, if it's either gluing or sewing, but not both, gluing is preferred not only for appearance and "feel underfoot" but



in harsh cold and/or low humidity weather.

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