

to it than great looks, though. "Turf has to have a good root system for the rhizome system to withstand the punishment it gets from these big athletes," Hudzik said. "It has to have the sheer strength where a player with cleats on can push off without tearing it quite as easily."

Reasons to upgrade

Maintaining such a high-quality playing surface at Penn State often created additional challenges and demands, many of which directly influenced the staff's irrigation practices. Until the recent decision to install a new irrigation system, all the watering at Beaver Stadium was done by hand, using traveling hose wheels.

"They had to make three moves every time they used those traveling sprinklers," said Bob Capranica, Irrigation Sales Manager at E.H. Griffin, the company that installed Penn State's new Toro 640 system. "They had to wheel them out and then wind them back in, and somebody had to go out there and turn them on."

"That was a big headache," said Herb Combs, assistant groundskeeper at Penn



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IRRIGATION & DRAINAGE

State. "With the water wheel, you always had to have somebody out there just to make sure it's working."

In addition to the time-wasting inconvenience of all that manual watering, the process didn't allow for accurate distribution of irrigation.

"Our ability to syringe the turf is critical, but there was no such thing as a syringe cycle with those big traveling sprinklers," said Hudzik. "You ended up putting down too much water."

Another complicating factor for the irrigation was the shape of Beaver Stadium itself, because the structure would create long shadows across the field when the sun is lower.

"In the fall, in the shaded areas, you knew the turf wouldn't be drying out as much, so we wanted to be able to back the water off in those places," said Combs. "The shadowing also meant the frost stayed out longer in those areas."

Preserving playability

Even though Hudzik and his team had a list of good reasons for needing more control and



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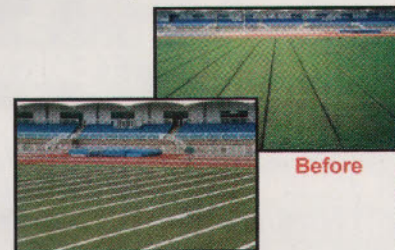
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Before

After Installation

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flexibility with their watering, there was another issue to address. Since Penn State puts such high priority on the playability of its turf, there was some concern that in-ground sprinkler heads could be a problem for the athletes on the field.

However, it turns out that a Toro 640 system had actually been installed on one of Penn State's practice fields a few years earlier.

"They used that field all season and never even realized it had the irrigation system in it," said Hudzik. "And we never had any complaints."

Based on that success, the athletic department agreed to install in-ground irrigation at Beaver Stadium. After a careful bidding process, the Toro 640 was selected. The new system went into place last May with minimal disruption of the playing surface, using a narrow trenching tool and strips of replacement sod.

"You wouldn't even notice it had been installed," Hudzik said. "The heads are below grade, and you get grass blades growing over them. If you walk across the field, you'd have a tough time even seeing them."

In addition to the 32 heads placed in and around the playing field, Penn State's new system features an ET-based Sentinel central control system. By monitoring the site's ET (evapotranspiration) levels, the Sentinel controller automatically shuts itself off when enough moisture is present. Now the Beaver Stadium grounds crew has complete flexibility to fine-tune irrigation on an as-needed basis.

"The system works great," Combs said. "I mean it's phenomenal compared to the way things were done before. Now, if I just want to water across the south end of the field, or just water from 20 to 20 (yard lines), I can do it without watering the rest of the field."

"Overall, it's a tool that's going to help us perform a better job," said Hudzik. "We wanted the individual head control because we end up with a lot of hot spots from all the shade at different times of the year. With the 640 system, now we can just cool off those spots with a syringe cycle. I can go out Friday night before a game and put on like a tenth of an inch."

That ability to apply precise amounts of water also helps Hudzik promote the playability of the field. "The moisture level is really critical in a football game," he explained. "You can get very good footing with just the right amount of moisture."

"Now we can syringe it or water it deeply with just the touch of a button, even from a mile away," said Combs. "Then if we have rain, the rain sensor in the controller will shut the sprinkler off." ■

Canyon Communications in Mesa, AZ, supplied this article.



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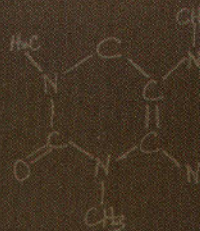
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$$\Delta G = \Delta H - T\Delta S$$



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49ers win...

STMA Field of the Year



The Sports Turf Managers Association awarded the 2006 Professional Football Field of the Year to the Marie P. DeBartolo Sports Centre's natural grass fields. These national awards are judged on playability and appearance, innovative solutions employed to maintain the field, effective use of budget, and the development

and implementation of a comprehensive, sound agronomic programs.

"This past year I thought it would be great to enter the 49ers natural grass football fields into the contest to see how we matched up with the rest of the nation. To my surprise and delight we won the award," says Rich Genoff, head groundskeeper for the 49ers. "Having been in the sports turf industry for more than

30 years, it was quite a thrill to receive this prestigious award, and it is great to be honored by my peers in such a competitive industry. Ryan Snead (49ers assistant groundskeeper), who by virtue of his hard work out on the football fields, was a key player in helping to win this award."

Situated on an 11-acre site in Santa Clara, CA, the Marie P. DeBartolo Sports Centre

provides San Francisco 49ers players, coaches and staff with all the necessary components for daily practices, weekly game preparations and general overall operations in one functional, state-of-the-art setting. Two national grass practice fields with underground drainage and watering systems allow for workouts in all Northern California weather conditions.

SportsTurf: What attracted you to a career in sports turf management?

Genoff: I was attracted to sports turf through my work as a caddy as a young kid, and then later when I was also caddying in the 19070's when I was in my twenties. I was also on the golf team in high school so it was my exposure to golf that got me going.

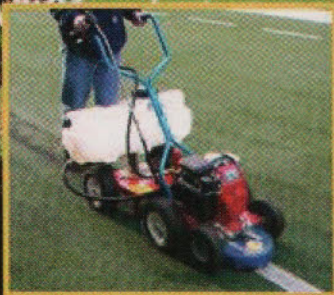
I had the privilege to work at some beautiful country clubs when I was young, and the turfgrass was like the most beautiful green carpet I had ever seen. The actual start of my career began at Atlanta Country Club. I was caddying for the big table; the golfer I was



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FIELD OF THE YEAR



working for missed his putt on the 18th hole and it cost him a lot of money. After he missed he took a huge divot out of the green. Part of the caddy's job is to repair divots, so I went to a bunker and got the sand I needed to repair the divot, and then I went to the pond and got some water and watered it in.

Two days later the superintendent asked me if I would like to go to work for him, and I took the job.

ST: What are your specific responsibilities in this job?

Genoff: Grow and maintain the football fields and grounds. Everything starts with the fields and I work out from them. I have been very fortunate in my career, the places that I've worked have allowed me to do all the work. It started at Santa Clara University, where they allowed me to convert Buck Shaw Stadium from football to baseball and back to football. I did a total of sixteen conversions over my 8 years there. This gave me the opportunity to learn about and operate heavy equipment, grading tractors, very large rollers, and backhoes.

My normal duties include equipment operation, pest control, irrigation, field painting (including endzone art), managing the field, leading the crew, setting up and overseeing of all training camp field work, building things such as our conditioning hill, which was shaping 750 tons of soil to meet the coaches' request.

Only on rare occasions do I use a contractor. To put it all together, my career has been very rewarding inasmuch as I have done everything that covers all aspects of sports field maintenance and management.

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FIELD OF THE YEAR

ST: What's the greatest pleasure you derive from your job?

Genoff: My greatest pleasure is working with, and watching the natural order at work, and the opening of training camp when the fields are absolutely perfect.

ST: Do you plan any adjustments, large or small, to your maintenance plan in 2006? Did you purchase any new equipment or product for this year?

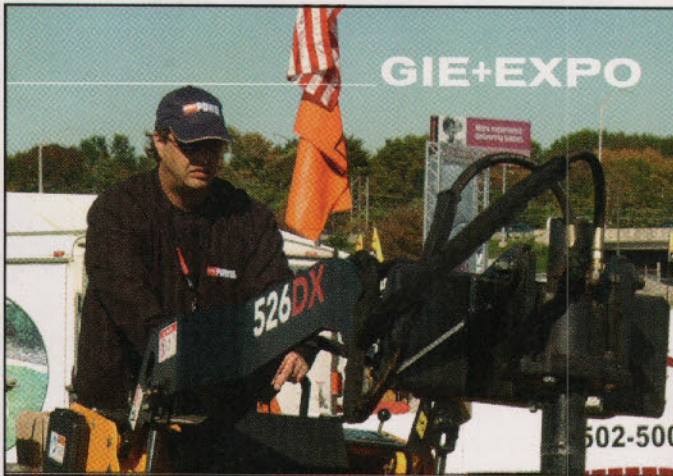
Genoff: No, I don't plan any adjustments. We did buy a new painting machine. With the advent of new and improved synthetic playing fields, the San Francisco 49ers decided to invest \$1,000,000 in a new Sportexe football field at the training facility. The new field allows us to always have a field available during inclement weather, and it allows extra time for rest and repair of our natural grass fields.

ST: How do you see the sports turf manager's job changing in the future?

Genoff: Sports turf managers are in trouble with the advent of the new and improved synthetic field surfaces. I understand geography, and that it is difficult to maintain fields where you have to battle the weather. However, our industry will never stop improving the varieties of grass available to be used for sports turf, and the young people choosing to work in our industry I'm sure will be as hard working and innovative as their predecessors. So the biggest challenge to the new sports turf manager will be more flexibility and greater expertise. ■



The STMA Field of the Year Awards program is enhanced by the support of these sponsors: Carolina Green, Covermaster, Hunter, Nu-Gro, Turface Athletics, Scotts Turf-Seed, and World Class Athletic Surfaces.



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Consider STMA Board service

Each year, STMA presents a "Call for Nominations" for STMA voting members to indicate your interest in board service. Please take a moment to consider serving on the STMA Board of Directors, or nominating a qualified colleague. The benefits are many. Through serving on the board, you'll:

- Contribute to your professional association.
- Be a part of a decision-making body.
- Hone your listening, collaborative and other personal development skills.
- Strengthen your leadership abilities.
- Make a difference in the strategic direction of the profession.
- Garner respect from your employer, your peers and your staff.

For 2008, STMA is seeking nominations for Directors from the Academic, the Parks and Recreation and the Higher Education seg-

ments of membership. These three positions will be elected to 2-year terms.

Per the STMA Bylaws, the

- Academic must be a member engaged in research, education or in extension outreach programs related to sports fields.
- Parks and Recreation representative must be a member who manages sports fields for a parks and recreational facility, municipality, city or other non-profit entity.
- Higher Education representative must be a member who manages sports fields for institutions that provide education beyond the secondary level.

For 2009, the Director positions up for election will be K-12, (a member who manages sports fields for institutions that provide education to students in grades Kindergarten through 12); Professional representative, (a

member who manages sports fields used by professional athletes); and Commercial representative. The Bylaws define "Commercial" as an entity engaged in a commercial enterprise providing services and/or products to the sports turf profession.

The Nominating Committee, chaired by Past President Mike Trigg, CSFM, and comprised of non-board members from the segments up for election, considers all nominations and prepares the Slate of Candidates for the membership's vote. Members can write in a candidate for any position up for election, including the Officers (Secretary, Treasurer, Commercial Vice President, President Elect, and President). The sixth Officer, the Immediate Past President, automatically ascends from President and is a non-voting position on the Board.

If you are interested in board service, please fill out the form below. ■



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Two NEW membership categories offer lower dues

In January, STMA members voted to offer two new membership categories: Sports Turf Manager Associate and an Affiliate category.

The Sports Turf Manager Associate category offers a discounted member price for additional professional members from the same facility. The first member pays \$110 and all other sports turf managers from that facility pay \$75 each. The Associate member will have the same voting rights and privileges as a full dues-paying member. This will help the budgets of those facilities that support the association with multiple members.

The Affiliate membership category is for the person who is indirectly or on a part-time basis involved in the maintenance or manage-

ment of one or more sports field. The Affiliate pays \$50 and receives all the benefits of membership except for voting privileges. The goal of this category is to help educate and provide resources to those who have some responsibility for sports fields.

To join STMA, see the application in this issue or go to www.STMA.org.

All STMA members receive the following benefits:

- Hard copy of the Membership Directory, STMA Membership Certificate and Membership Card.
- Access to the Members' Only section of www.STMA.org, which has a searchable membership directory, technical resources, employment openings and résumés of potential staff and interns for easy recruitment.
- Discounted registration to attend STMA's Annual Conference and Exhibition where you will find dozens of educational sessions and workshops not available anywhere else.
- A monthly electronic newsletter that communicates association, industry and career development information.
- Recognition as a professional Sports Turf Manager and access to further validate your abilities through certification as a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM)
- Discounts to the University of Georgia's distance-learning programs, including Principles of Turfgrass Management, which results in the credential Certified Turfgrass Professional.

Continued next page

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Continued from page 49

- Opportunity to take a leadership role in guiding the profession through National Committee service.
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- Ability to enter your sports field or complex in the nationally recognized Field of the Year Awards Program.
- Voting privileges (Students and Affiliates are not eligible to vote)

In addition to the above, Sports Turf Managers, Academics, Students and Affiliate Members receive access to Michigan State's Turfgrass Information File (TGIF), the green industry's greatest resource for up-to-date technical information, which would cost

\$100 if purchased separately.

STMA also has the generous support of Commercial members who further the industry through continuous advancements in technology. STMA's commercial members receive all the benefits above except for TGIF, and the additional benefits listed below.

Commercial Member benefits:

- A one-time use per year of the STMA mailing list, in an Excel format that includes member mailing information (e-mail is not available).
- One Free listing in PowerLinks, STMA's comprehensive on-line resource to sports field specific products and services - one of the most highly utilized resource on the STMA website available to members and non-members.

- A Free listing of the company in the annual STMA Membership Directory.
- Discounted booth space at STMA's Annual Conference and Exhibition that offers face-to-face meeting opportunities with the key purchaser and decision-maker: the sports turf manager.
- Sponsorship opportunities at the annual conference, with high profile programs and activities for maximum recognition.
- Use of the STMA logo.
- Lower cost for other commercial members to join from the same company (\$75) ■

For information on how to take advantage of these benefits and services, contact STMA Headquarters at 1-800-323-3875.

Ten Tips on Career Advancement

By AllBusiness.com

Many career experts agree that the best time to look for a new job is while you are still comfortably in your old one. If you're starting to feel unchallenged in your present position, you may be ready for a promotion to the next level. If there aren't many career advancement opportunities where you work, the best next job may be waiting for you elsewhere.

Nowadays, it's up to you to take control of your professional future and make sure that you are progressing wisely down the right career path. Here are 10 proven strategies to help you get started:

1. Talk to your boss. Sit down and have a very direct and pointed conversation with your boss about your future in the company. Stress that you want your job performance to meet the company's goals. Share your own career goals with him or her. Your boss will respect this display of confidence and maturity.

2. Ask for more. Volunteering to help out other departments or teams - or simply

