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# Coakley and crew win Field of the Year



In the competitive category of Professional Baseball, winning an STMA Field of the Year Award is impressive. The 2006 winner is

Blair County Ballpark in Altoona, PA, along with sports turf manager Patrick Coakley, CSFM, who also was named national Class AA Sports Turf Manager of the Year for 2006. Minor League Baseball and STMA co-sponsor those awards.

Recognition also should be extended to Coakley's assistant, sports turf manager Lisa Guinivan, and his seasonal crew, Craig Replogle, Chris Krozel, and Bobby Hughes.

*SportsTurf* caught up with Coakley in early February:

**ST:** What are your specific responsibilities in this job?

**Coakley:** I oversee the playing surface for the Altoona Curve, the AA affiliate of the Pittsburgh Pirates. This includes all budgeting,

personnel, purchasing and scheduling outside events, developing responsible IPM and maintenance schedule. The day to day maintenance involves mowing, edging, infield skin maintenance, mound and plate repair, all chemical applications, aeration and other supplementary cultural practices. We also handled some of the larger landscaped areas of the ballpark and will be taking over all landscaped areas in 2007. Curve Baseball, LP also owns the State College Spikes. Matt Neri is the sports turf manager at that location and we try to help one another out when needed, which is a nice resource in emergencies.

**ST:** Do you plan any adjustments to your maintenance plan in 2007?

**Coakley:** Our maintenance plan worked very well this past season. Our turf was as strong as it has ever been, under the most challenging weather conditions we have had since I arrived in 2003. The only adjustment we are going to make is adding a little more nitrogen over the entire season. We had enough room to add

some N and still be just less than six pounds for the year. This, I hope, will give us just a little more kick without having the growth get too crazy. Of course, we always are prepared to adjust on the fly due to weather conditions or whatever other unknowns come our way.

**ST:** What is the most important piece of equipment or product in your program?

**Coakley:** I can't point to one piece of equipment or product that stands out because it is truly the combination of everything that made our plan work. For the skin areas, the Rahn groomer attachment on our Sand Pro is an essential tool. We switched to an organic fertilizer this season, Nature Safe 9-0-9 in combination with White Gold 0-0-24 with 14% Ca. We aerated aggressively this season so our aerator and core harvester were obviously important. If you take any of these components out it would affect the total outcome so it is hard to point to one and say it is the most important. If you want to pick out one thing, look at the people. Lisa and our part time guys take a tremen-

Above: Blair County Ballpark hosted the Eastern League All-Star game in 2006.



dous amount of pride in our field. Our final results are a direct reflection of their efforts.

**ST:** What attracted you to a career in Sports Turf Management?

**Coakley:** My original plan was to be a minor league general manager. The problem was my first job was in Albany, GA. Being a Massachusetts native, I had a slight communication problem in the south, so sales proved difficult. It was decided that I should be moved to the grounds crew so that the amount of people that I came in contact with could be limited. After many seasons I developed much more of an aptitude for caring for infields and turf than I did selling fence signs. Once I committed to the grounds everything took off for me. I realized that working on the field is what I truly wanted to do. It has worked out great, but people still can't understand me when I speak.

**ST:** What do you like to do when you are away from work?

**Coakley:** Well, it doesn't much matter. My two-year-old daughter, Riley, has made it quite clear that there is no need for me to think independently. She tells me where to be and when, and has been known to physically move me if I do not comply. So I guess



Patrick Coakley, CSFM, keeps busy on his field and chasing daughter, Riley.

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# FIELD OF THE YEAR



Assistant Sports Turf Manager Lisa Guinivan at work.

you could say my main interests are “Barney,” “Blue’s Clues,” running in circles, and the occasional game of “Ring around the Rosie.”

**ST:** What are your biggest challenges and how do you approach them?

**Coakley:** Weather is always a challenge because you never know what you are going to get and you have absolutely no control over it. The best approach is to anticipate as best you can and have a plan B, C and D.

Keeping people and myself motivated over a long season can be hard. You have to encourage peak performance, consistently over a long season, without sparking a mutiny. You have to try to recognize when people need a break and are sick of listening to you.

If you run a marathon, stopping to stretch occasionally can actually improve your time. Trying to grind it out without a break will wear you out. You have to know when it is more beneficial to refuel so you don't break down the last month of the season. That makes time management and working efficiently essential. ■

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# John Mascaro's Photo Quiz

**A**  
**Answer:**  
**from page 12**



The brown areas on the football sideline in the photo were caused by the CO<sub>2</sub> that the University of Miami Hurricanes use as they run out onto the field before a game. The traditional Hurricane "smoke" entrance in the Orange Bowl began in the 1950s. In an attempt to increase fan interest, the UM transportation director came up with the idea of using fire extinguishers to produce the now-famous smoke that the Hurricanes run through as they enter the field.

I asked the Sports Turf Manager at the Orange Bowl if some fire extinguisher operators were better at preserving the turf than others were. He replied, "All fire extinguisher operators (smoke) are only experienced in sending the team to the field, not in preserving the turf unless you consider freezing a preserving process." He also reported "To recover the turf requires a daily application of South Florida sun."

*Photo submitted by Clive "Spud" Williams, CSFM, Park Maintenance Supervisor III from the City of Boca Raton, FL. Story told by Dale Sandin, Sports Turf Manager City of Miami Orange Bowl, Miami. ■*

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](mailto:john@turf-tec.com). If your photograph is selected, you will receive full credit. All photos submitted become property of SportsTurf Magazine.

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## STMA Conference sets record despite ice storm

**T**he 18th annual Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) Conference and Exhibition brought 1,548 total attendees to San Antonio in January. Despite an ice storm that literally shut down the city, including highways, government offices, malls, and the airport, STMA experienced a gain of more than 3% in total attendance over the 2006 conference in Orlando. This was despite on-site registrations being down by more than 200 due to the weather. STMA was forced to cancel a golf tournament and one of two off-site seminars due to the storm. The conference wrapped up a yearlong celebration of the association's 25th anniversary.

Integral to the conference was the 88,000 sq. foot exhibition that showcased the sports turf industry's products, services and equipment. More than 162 companies displayed the newest innovations in turf-related products. Fifty-eight educational sessions and workshops, a dozen roundtable discussions, a 4-hour chapter officer's training session, and an offsite seminar hosted by MLB/NFL/MLS turf managers were packed into the 4-day conference.

The conference events were enhanced by the support of: Barenbrug USA; Bare Spot Solutions; Beacon Athletics; Covermaster; Cygnet Turf & Equipment; Diamond Pro; Ewing Irrigation; Floratine Products Group; Hunter Industries; Jacobsen; Kubota; Midwest Rake; Newsom Seed; Pro's Choice; Sod Solutions, Inc.; TLI Sports; Tencate; The Toro Company; Turface Athletics; University of Georgia; West Coast Turf; and World Class Athletic Surfaces.

### Founders Awards presented

The STMA Awards banquet culminated in the awarding of the Founders Awards, STMA's most prestigious honors. Mike McDonald, CSFM, Turf Manager at the University of Minnesota, received the Dick Ericson award, which is given to a sports turf manager who positively impacts the sports turf industry and exhibits effective team leadership.

Dr. James McAfee, Extension Turfgrass Specialist at Texas A&M, received the Dr. William H. Daniel Award, which acknowledges significant contributions to the sports turf industry through research, teaching and extension outreach.

The George Toma Golden Rake Award, which acknowledges an individual's strong work ethic and job performance, was presented to two people, Todd Jeansonne, Sports Turf Manager at Louisiana State University, and Jeff Kershaw, Director of Maintenance for the West Baton Rouge Parrish School, for their efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

The Harry C. Gill Memorial Award was presented to former STMA board member Boyd R. Montgomery, CSFM of The Toro Company. The Gill Award recognizes an individual for their hard work in the sports turf industry and acknowledges their dedication and service to the STMA.



Old and new friends pose at STMA's exhibition in San Antonio last month. From L to R: Dale Getz, CSFM; Boyd Montgomery, CSFM, this year's recipient of the Harry C. Gill Memorial Founders Award; Barney Lopas of the MLB's Angels; legendary George Toma; Toro Super Bowl contest winner Chris Fondren; and Steve Beck of Western Pozzolan.

### Fields of the Year, MiLB awards

Eleven STMA Field of the Year winners were also honored during the annual awards banquet. The sports turf managers whose fields won were judged to have exceptional playability and aesthetic playing surfaces, employ innovative solutions, use budget dollars effectively, and develop and implement a comprehensive, agronomically sound maintenance program. The winners include:

- Baseball: (Professional) Blair County Ballpark, Altoona, PA
- (Schools/Parks) Gaebelein Field, Norcross, GA
- Football: (Professional) Marie P. DeBartolo Sports Centre, Santa Clara, CA
- (Collegiate) Greentree Practice Facility, University of Miami, Coral Gables, FL
- (Schools/Parks) Raider Stadium at Atlee High School, Mechanicsville, VA
- Soccer: (Collegiate) Jeffrey Field, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA
- (Schools/Parks) Greene Field, Noble and Greenough School, Dedham, MA
- Softball: (Collegiate) Cyrill Softball Stadium, University of South Carolina-Upstate, Spartanburg, SC
- (Schools/Parks) Mizuno Field, Eastside Center, East Peoria, IL
- Complex: (Professional) Surprise Recreation Campus, Surprise, AZ

## Travel Travails Contest



Anyone have a hassle getting to San Antonio for the STMA Conference in January? We thought so! Here's a chance to turn that painful memory into something useful. STMA is sponsoring a "Travel Travails Contest" with the winner receiving a free and full registration to next year's STMA Conference in Phoenix. The STMA Conference Committee will select the attendee who endured the most arduous journey.

If you think your travel nightmare to San Antonio is worthy of consideration, please send your story in 200 words or less to STMA HQ by March 31. You can fax (800-366-0391) or email (STMAinfo@sportsturfmanager.org) your entry.

Make your misery work for you!



(Schools/Parks) Village of Lincolnshire's NorthPark, Lincolnshire, IL

Four Minor League Baseball (MiLB) Sports Turf Managers were honored for the quality of their fields during the awards banquet. STMA is a co-sponsor with the MiLB for the Sports Turf Manager of the Year Awards. Sixteen leagues selected a winner and from those winners, STMA awarded the Sports Turf Manager of the Year to:

Short Season/Rookie:

Joe Skrabak, Greeneville Astros

Class A:

Greg Elliott, Lake County Captains

Class AA:

Patrick Coakley, Altoona Curve

Class AAA

Jake Tyler, Toledo Mud Hens

### SAFE auctions raise \$6K

The Foundation for Safer Athletic Field Environments (SAFE), the charitable arm of STMA, raised \$6,019 for scholarship, research, and education during the conference. That total does not include any donations of entry fees from the cancelled SAFE/Jacobsen Golf Tournament, for which Jacobsen will match 50% of those monies, potentially \$27,000. Funds were generated from the live and silent auctions held on the trade show floor and the raffle.

### Students compete in 3rd Collegiate Challenge

Students were able to take advantage of many activities specifically geared to them including the Third Annual Student Collegiate Challenge presented in partnership with the SAFE Foundation and Platinum Sponsor Hunter Industries. Through the generosity of SAFE and Hunter, the Student Challenge was expanded this year to provide the winning two-year team and the winning four-year team each with a \$4,000 grant to fund a practical learning lab at their university. Ninety-one students comprising 26 teams from various colleges and universities participated in a written exam on athletic turf and sports field management topics and identified plants, insects, diseases and weeds, as well as a written case study. Twenty-two teams competed in the event in 2006.

The winning team from the 4-year program was The University of Tennessee, Team 24: Lucas Freshour, Will Jellicorse, Tyler Mittlesteadt, and Stuart Morris excelled in the

matching, multiple choice and identification sections of the test. Iowa State, Team 7 came in second and Penn State, Team 19 came in third.

In the 2-year program, Mount San Antonio College, Team 14 took top honors, with teammates Julio Carbajal, Mike Reed, Ed Schmachtenberger, and David Wolfsbauer all pulling their weight. Second place went to Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College.

The two First Place teams also received the Challenge Cup trophy and individual medals. Second and third place winners received plaques and medals.

## Tournament cancelled but not spirit

By Patrick Allen

The scheduled SAFE/Jacobsen Golf Tournament at The Quarry Golf Club in San Antonio, was cancelled due to an unprecedented winter storm, which brought frozen rain and ice to the city for the first time in more than 20 years. The golf course closed, in addition to highways, the airport and even shopping malls, sidelining a full field of 144 golfers, the largest number ever for a SAFE/Jacobsen Golf Tournament, now in its seventh year.

However, there is some good news for the SAFE Foundation: Jacobsen has pledged to match 50% of all entry fees that are donated to SAFE, meaning that if all 144 golfers donate their fee, a total of \$27,000 could be raised for the foundation. Refunds will also be issued to those making a written request to STMA headquarters. Additionally, Jacobsen donated all of the prizes designated for the golf tournament to the SAFE Live and Silent Auction. Sixteen TaylorMade drivers and rescue clubs netted more than \$2,000 for SAFE.

So without hitting a shot, sinking a putt, losing a ball, or posting a score, the members of STMA and Jacobsen have once again made the SAFE/Jacobsen Golf Tournament a tremendous success. Now if Phoenix only had a golf course we could play at next year!

### SAFE Scholarship winners recognized

Ten outstanding students were recognized for winning scholarships. The SAFE Scholarship Program is funded through the generous support of The TORO Foundation, Jacobsen, the SAFE Live and Silent Auctions on the Trade Show floor, the raffle held throughout the conference, and the miscellaneous donations received from individuals and companies during the year.

Graduate: Adam Thoms, University of Tennessee, the \$2,000 Dr. James Watson Scholarship, and Thomas Serensits, Penn State, \$1,000.

Four-year: Will Jellicorse, University of Tennessee, Dr. James Watson Scholarship, \$2,000; Amy French, Michigan State University, \$1,250; Anne Beckingham, SUNY-Delhi, \$1,000; Jared Knoodle, Michigan State, \$1,000; and Tyler Mittlesteadt, University of Tennessee, \$1,000.

Two-year: Ed Schmachtenberger, Mt. San Antonio College, Fred Grau Scholarship, \$1,250; Chris Romo, Mt. San Antonio, \$1,000; and Brian Sayers, Michigan State, \$1,000.

### Indyk and Kurtz Scholarship donations

In 2006, STMA contributed \$5,000 each to the Dr. Henry Indyk Graduate Fellowship in Turfgrass Science and to the Dr. Kent W. Kurtz Scholarship Endowment. These two icons for whom the scholarships are named passed away within five months of each other.

Dr. Indyk was the inspiration for the STMA certification program. As the first chairman of the STMA Certification Committee, he led a team of sports field managers and educators to develop the highly respected Certified Sports Field Managers (CSFM) program. Dr. Indyk also received the STMA Harry Gill Award in 1994. He was honored with other prestigious awards and was also responsible for the development and organization of the New Jersey Turfgrass Expo, for which he served as its chairman from 1974 to 1996.

To insure that Dr. Indyk's legacy lives on, a memorial Graduate Fellowship in Turfgrass Science is established at Rutgers University. To make a tax-deductible contribution, please send your check to the Rutgers University Foundation, 7 College Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901, and indicate that this is for the Indyk Fellowship.

Dr. Kent Kurtz, STMA's first executive



## STMA installs four chapters

STMA presented four new affiliated chapters with gavels during the Chapter Officers Training Session (COTS) that was held during the STMA 18th Annual Conference and Exhibition in San Antonio in January.

Dave Reis with the Intermountain Chapter of STMA, Brock Phipps with the Ozarks Chapter, Mark Lucas with the Northern California STMA, and John Mascaro with the North Florida Chapter were welcomed to the STMA Chapter network, bringing the total number of affiliated chapters to 30.

To become a chapter, at least 25 members must join that chapter; it must be registered with that state's secretary of state, articles of incorporation and bylaws must be developed, elections held, and financial and operational obligations met.

### STMA Chapters

**Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona:**  
www.azstma.com.

**Chesapeake Chapter STMA (formerly Mid-Atlantic Athletic Field Managers Organization - MAFMO Chapter STMA):**  
www.ccstma.org.

**Colorado Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
www.cstma.org.

**Florida #1 Chapter:**  
954/782-2748

**Gateway Chapter Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
www.gatewaystma.org.

**Georgia Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
770/928-1580.

**The Greater L.A. Basin Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
562/985-8586.

**Illinois Chapter (formerly Midwest Chapter) STMA:**  
847/263-7603.

**Intermountain Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers**

**Association:** 801/422-5467.

**Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
www.iowaturfgrass.org.

**Keystone Athletic Field Managers Org. (KAFMO/STMA):**  
www.KAFMO.org.

**Kentucky Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
www.kystma.org.

**Michigan Sports Turf Managers Association (MiSTMA):** www.mistma.org.

**Minnesota Chapter STMA:**  
www.mstma.org.

**MO-KAN Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
www.mokanstma.com.

**New England STMA (NESTMA):** www.nestma.org.

**Nebraska Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
402/441-4425.

**North Florida STMA Chapter:** 850/580-4026.

**Northern California STMA:**  
916/366-8350.

*Continued from page 47*

director was a long-time supporter of STMA and was its Historian. He received two Founders Awards from STMA: the Harry C. Gill Memorial Award, STMA's most prestigious award, in 1986, and the Dr. William H. Daniel Award in 1996. He also authored "Doc's Dugout" for the STMA newsletter and was a turf educator for more than 30 years. STMA worked with his children to obtain his professional papers and materials. The STMA Historical Committee is developing a Dr. Kent Kurtz Collection, which will showcase the profession and the history of the association.

To honor Dr. Kurtz, the family has established the "Dr. Kent W. Kurtz Scholarship Endowment," which will fund scholarships for students pursuing a degree in the field of turfgrass management. Tax-deductible donations can be given by check, payable to the "Cal Poly Pomona Foundation," and sent to Ms. Michelle Moyer, DOD, College of Agriculture, Cal Poly Pomona, 3801 W. Temple Ave., Pomona, Ca 91768. Please note in that this is a contribution to the "Dr. Kent W. Kurtz Turf Scholarship." Donations can also be made on line at "GiveToCal PolyPomona.Com." ■

**Ozarks STMA:** 417/862-6974.

**Sports Turf Managers of New York:** www.stmony.org.

**Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey:**  
www.sfmanj.org.

**Ohio Sports Turf Managers Association (OSTMA):**  
www.ostma.org.

**Pacific Northwest Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
www.pnwstma.org.

**Southern California Chapter:** 858/679-2526.

**South Carolina Chapter of STMA:** www.scstma.org.

**Texas Sports Turf Managers Association:** 866/897-8621.

**Tennessee Valley Sports Turf Managers Association (TVSTMA):** www.tvstma.org.

**Virginia Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
http://www.vstma.org.vt.edu/.

**Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association:**  
www.wstma.org.

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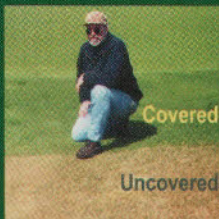


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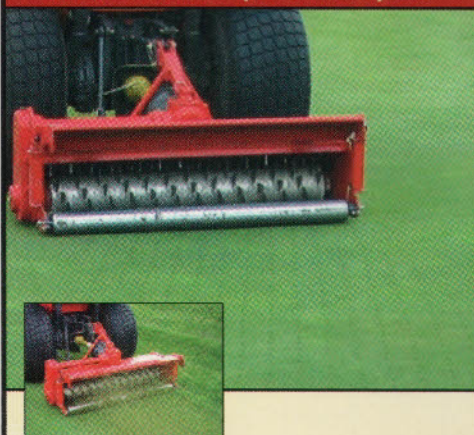
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