

My plan was to keep Dave and Justin on irrigation maintenance and other campus needs and I would mow the athletic fields. I met with my crew daily to determine our priorities and we maintained the course. Their input and determination to pull this off could not have been done without their understanding and commitment; however, they did not work extra hours. I did not have the budget for it.

“Sports turf managers need to become more involved with legislation at the federal, state, and local levels.”
—Gerald Landby

Soon my supervisor, Tom McCarvel, VP of community relations, asked if he could help. I trained him to operate the Sidewinder and him and I regularly did the work, mowing four of the eight acres daily and the rest every other day. We had our regular jobs too.

Soon June turned to July, which brought record heat for Helena. It was

the hottest July since records were taken. By mid July, a forest fire started 25 miles north of Helena and it lasted until snow fall. Other fires on the edges of Helena and the Northwest region made for a very smoky valley, and made for difficult working conditions. While I was working, I would see the athletes training in the same environment. These athletes train and play soccer and football because they love the sport. It is the way the game is supposed to be played. This was my motivation!

By the way, there's been interest here in putting in synthetic turf. Honestly, being the one who has put blood, sweat, and tears into this place as one cares for his or her family, I was offended to hear of it. For example, I listened as one salesman told us how we would win more games, playoffs, and possibly championships if we tore out the grass and installed his product. Obviously, this person did not do his homework on Carroll College!

But I have taken the challenge to learn about something that scared and saddened me. This is what all of us should do. I have sought to learn all there is to learn about synthetic turf and I simply ask, "What is best for Carroll College?" That is the discussion I want to hear. Don't take the words of corporations seeking money or because it is the thing everyone else is doing but research the information and come up with your own data and consensus.

It is my friends at the STMA who has helped me with this struggle. While I am close to reaching my consensus, I know whatever decision or challenge comes before me I am prepared to continue to offer the best facility Carroll College athletes deserve.



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Tom McCarvel, Carroll's VP of Community Relations, mowing for Shodair All State Soccer Cup. It was very smoky for nearby fires.

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ST: How do you communicate with others?

Landby: My short answer is: By taking the first step. Initiate the communication and be a listener! Acknowledge those who do well for you. Give praise! Always ask questions. No question is ever too dumb.

I meet with Athletics weekly to discuss their needs and to share my input. We work together to schedule and prepare for events. We work together to find funds to make our goals happen. We follow up on phone and email. I meet with my crew daily to review work projects and to prioritize each day. My crew is very important to me and I strive to help them succeed in their jobs.

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

Landby: I think the job description has been changing already. Looking to the future, I am concerned. It is hard to find help and people who want to do this kind of work. Attitudes with the newer generations are somewhat different from 20 years ago. Young people today expect a \$50,000/year job out of high school and by the end of the first week they are ready to be CEO.

I think mentoring and being involved with encouraging young people to consider careers in sports turf will be more of a responsibility for those who are in the career now. Sports turf managers need to become more involved with legislation at the federal, state, and local levels. Our industry is under scrutiny for what we do. We need to be informed and communicate our concerns. Now is the time to be more involved with the STMA and our industry than ever.

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

Landby: I was interested in being a farmer but times were changing in the late 70's. I found out obtaining the family farm was not going to become reality. Horticulture is very much agriculture related so I pursued my interest in Horticulture at the University of Minnesota-Crookston. After I graduated, I wanted to move west so I visited Montana State University-

Bozeman and inquired about another interest, meteorology. But that program was being phased out so I looked into the Landscape Management program. Soon I was hired by MSU Grounds to fulfill my internship obligation to UMC.

I moved to Montana, worked at MSU and got my bachelors in Landscape Management. When I studied horticulture, I studied almost anything to do with horticulture. I believed I needed to be as diversified and well rounded in my education so I would be prepared for anything in my career. While I was prepared through education and experience, I sort of walked onto sports turf management by accident.

I inherited Nelson Stadium as it was under construction when I started at Carroll College. As the only sports turf manager the field has ever had, I have grown into my job and I believe it is my job to take the standards of sports turf to the level affordable but obtainable. Now I see myself as an urban farmer and my crop is sports turf.

ST: How do you balance work and personal life?

Landby: Last year, this was difficult but then perhaps not. I like what I do and am privileged to live in Helena. Everyday is a day in paradise! However, I need to leave work behind once in a while. I use any moment I have to relax and enjoy life. I look for the small things and appreciate these in a big way. I am an avid hunter and fisherman. When the weather is miserable, I am out there enjoying it.

I occupy myself with the Association of Montana Turf, Ornamental, and Pest Professionals, Montana Urban and Community Forestry Association, and STMA. In the company of these colleagues and friends, we strive to bring our industry to the forefront. These organizations get me away once in a while.

I like to do fire mitigation work so I have been busy helping others making their homes safer. I encourage the professionalism of the STMA and help out at the Helena Brewers baseball club when I can. (Yes, Eddie Alvarez and Jonathon Garrett that was for you!) I enjoy a beer with my friends at the Brewhouse. And I cherish quiet time with my wife, Sandy. ■

The STMA Field of the Year Awards Program has been made possible through the generous support of its sponsors. They include Carolina Green; Covermaster; Hunter Industries; Turface Athletics/Profile Products; Scotts Turf Seed; and World Class Athletic Surfaces.

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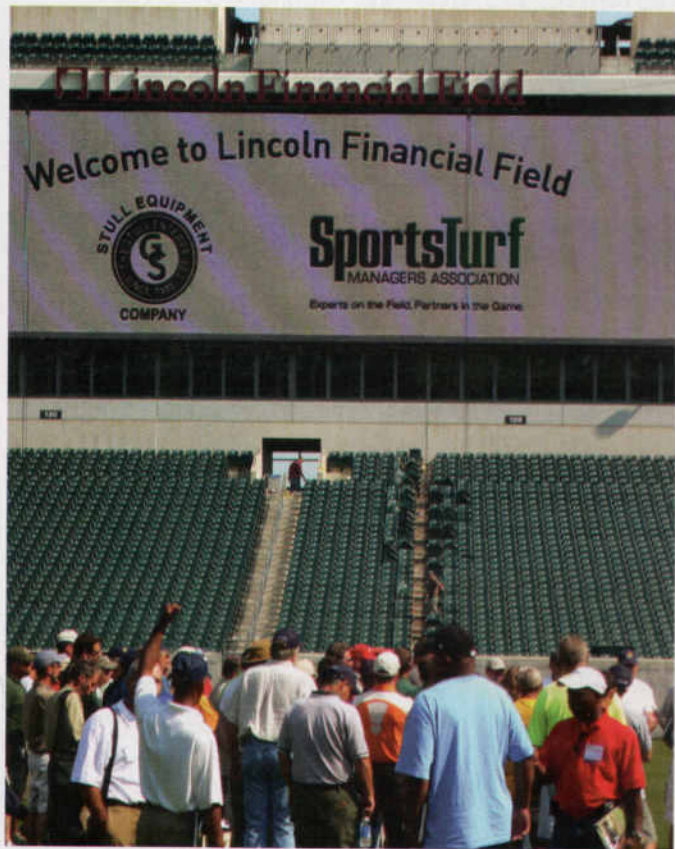
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Mid-Atlantic regional event a success

By Kim Heck, STMA Chief Executive Officer



Philadelphia's Lincoln Financial Field scoreboard welcomed STMA for the June 27 event.



Eagles turf manager Tony Leonard, left, and Dr. John Sorochoan of the University of Tennessee, right, walked around the field discussing management practices.

"Spend time like money," advised Jeff Fowler, Penn State University Cooperative Extension Program Director, during the STMA Regional Education and Field Day event held in Philadelphia June 27. Fowler was one of five presenters throughout the day and his "7 Habits of Highly Defective Sports Turf Managers" offered tangible strategies to attendees on how to improve their professional and personal lives. Key to that success is to be a better communicator, actively embrace a positive attitude, become a lifelong learner, set and achieve goals and be flexible.

The regional event drew more than 160 people and was supported by six STMA-affiliated chapters: Keystone Athletic Field Managers Organization (KAFMO), Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMNJ), Sports Turf Managers of New York (STMONY), Virginia Sports Turf Managers Association (VSTMA), New England Sports Turf Managers Association (NESTMA) and the Chesapeake Chapter of STMA.

Dr. John Sorochoan, University of Tennessee, kicked off the day with a presentation on "Managing Bermudagrass in the Transition Zone." He acknowledged that the number one challenge to managing athletic fields is cost and recommended that sports turf managers quantify the value of overseeding. Sorochoan also reminded attendees that "You get what you pay for" when purchasing seed and urged attendees to select high quality bermudagrasses that are cold tolerant with high quality turf coverage.

Emcee Dan Douglas (KAFMO Chapter president) kept the participants on schedule as they moved to and from the classrooms to the fields. He helped Fowler administer an agronomic quiz to a team from each chapter, as they competed to win a complimentary full conference registration to the STMA annual conference in San José in January 2009. The Virginia Chapter took the honors and was awarded the conference registration to give to one of its members.

Sorochoan and Tony Leonard, Director of Grounds for the Philadelphia Eagles and host for the day's event, were paired and walked about Lincoln Financial Field discussing its management practices. The field was originally sodded with Kentucky bluegrass sod, after which a DD Grassmaster system was installed. According to Leonard, the field performed very well the first 2 years, but then started to decline quickly throughout seasons three and four. He began removing the top 2 inch to eliminate any organic matter build up and reseeding, but very hot and humid summers led to a weak field going into the football season. After year four, the top 2 inch was grinded again and the field was sprigged with Patriot bermudagrass. The bermudagrass gave the field a chance to be at 100% at the beginning of the football season.

During the 2007 season, the field was sodded over the top of the existing field, and the bermudagrass survived underneath. This allowed for a large percentage of the original bermudagrass to reestablish, and the field was also resprigged in March of this year. Going into this season, the grass is much denser and stronger than it was at this point in 2007, Leonard said.

Leonard's assistant, Dan Shemesh, showed attendees key pieces of equipment that he had stationed in an endzone on the field. This equipment is used by the crew to manage Lincoln Financial Field, Novacare Practice facility and the surrounding landscape and grounds. The equipment includes a spiker for quick aer-

ation, a jumbo spike seeder that is twice the size of a regular seeder to accommodate 200 lbs. of seed at one time for efficient overseeding, and a deep tine aerifier.

Stull Equipment also had its new line of golf course maintenance equipment displayed in the other endzone for attendees to view.

Leonard, with help from two Eagles cheerleaders, conducted a raffle of Eagles clothing and merchandise, followed by a raffle of STMA items.

Sorochan also presented "Cool Season Turfgrass Management." He showed statistics from a study he recently conducted on fertilization rates and mowing frequencies for various cool season grasses. He recommended, "You want to be continuously feeding your turf. With medium frequency of fertilization, density increased."

He also assessed some of the new hybrid bluegrasses, which are great heat, disease and drought tolerant. A tip to help extend the season on sports fields is to use crumb rubber. "It may help wear tolerance by protecting the crowns," says Sorochan.



Mike Boekholder, groundskeeper for the Philadelphia Phillies, presented his pre- and post-concert management philosophy for Citizens Bank Park.

"Aerifying is the easiest maintenance practice for the most benefit," said Mike Boekholder, head groundskeeper at Citizens Bank Park, home to the Philadelphia Phillies. Boekholder gave the final presentation of the day at his field. He explained the unique drainage system that was designed and installed in the sand-based Kentucky bluegrass

field because the field itself is below sea level. He also described the intense pre- and post-concert management practices he implemented to help the field recover from a June Jimmy Buffet concert.

The day concluded with an optional tour of the Eagles' Novacare Practice Facility that is a few blocks away from Lincoln Financial Field. ■

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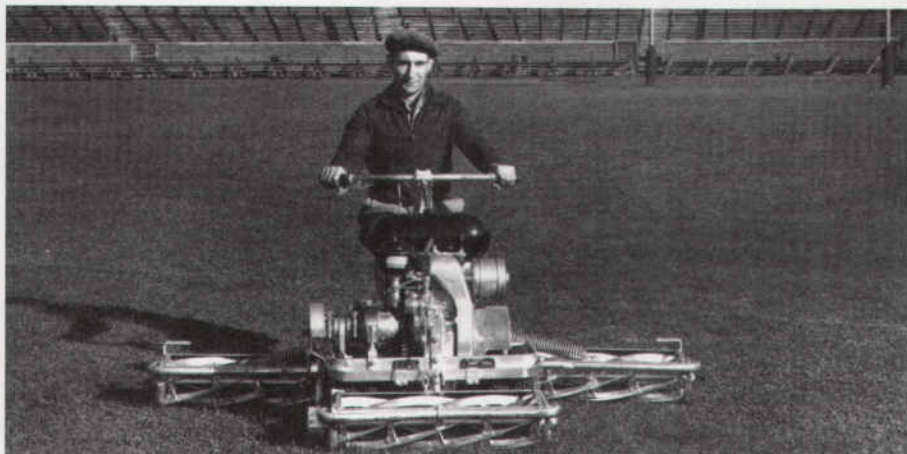


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Early gasoline triplex mowers



The first gasoline powered mowers were horse-drawn traction mowers pulled by tractors instead of horses. Next, the self propelled mower was introduced, which were large and left wheel impressions because of their weight. The invention of the triplex was the next step in the evolution. The triplex allows turf to be mowed without hoof prints or a wheel impression left behind. Also, because of the three reel design, mowing times were dramatically reduced and maneuverability was enhanced. The triplex mower has now become a staple of our mowing regimen.

The STMA Historical Committee met in late November for the first time to log and develop the acquired collection of Dr. Kent Kurtz, STMA's first executive director. "Doc", as he was admirably referred

Here we have an example of one of the first gasoline powered triplex mowers used on sports field maintenance. This is a Toro Triplex mower used at the Rose Bowl in the 1920's. Innovations such as the powered triplexes, which we take for granted today, were not always around. The horse drawn mower was the only method available until companies like Toro, National and Ransomes incorporated internal combustion engines to the machines.

to, also served as the association's first Historian, and amassed an amazing collection of document and photographs of the sports turf profession and STMA. Doc's collection included a kind donation from the estate of turf industry pioneer Dr. Fred Grau. In appreciation of Doc's contribution and the generous donation of the Kurtz family to STMA we will be running a monthly account of the people, places, stories, equipment, and photographs that are important to the profession and association. ■

STMA Affiliated Chapters Contact Information

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: www.gstma.org.

The Greater L.A. Basin Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association: www.stmalabasin.com.

Illinois Chapter STMA: 847/263-7603.

Intermountain Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association: www.imstma.org.

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 Carolina Chapter of STMA: www.ncsportsturf.org.

North Florida STMA Chapter: 850/580-4026.

Northern California STMA: www.norcalstma.org.

Ozarks STMA: www.ozarksstma.org.

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: www.socalstma.com.

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.com.

Virginia Sports Turf Managers Association: www.vstma.org.

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

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4 Yearly operating expenditures (excluding salaries)

- F ☐ Over \$1 million C ☐ \$50,001 - \$100,000
E ☐ \$500,001 - \$1 million B ☐ \$25,001 - \$50,000
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August 2008 - Expires February 2009 - RS0808

After the flood

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Many recreational athletic fields are built in flood plains and flooding through out the Midwest in 2008 has prompted many calls related to getting fields back in shape for play. After giving flood recovery recommendations several sports turf managers shared with me their tips and lessons learned to help you prepare when flooding is eminent.

Flooding results in variable conditions that tests the creativity and experience of an athletic field manager. Try to match your management strategy to fit the specific conditions that exist at each site. Some areas will recover with little input, while others will need removal of silt followed by reseeding. In extreme areas, tilling and regrading may be required. The large volume of water in a flood usually dilutes liquid contaminants such as petroleum products and sewage. Ryegrass can be planted in small test plots or soil samples to give a quickly determine if there may be contaminants in the soil that would prevent grass establishment.

- Remove debris, litter, and check for hazardous materials that may contaminate the soil. The cadre of wood, metal, trees, and house hold items that are swept down the river can all end up on your facility.

- Remove sand and silt as soon as possible so the existing grass has a chance to grow. Sand as deep as 5 feet may accumulate in pockets closer to the river or where water was moving fast. Silt layers can range from ½ to 1 ½ inches thick; drag thin layers or remove thicker layers to sufficiently expose grass blades for recovery. Once the areas dry there are generally two strategies. Silt that crumbles and turns to powder can be dragged into the surface to make a seed bed. Thicker deposits of silt that break into stable 1-inch beds may be bladed into a wind row and scooped from the surface. With an excessive amount of dried soil on the surface, this can actually be a good time to smooth the surface by dragging or laser grading. Silt should be removed from sand-based grass fields and skin areas of baseball/softball fields. Anticipate loosing ½ to 2 inches of the original skin material when removing silt contaminated skin areas. A Topmaker is handy since it can neatly remove variable depths of silt. Solid tine slicers and aerifiers or a variety of spiked drags can be used to dry out and break up the silt layer.

- Aerify with hollow or solid tine equipment to dry the field and regenerate growth of soil microbes. The unforget-

table bad smell on flooded fields is often caused by death of aerobic soil microbes and the abundance of anaerobic soil bacteria. Aerifying dries out the soil and speeds recovery of beneficial soil microbes. Hollow tine aerification with core removal is preferred when possible.

- Be flexible with your regressing strategy. Some areas will recover by simply dragging and mowing. Over the next 2 weeks turf will recover or weeds, especially knotweed and spurge, will dominate. If there is pressure to immediately reopen the facility then seed or sod the fields as soon as the surface can be prepared and irrigation is available. Where time is available summer flooding is best followed by seeding from mid-August through mid-September.

- Crowned fields survive the best because puddles are eliminated as the flood water subsides. Low pockets of shallow water can literally cook the grass in just a day or two under sunny conditions.

- Joe Wagner, Iowa City Parks and Recreation, and Ted Thorn, University of Iowa, offer these tips as they recover from the flood of 2008: Move equipment and anything of value to higher ground. Remove irrigation controllers and electric motors from pump stations. After flooding all electrical items, wire, and conduit must be replaced; only the direct burial wire may remain. Moving water popped out the home plate and pitching rubber and carried them away. They also lost bleachers, trash cans, wind screens, and signs from fences that may have been saved if they knew the extent of damage that was to come. Once the shop was evacuated they recommend opening the doors so that water may flow through the building and reduce the chance of removing it from the foundation.

In my 52 years I've experienced two 500-year floods; the Missouri flood of 1993 and now the Iowa flood of 2008. With the large number of athletic fields located in flood plains it seems to be just a matter of time before you will be making your own flood recovery plan. Thanks to Brian Wood, Commercial Turf from Missouri donated the use of Seed-A-Vator for flood victim members of the Iowa Chapter of STMA. I can't think of a better reason to be a member of STMA. ■