

spent on the growth regulator has more than paid for itself as far as us being able to provide a perfectly striped field for all games without sacrificing time and quality.

ST: What's the best piece of turf management advice you've ever received?

Davis: There are a ton of people that I owe a great amount of gratitude to for helping me along in my sports turf career. It's hard to single out one piece of advice. However, there is one thing that has definitely stuck with me and is always in use when I am on a field. "A good groundskeeper always walks with his head down."

Tom Nielsen of the Louisville Bats has been one of the most influential guys in my career. This statement of his from years ago has become a part of my subconscious in my daily work: "There is always something to be seen in your turf. One small area on a field can potentially tell of stressed turf, disease, nutrient deficiencies or a number of signs that hopefully can prevent larger problems." It's funny that the statement has stuck with me so long. I think I share the same outlook as most turf managers; we take a tremendous amount of pride in our work and feel that there is always something more that can be done.

ST: How do you keep your "engine" charged to do your best every day?

Davis: During the busy part of the season it's sometimes difficult to keep motivated. We maintain 14 acres of sports turf

as well as about 50 acres of grounds around the athletic facility and school buildings with a crew of three. However, I would not trade this profession for any other. I've always had an outdoor job and cannot see that changing in the near future.

I think most turf managers would agree that there are always improvements that can be made. There is always a new technique or product to try. There is always something that can be done to sure up the safety of the field or give it just a little bit more aesthetically pleasing look. I think the biggest satisfaction I get from my job is climbing to the press box on our football field. It is centrally located and from this spot you can see almost every field. There is nothing more pleasing than seeing a freshly mowed and painted field. Just this quiet time surveying the facility and taking in the satisfaction that comes from a job well done keeps me going.

ST: How do you balance work and personal life?

Davis: My wife, Amy, and our two sons, Jake and Will, are very supportive of my career. My oldest attends school on the same campus and calls himself my "Jr. Groundskeeper." Every afternoon after school he is quick to my shop to help out with whatever is on the agenda for the day. He even has his own locker in my office. One of the boys' favorite activities if I work late is to come and run through the sprin-

klers if the irrigation happens to be on. I guess you can call that a perk if you are 7 or 3 years old. There are often long hours and weekends, but the support of my family allows me to be able to concentrate while at work and devote my time to the family when at home. During the winter months I try to catch up on things around the house and yard, as well as take a much needed vacation.

ST: What steps do you take to ensure the field drains well? Or, what system is installed?

Davis: Our field profile is a heavy clay so it does not drain exceptionally well. The field is crowned and there are storm drains on the edge of the field but no real drainage system. I try to aerate heavily and topdress at least once a month when the turf is actively growing. This past year we were able to purchase a turf sweeper. My plan for the future is to harvest the cores after we aerate and before topdressing. Anything I can do to alleviate soil compaction and increase water percolation will benefit the turf for not only drainage but root development. ■

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.

Christian Academy of Louisville Monthly Maintenance Program

January

Root fertilization, _ lb. K/1,0002

February

Apply post-emergent

March

Paint field for spring game

April

Apply post-emergent

Starter fertilization, 1 lb. N/1,0002

May

Aerification in two directions

Cores pulverized

Topdress with 25 tons fine grade sand

Mow as needed

June

Aerification in four directions

Verticut in two directions

Seed with Transcontinental bermudagrass, 2 lbs./1,0002

Starter fertilization, 1 lb. N/1,0002

Liquid fertilization with growth regulator, _ lb. N/1,0002 weekly

Mow 4-5 times weekly

July

Aerification in two directions

Verticut in two directions

Slow release fertilization, 1 lb. N/1,0002

Liquid fertilization, post-emergent, growth regulator, _ lb. N/1,0002 weekly

Mow daily

August

Aerification in two directions

Verticut in two directions

Topdress with 25 tons fine grade sand

Liquid fertilization with growth regulator, _ lb. N/1,0002 weekly

Mow daily

Paint field once a week

September

Slow release fertilization, 1 lb. N/1,0002

Mow daily

Paint field once a week

October

Mow daily

Paint field once a week

November

Mow as needed

Root fertilization, _ lb. K/1,0002

Apply post-emergent

December

Soil test

Staffing solutions offered at Conference

Seeeking an intern, sales staff, an assistant or a head sports turf manager? The STMA Annual Conference and Exhibition is offering to you an easy way to jump start the hiring process.

At the new Career Center debuting in San José, which is sponsored by Ewing Irrigation, employment openings will be posted on a job board and also available for electronic viewing. There is no charge for an organization to have an opening posted, nor does the organization have to attend the conference. Just send the position description by Jan. 7, 2009, to STMAinfo@STMA.org. If you are attending the conference you can bring it with you to San José, or even create it on-site using one of our Career Center computers. You should also consider posting your on-site contact information on the position description, if you want prospective employees to contact you while you are in San José.

STMA is providing interview rooms for those who want to begin the hiring process while in San José. The private rooms will have a sign-up sheet for 30-minute time slots, Tues., Jan. 13, through Fri., Jan. 16, during business hours. Each room will have a table and four chairs, in case more people from your organization participate in the process.

In addition to reviewing the job openings, job seekers can drop off copies of their résumé for potential employers to pick up and review. Be certain to include your on-site contact information, so the employer can meet with you while in San José.

The STMA Career Center will provide tip sheets on résumé writing and interviewing techniques, and will have a series of 20-minute presentations on career enhancing strategies.

Career Center-at-a-Glance

View Job Postings, Drop off Résumés, Pick up Career Materials, Hear Presentations, and Use Interview Rooms

Tues., Jan 13 OPEN 3-7 p.m.

Wed., Jan. 14 OPEN 7 a.m.-7 p.m.

12:30-12:50 p.m. Crisis Communication. Presentation – Learn how to diffuse potentially serious situations that can affect your credibility.

4:10-4:30 p.m. Dealing with a Diverse Workforce. Presentation – Hear how to implement management strategies that engage and strengthen your team

Thurs., Jan. 15 OPEN 6:30 a.m.-7 p.m.

7:30 – 7:50 a.m. Implementing the STMA Playing Conditions Index (PCI). Presentation – Find out from the developers of the PCI how and why you should use the PCI at your facility.

3-3:30 p.m. Developing a Winning Field of the Year Award Submittal. Presentation – The judges of the Field of the Year Awards program share their ideas on what they look for in an awards submittal.

Fri., Jan. 16 OPEN 6:30 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

11 a.m.-12 p.m. CSFM Networking Session – Considering Certification? Use this informal gathering of CSFMs to ask questions of and find out how becoming certified has enhanced these members' careers.

12:10-12:30 p.m. Advancement through Association Involvement. Presentation – Hear first-hand from outgoing President Mike Andresen, CSFM how becoming involved in your local and national association has immense rewards and benefits.

12:40-1 p.m. Creating an Impactful Résumé. Presentation – Learn from a career expert on how to create a résumé that gets you an interview.

1:10-1:30 p.m. Interviewing Techniques that Lead to Job Offers. Presentation — Knowing what to do and say during an interview can help you succeed in landing that job.

STMA Announces Candidates for the 2009 Board of Directors

The STMA Nominating Committee has announced to its membership the slate of candidates for the 2009 STMA Board of Directors. Voting members will cast their vote via a ballot, which are due by Dec. 19.

The Committee had an excellent response from members who volunteered for Board service. Under the leadership of Chairman Mike Trigg, CSFM, the Committee spent the fall months creating the slate. Trigg says, "Our Committee was very impressed with the qualities and qualification of our volunteers, and we had a difficult time trimming it down." Trigg also feels STMA is in a great place for the future. "We have a talented pool of candidates in reserve for our future elections," says Trigg.

The slate of candidates presented on the ballot reflects the new Bylaws, and members will be voting on an additional director and the combined Secretary/Treasurer position.

Board positions up for election for 2009 include the Director for Facilities used by Professional Athletes, the Director representing Schools K-12, the Commercial Director and an At-Large Director. The 2009 Board will also be implementing additional provisions from the Bylaws, such as limiting the Officers' terms to one year and allowing the Immediate Past President to vote on Board actions.

STMA 2009 Slate of Candidates

OFFICERS

Immediate Past

President: Mike Andresen, CSFM, Iowa State University, Ames, IA

President: Abby McNeal, CSFM, Colorado School of Mines, Golden, CO

President-Elect: Chris Calcaterra, M.Ed., CSFM, CPRP, City of Peoria Sports Complex, Peoria, AZ

Commercial VP: Dale Getz, CSFM, CSE, The Toro Company, Bloomington, MN

Secretary/Treasurer: Jody Gill, Blue Valley School District, Overland Park, KS
v. Troy Smith, CSFM, Denver Broncos Football Club, Denver, CO

DIRECTORS

Schools K-12: Martin Kaufman, CSFM, Ensworth Schools, Nashville, TN
v. Mike Tarantino, Poway Unified School District, Poway, CA

Facilities used by Professional Athletes: Larry DiVito, Washington Nationals, Washington, DC
v. Joe Kennedy, CSFM, Surprise Recreation Campus, Surprise, AZ

Athletes: Joe Kennedy, CSFM, Surprise Recreation Campus, Surprise, AZ

Commercial: Greg Dunn, West Coast Turf, Stevinson, CA
v. Chad Price, CSFM, Carolina Green Corp., Indian Trail, NC

Director At-Large: Jimmy Rodgers, CSFM, Luck Stone Co., Charlottesville, VA
v. David Schlotthauer, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT
v. John Sorochan, Ph.D., University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN

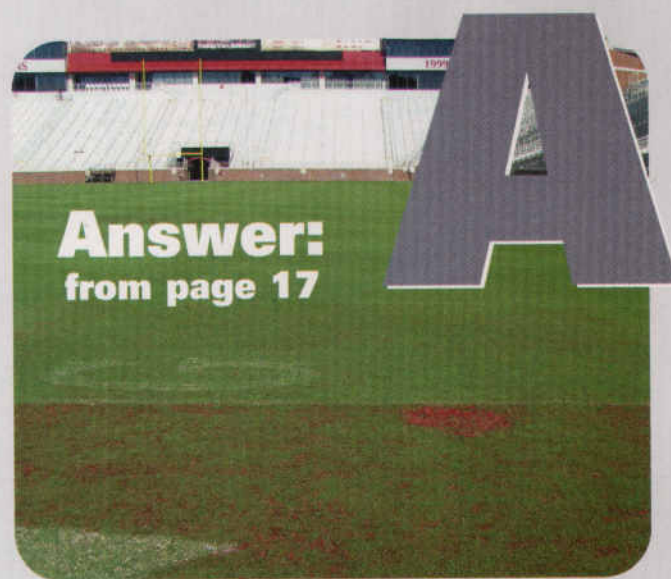
Continuing in one more year of their terms: Academic Director Mike Goatley, Jr., Ph.D.; Higher Education Director Amy Fouty, CSFM; and Parks and Recreation Director David Pinsonneault, CSFM, CPRP. An additional At-Large Director may be appointed by the President.

John Mascaro's Photo Quiz

The garnet colored paint on the turf in this stadium end zone is not a result of using too much paint in one area or even the result of spilling excess paint on the turf. The reason why this paint is still visible is because the turf growth has slowed in this circular area. The explanation as to why the turf growth has slowed is because the mascot for the FSU football team is a horse. This is the problem with football teams having large animals as mascots, the fact that they need to relieve themselves from time to time on your turf. Typically

the area where the horse makes his mark is on the non painted areas leaving a brown spot in the days following the game. These brown spots are either plugged out or allowed to re-grow if adequate time is allowed between games. On this occasion, Renegade the horse chose a painted area to get some relief. At least it wasn't a pile of horse chips or that may have given a whole new meaning to goal line stance!

Thank you to Brian Donaway, grounds supervisor at Florida State University, for allowing me to take these pictures.



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

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.norcal-stma.org.

Ozarks STMA: www.ozarksstma.org.

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

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey: www.sfinanj.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.scestma.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.

Forming Chapters:

Gulf Coast Chapter: 225/757-9136.

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Index your field

BY DR. DAVID MINNER

Professor, Iowa State University

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I need to establish a set of guidelines for field usage. We have a new facility that includes baseball, practice soccer, and a soccer game field to go along with our two older practice fields. Since no guidelines were in place for the fall season the ensuing free-for-all resulted in damaged fields.

*Anne Beckingham, Athletic Fields Supervisor
Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY*

There are two excellent resources to help quantify activity on your fields. In addition to developing a field maintenance strategy to deal with field wear and tear your challenge will be to empower the athletic director, coach, and any other user groups so that they also develop a field activity level that reduces wear and improves playing conditions.

The STMA Playing Conditions Index® (PCI) was developed to give sports turf managers a "snap-shot" of a specific field at a given point in time. Approximately 30 questions related to resources, activities, and agronomic performance are used to produce a numerical value that ranks a field from excellent to unplayable. STMA members can access and print out the PCI at www.stma.org/MemberServices/PCI. The index can be used to justify additional resources, information for media relations, communicate with parents, coaches, players, and administrators.

Another Field Wear Index FWI was developed by STMA member David Schlotthauer from Brigham Young University (see www.sportsturfonline.com, click "Articles & Archives," then "February 2008" to find this article). The FWI uses hours of field usage to guide the level of suggested field management practices. Both indexes are flexible enough to be modified for any athletic field situation and they both indicate that the index may need adjustment for your specific field situation. Evaluate the field for at least one year or playing season before using the information to influence field use and management decisions.

Once you record the activities, inputs, and injury to the field you will need to use your communication skills to present the information to your user groups in such a way that they will participate in improving the fields. Coaches and athletic directors have ascended to their position by surrounding themselves with good people that help them make good decisions. Make sure you are giving them tangible information in the form of field ratings and repair costs so that they can make good decisions when they finally realize that you are on their side.

Here are some tips to help coaches and sports turf managers share the success or failure of their playing fields:

- Wet conditions. Rutting and tearing up the field during wet conditions is unforgivable if there is an alternative. Use the synthetic field if available, that's what it is for. Have an activity cancellation policy in place for games, practices, and other field uses. Use pictures to document the disastrous rutting that occurred after activity on a field that was too wet.

- The rule should be play games on the game field and practice on the practice field. Occasionally the coach may want to use the game field for a special practice and this should be

allowed. Coach, don't abuse this or you will lose one of your biggest supporters.

- Rotate activity. Coach, ask your sports turf manager to help set up the facility to reduce traffic by rotating your practice activities. The coach needs to take the lead on policing traffic and the sports turf manager needs to support any changes in field orientation, painting, extra goals, and developing drill stations. Coach, here are a few traffic patterns that we need help changing. Don't place the football on the same yard line for each play; a distinctive wear pattern around every 5-yard line shows your lack of creativity. Portable soccer goals are a must for warm-up. In fact, avoid repeated activity on any painted lines, i.e. calisthenics and cutting drills. Just move over about 3 feet to spread the traffic pattern.

- Take pride in the field. Baseball coaches and players often assume management of the mound, batter boxes, and infield lips. The sports turf manager should hold clinics specifically to teach proper techniques for managing the baseball field. Once they begin to take pride and ownership of their field then they will start to self regulate excessive traffic.

The real challenge is to realize that you both want the same thing, a better playing surface. I know how most sports turf managers think and I am getting better at understanding how a coach thinks and what they want from a playing field. Coach, it is very likely that your sports turf manager has a 2- or 4-year college degree, has served as an apprentice for at least 3 years and may have spent more hours on your field than your combined coaching staff. They know the field and its limitations.

At an STMA field tour in Phoenix, a head coach was asked why they never listen to the sports turf manager. His reply surprised me but gave some great insight into how and when to communicate. He explained that yes, coaches are very concerned about field conditions and they are very aware that their sports turf manager does a marvelous job taking care of the field. And yes, he wants to receive input on spreading wear patterns.

But, during practice they are so focused on coaching and teaching that they completely forget about the field and in fact they don't want to even think about the field at that time. So, don't even try to make a suggestion during practice. Schedule an appropriate time to meet with the coach and even more importantly the assistant coaches and sometimes the trainers or equipment managers. That is the time to make the plan for spreading the traffic pattern in such a way that it fits into the team's practice regimen.

You may have better success if you rely on the assistant coaches and equipment managers since they often designate drill locations, set up cones, and place the football between practice plays. The one thing you can usually control is paint. And where you paint, they will stand. So move the paint and move the traffic.

The message here is to first have a traffic management plan that is understood by all users and managers of the field. Then decide that you are all on the same team that strives for a better playing surface. And finally, win over your adversary by giving in a little and expecting the same in return. ■

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