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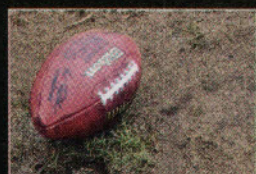


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- Are unreasonably low cutting heights sustainable?
- Can we use some natural organic fertilizers in our programs, a practical answer to a question of waste?
- Is our equipment tuned for peak performance?
- Does continuing education allow us to accurately identify turf problems and their causes?
- Shouldn't pesticides be comparatively scrutinized before selection?
- Aren't there special considerations in the sand-based rootzones of some sports fields?
- How and where is our mowing equipment washed?
- Is fertility mismanagement canceling out the water purifying benefits of turf?
- Are we addressing a pest issue with chemical intervention when a cultural modification will do?
- Has an irrigation audit enabled the most efficient use of a natural resource?
- Are the attitudes and actions of our industry visible and recognizable as those of environmental stewards?

Environmental Turf Craft is a balanced approach that relies on science to steer the course. It's more than an amalgam of tools and techniques. When our daily management decisions are guided by the underlying principles of environmental responsibility, our strategies

and procedures are subtly and positively influenced. We abandon the clumsy, product based, heavy-handed practices left over from turf management's infancy in the last century. We become aware of our roles as navigators and pilots within the environmental movement. We take our place as leaders in this new kind of pragmatic environmentalism where social and economic as well as ecological objectives are balanced.

We become active caregivers in the process of earth's healing: as toxic, abandoned mining sites become oxygen generating golf courses; as landfills are sealed and reborn as health promoting athletic fields; as people get out of their homes and offices and, seeking recreation and life sustaining fresh air, join us on our turf.

It's unfortunate that some misguided critics of turfgrass see us as an environmental problem when obviously, we're part of the solution.

What could be greener than grass?

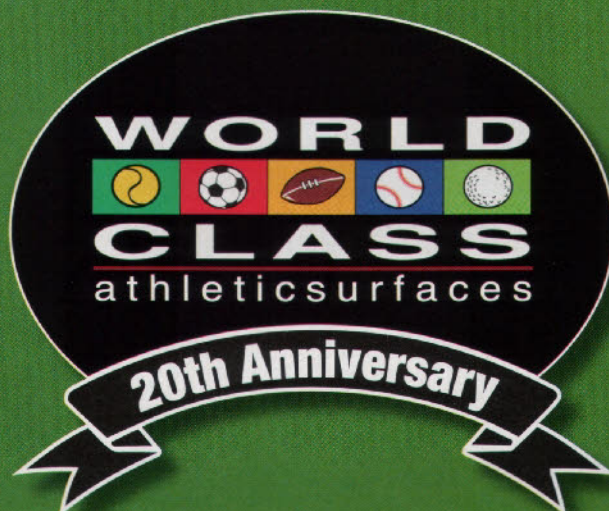
This article originally appeared in the 2007 Rutgers Turfgrass Proceedings. ■



Kevin Trotta is the New York Team Captain of the Global Sports Alliance, an official partner of the United Nations Environment Program, and is head groundskeeper of the North Rockland School District, Garnerville, NY.

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John Mascaro's Photo Quiz

Can you identify this sports turf problem?

Problem:

Irregular brown area on turf

Turfgrass Area:

Practice fields

Location: Miami, FL

Grass Variety: GN-1 Bermudagrass

**Answer to John Mascaro's
Photo Quiz on page 53**

*John Mascaro is President
of Turf-Tec International*



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Photo courtesy of Del Mar Thoroughbred Club

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New **ASTM** standards for sports turf managers

By James Brosnan and Michael DePew



Holy Cross Soccer Stadium field, Worcester, MA, the very first field developed to ASTM F2396 specs.

ASTM International is one of the world's largest and most recognized standards writing organizations. The "standards" produced by ASTM are reference documents that attempt to limit variability between the products and services of many different industries. ASTM standards exist for a wide variety of products ranging from microprocessors to adhesives, to both natural and synthetic turf athletic fields.

Sports field managers are often unknowingly affected by ASTM standards. Send a soil sample into a testing laboratory and it will be analyzed using test methods that have been standardized

by ASTM. Using these standardized procedures ensures meaningful results. Look at any piece of PVC pipe and there will be an "ASTM D-1785" stamp on the side indicating that the pipe meets ASTM specifications. This stamp is a message to the consumer that they will be receiving actual PVC pipe and not a lower quality imitation that may fail in the field.

Athletic field standards primarily fall under the jurisdiction of the F08.64 (natural turfgrass) and F08.65 (synthetic turf) sub-committees within ASTM. These sub-committees consist of engineers, agronomists, architects, consultants, industry representatives, and soil sci-

entists who voluntarily meet twice a year to both edit existing standards and develop new standards for athletic fields. Anyone interested can participate in these committees. The Sports Turf Managers Association sends a technical standards committee member to these meetings to represent the interests of sports field managers.

In early November the F08.64 and F08.65 sub-committees convened in Tampa, FL to work on new athletic field standards. The following sections will describe each particular standard and discuss how it might affect sports field managers.



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Head Groundskeeper
Chase Field

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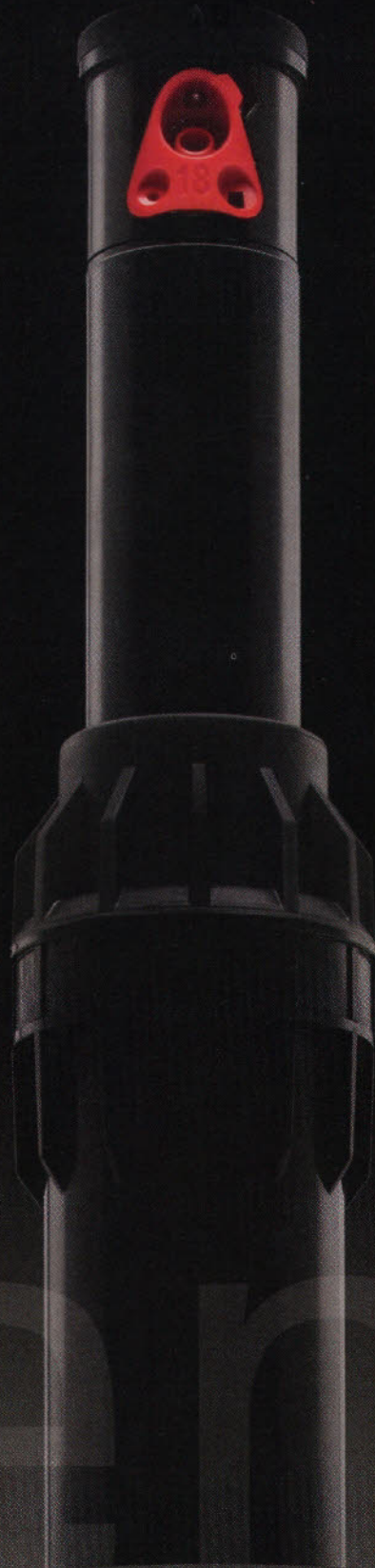
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F-1551-03

This is the Standard Test Method for Comprehensive Characterization of Synthetic Turf Playing Surfaces and Materials.

Explanation: This revised document standardizes the test methods used to characterize the components of synthetic turf playing surfaces. The standard outlines a specific set of material test procedures for laboratories characterizing the rubber infill, carpet backing, gravel sub-grade, and pile fiber of infill systems.

Effect on sports field managers: Standardizing these test methods ensures that each manufacturer's product is characterized using the same procedures; therefore, sports field managers can feel comfortable using manufacturers' "spec sheets" to compare one particular brand to another.

F-1936-07

This is the Standard Specification for Shock Absorbing Properties of North American Football Field Systems as Measured in the Field.

Explanation: This document standardizes the method used to test the hardness of synthetic turf fields (i.e., "Gmax" testing). It was proposed that this standard be expanded to include more sports than just football. Additionally, it was proposed that impact attenuation be measured only in the highest traffic areas of a field (between the hash-marks, goalmouths, corner kick areas) rather than both traffic and non-traffic areas.

Effect on sports field managers: If the proposed changes are accepted, sports field managers will be able to have infill systems used for multiple sports tested for impact attenuation with a new method designed to provide more meaningful data.

WK1582

These are the Standard Test Methods for Comprehensive Characterization Performance Properties of Synthetic Turf Systems.

Explanation: This is a proposed new standard outlining a set of test methods that can be used to characterize the performance of an infill system. Performance is characterized through measurements of properties like traction, ball bounce, ball roll, and impact attenuation (Gmax).

Effect on sports field managers: This set of methods would provide a more cost-effective alternative for those wishing to have the performance of their field certified in a manner similar to the FIFA certification program conducted throughout Europe.

WK1449

This is the Standard Test Method for Density and Unit Weight of Topsoil and Blended Soils In-Place

by the Core Displacement Method.

Explanation: This is a proposed new standard for natural turf athletic fields that outlines a method to measure the bulk density of rootzone mixes, in the field, prior to sodding/seeding. The method, which would be much cheaper and more user-friendly than commonly used nuclear techniques, could be used as an alternative to the sand-cone method.

Effect on sports field managers: In most cases, the only way sports field managers determine the bulk density of their rootzone mix is through laboratory testing of stock materials. This standard would provide a simple, cost-effective method sports field managers could use to measure soil bulk density in the field.

A proposed standard for golf course greens/tee construction was also reviewed at the meeting. This standard is similar to "F2396-Standard Guide for the Construction of High Performance Sports Field Rootzones," which provides specific guidance for the selection of materials (soil, sand, gravel, peat) used in designing and constructing sand-based sports turf rootzones.

Similar to what the United States Golf Association has done for the golf industry, ASTM is working hard to produce standards specific to sports turf management. When used effectively, these documents can be valuable tools in a sports turf manager's arsenal.

For more information on ASTM International or to purchase a copy of an ASTM standard, visit <http://www.astm.org>. ■

James Brosnan is assistant specialist-turfgrass management at the University of Hawaii. Michael DePew is sports field agronomist/soil scientist for Environmental Technical Services, Ellicott City, MD.



Turf intern caught in "Civil War"

By Jonathan Garrett



One of the oldest rivalries in college football is "The Civil War" between the University of Oregon Ducks and the Oregon State University Beavers; the 2007 meeting was the 111th (Oregon State won 38-31 in double overtime). If you live in Oregon it is a requirement that you choose a rooting interest in one team or the other. Either you're a Beaver or a Duck. The towns of Corvallis and Eugene are relatively close, so the tensions are always high when the gridiron match-up comes around each fall.

As a horticulture undergraduate at Oregon State, I took a summer internship with the University of Oregon grounds crew. This decision wasn't easy to make. Despite some hard times and inner turmoil however, it turned out to be one of the best jobs I've ever had. I learned many things about the turf industry; I worked for a great boss who showed me how to be a good manager; learned some tricks of the trade from a veteran crew; learned how to be a better employee; and how to get the most out of my internship. Most importantly, I learned that it's not the destination it's the journey (the

dirty, wet, grass-stained journey).

I chose to be a Beaver during my senior year of high school since I thought Oregon State had the best turfgrass program in the area. The program is headed by well-known professor Tom Cook. It wasn't until I got into the program that I decided to narrow my career focus more toward sports fields. With that decision in mind I joined the STMA as a student member in 2004 though I didn't attend my first Conference until last year in San Antonio. In a hotel lobby there I saw a man wearing an Oregon Ducks shirt talking to a friend of mine who had gone through the

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program at Oregon State. He turned out to be Eric Fasbender, CSFM, the grounds manager Oregon. I was introduced and that was when the dialogue started about a possible internship at the U of O. I was very hesitant at first, because of my innate dislike for any association with the Ducks.

Later at the Conference I attended a seminar and there was Eric again, who was presenting on how to portray professionalism in the turf industry. I was very impressed by his presentation, especially the professionalism he portrayed while presenting it! Throughout the week I ran into Eric quite a few more times. It was as if fate were trying to tell me something. Eventually, I got his business card and we talked more seriously about the internship. My measure of dislike for anything yellow and green was lessening, but still not gone.

Hearing it from the Beavers

Later, at a meeting of the OSU turf club, we were discussing where

everyone was headed that summer for their internships. When I mentioned the possibility of working at University of Oregon, the club's response was a host of jeers, complaints, and dirty looks. This worried me about my choice. I asked Professor Cook his opinion and he said, "You know they grow Kentucky bluegrass down there, right?" I replied that I knew and that it interested me. He went on to say that if I could live with working at U of O then he thought it would be a good experience. So I contacted Eric and let him know that I would like to work for him, if he still wanted to hire a Beaver.

Life of an intern

I wanted to work hard and show that I was competent with the tasks that I had been given. I thought that to be a good intern I should take as much work off the manager's hands as possible. I also knew part of having a good internship means learning anything you can from anyone possible. But after a few weeks my understanding of a quality

