

I did not have them, especially with the short time frame we have here to do maintenance.

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

Klute: By far my biggest challenge would be getting the field open a few days to do some field maintenance. The field is constantly being used from February to November. Overall we have more than 255 events and with Nebraska weather that is a large number. The University has around 175 events including their games, youth baseball camps, high school and junior college games, practices, and visiting team's practices. We also have around 80 other events including Lincoln Saltdogs games, High School state baseball tournaments, other baseball events, boy/girl scout sleepovers and other on field promotions. So it is hard to find time to do common field maintenance. There are not very many ways I can approach these challenges. I do my fertilization applications mostly at night after games and try to solid time if there is two straight days off. This year I actually did not get to pull cores and top-dress because there were never enough consecutive days off on the field. Any time that there is time off on the field we need to work extra hard on catching up and getting the maintenance done that is needed.

ST: How do you communicate with management and field users?

Klute: During the winter months we have two operation meetings every month where the University and Saltdogs management get together and talk about projects and planning for the upcoming year. I've learned that the more everyone is on the same page the more smoothly things will go. The people that are most important to communicate with during the year are the coaches and players. This is a tough situation because I do my absolute best to get with the coaches and try to explain my philosophies and get them to cooperate. I understand their goal is to win games and put themselves in position to win by practicing and doing whatever drills they need to do to win. The only thing I can do is manage the wear that is being put on the field. I do that by trying to get the coaches to move their drills around and try to educate the players of why I need them to cooperate while still focusing on their goals. As we all know that is easier said than done. I'll leave it at that.

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

Klute: It is rather difficult from February to November but once a homestand begins I started a rotation of giving one employee off



Haymarket Park guards groundwater

Groundwater and environmental stewardship are important components of effective turf management. A new program of The Groundwater Foundation, Groundwater Guardian Green Sites, recognizes the stewardship efforts of turf and green space managers.

The program is open for participation to sites across the country. Groundwater Guardian Green Sites are essentially places with a lot of green space that implement groundwater and surface water-friendly practices to maintain the site.

To earn the exclusive Groundwater Guardian Green Site designation, site managers complete a simple application that documents their site's groundwater-friendly practices related to water, pesticide and fertilizer use, pollution prevention, and environmental stewardship. Sites receive Green Site designation by earning at least 70% of the total applicable points based on the site's current practices. The application is available for download online at www.groundwater.org/gg/greensites.html.

Being good guardians and good stewards of groundwater is something turf managers strive to do every day, whether it's through efficient water use, managing fertilizer and pesticide use, or controlling runoff. The Green Site program publicly recognizes sites for their groundwater and environmental stewardship, provides an opportunity for site staff to educate themselves and site visitors about groundwater, documents the environmental benefit of the site's groundwater-friendly practices, and encourages the sustained use of these best practices.

The program has involved a variety of sites, including Haymarket Park. Jen Roeber, Haymarket Park's assistant athletic turf manager, said, "The [Groundwater Guardian Green Site] application made me think about all the ways that what we do impacts water. I hadn't really thought about our operation that way before."

FIELD OF THE YEAR



a night. Between my two assistant, interns and I, we rotate nights off starting after batting practice setup in the afternoon. As long as there is no real threat for rain I will join in on the rotation. I am fortunate to have really good assistants and interns that I can trust and not worry about a thing when I leave the park and there is an event going on. Having one or two nights off in a homestand is not a lot of time off but it is just enough to help us stay charged.

Also, I believe it is important to have fun when we work so many hours together. Our crew gets along with each other very well and having

fun, while still getting our work done, helps pass time by a lot faster.

ST: How do you balance work and personal life?

Klute: I am slowly learning this one. I am very fortunate to have my wife, Teri, who understands what goes on in my profession and the hours it takes to succeed. She is very supportive of what I do and she never complains about all the mornings, days and nights I work. She often has to come to the games at night to see me but I have turned her into a baseball fan so she doesn't mind it so much. She also doesn't hesitate to help out

when ever she can, including late night emergency tarp pulls. But if there is a time when I need to leave work right away because something has come up, it all goes back to having a great crew. I have total trust in my crew to step in and correctly get the job done. ■

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.

Cast your vote on STMA Bylaws

STMA voting members will be provided the opportunity to approve or reject the proposed Bylaws changes this month via a special ballot sent through the U.S. mail. The proposed changes primarily affect three main components of the Bylaws: formalizing the ascension process to the Presidency, reducing the Officers' terms, and increasing the size of the Board.

The proposed changes were formulated during 2007 and early 2008 by the Governance Task Group, chaired by Mike Trigg, CSFM, STMA Immediate Past President. The Bylaws language was subsequently written by the Bylaws Committee, chaired by Ken Mrock. The Board approved the new Bylaws language at its summer Board Meeting.

Two Officers' positions, the Secretary and the Treasurer positions, are proposed to be combined into one position, Secretary/Treasurer. This new position will have two candidates placed on the ballot, and the candidate who is elected will be on the track to the Presidency. The Secretary/Treasurer will move unopposed to the President-Elect, then to the Presidency and to the Immediate Past President, as he/she concludes Board service. Formalizing the ascension process is extremely important for a strong governance system. The Secretary/Treasurer position becomes the pivotal position that allows you to vote on the candidate who ultimately will become your association's President.

Additionally, the terms of all of the Officer positions, except the Commercial Vice President, are proposed to be reduced to one year. Currently, the Officers serve two years in each Office. STMA has matured to the point that it no longer needs to rely on a smaller group of committed volunteers for leadership. Rather, the expanded committee involvement and the strong chapter network are preparing more and more members for leadership positions at the national level.

This shortening of the terms will reduce the maximum amount of time that a board member serves from 14 to 8 years, which is still a considerable commitment. The Commercial Vice President position is ineligible to ascend to the Presidency, and a two-year term is proposed as the amount of time that is needed to gain perspective from this important segment of the membership. Director terms, except for the proposed At-Large Directors, will continue to be two-years, not to exceed a total of four years.

The proposed changes also expand the Board of Directors by two At-Large Director positions. Currently there are 12 Board members: six Officers and six Directors. The proposed combination of Secretary and Treasurer reduces the Officers to five members, and the two new At-Large Director positions bring the Board size to 13 members. Candidates from any segment of the membership are eligible to serve as an At-Large Director. Candidates running for one of the At-Large Director position will appear on the ballot. Members will cast their vote for this Director as they do for the current director positions. This position, however, does not

have to represent a specific category of membership—it can be from any category. Thus, a parks and recreation sports turf manager may be slated against an academic, or a sports turf member representing higher education may be slated against a commercial member. Any candidate slated must be a voting member of STMA. The second At-Large Director position will be appointed by the STMA President. The Governance Task Group realizes that there will be a tremendous loss to the Board of one quality board member from the Secretary/Treasurer election. Thus, they recommend that the President be given the flexibility to appoint the person who does not win to this At-Large Director position. Both At-Large Directors will serve a one-year term.

The ballot will have specific instructions on when and how to return it through the US mail, fax or electronically, so that your voting status can be verified, yet how you cast your vote is kept anonymous.

In addition to Chairman Trigg, the members of the Governance Task Group include Bob Campbell, CSFM, Richard Moffitt, Tim Moore, CSFM, Mary Owen, Scott Pippen, Jimmy Rodgers, CSFM, Bob Studholme, Jay Warnick, CSFM, and Steve Wightman.

Members of the Bylaws Committee include Chairman Mrock, Carol Baker, CSFM, Mike Boekholder, Richard Miller, Mary Owen, Scott Pippen, Jimmy Rodgers, CSFM, David Rulli, David Schlotthauer, Mike Trigg, CSFM (Board Liaison), Jay Warnick, CSFM, and Steve Wightman.

The proposed changes affect Sections V, VI, VII, and XI. To review a comparative version, please go on-line to the Members Only section of www.stma.org and click on STMA Bylaws. You can also review the SOP: STMA Officer Vacancy Ascension Process, which is referred to in the Bylaws.

Once the outcome of the vote on these proposed Bylaws is known, the STMA 2009 Board of Directors slate of candidates will be finalized. The voting members of STMA will be sent that ballot in late November and the new Board of Directors will be presented to the membership during the STMA Annual Meeting on January 15, 2009 in San José. ■

Wisconsin Chapter helps rebuild flooded ball diamonds

By Dan Carmichael

Sports turf managers around the state of Wisconsin convened in the Village of Lake Delton on August 26 to rebuild Kaminski Park. Horrible devastation occurred in mid-June after 15 inches of rain fell in the area over several days. Lake Delton itself breached the dam and overflowed its banks carving a gully 50 yards wide

and 30 feet deep. Trees, homes and dreams washed away into the Wisconsin River. Nearby Kaminski Park did not escape the damage, as several trenches 5-10 feet deep were formed, entire infield mixes were deposited in the outfield, and dugouts slid 30 feet into a ravine. These were just some of the problems the flooding caused.

Baraboo resident and chapter board member Craig Schlender approached me at our late summer meeting and suggested we do an "extreme field makeover" and get sports turf managers and different vendors to try and to this put back together for the Village of Lake Delton.

Piece by piece the association put a plan together. Members Raechal Volkening, Don Probst and Paul Anderson constructed a plan where the association could accomplish this task basically in a day. The village's public works department, directed by Larry Fish, did the necessary prep work before and after.

Through the association, Fish was able to enlist sports turf managers from around the state, including Milwaukee Brewers head turf manager Gary Vandenberg. In total, more than 50 members registered along with about 50 members of the community.

"If we had a contractor, it would cost between \$60,000 to about \$80,000 to do, probably closer to \$80,000," Schlender said

A good portion of the material cost was donated by STMA member Waupaca Sands and Solutions. After crews laid down the necessary base layers, the top 4 inches

Thanks to these fine folks

Here are some of the people and companies that donated time, effort, and supplies to the Kaminski Park rebuilding project:

Ball Diamond Fine Turf and Craig Schlender, for organizing the event and use of all his tools

Reinders, for use of Pro Core 864; Kubota tractor; Workman 3200 and 2110; SpeedZone herbicide; Turface infield mix; grass seed; and Starter fertilizer

Wisconsin Turf, for use of First Products' Aeravator, Cushman, Turfco Edger Right, Turfco Topdresser, and Smithco Superstar Infield Groomer

Spring Valley, for use of bulk spreader truck and Pro's Choice infield conditioner

Central Wisconsin Sod, for use of laser grader

Midwest Athletic Fields, for use of laser grader

Waupaca Sands and Solution, for donation of 400-plus tons of Sur-Hop Monk's Bar & Grill, for catering lunch

Original Wisconsin Ducks, for boat tours of the devastation

Village of Lake Delton, Public Works Department, for preparing the site

Sports Impression, for free Lake Delton Extreme Makeover t-shirts

Dan Carmichael from Spring Valley is the president of the Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association, www.wstma.org.



were added with a mix of clay and infield dirt called Sur-Hop—more than 400 tons, thanks to Waupaca Sands and Solutions. In addition, Turface Athletics and Pro's Choice donated nearly a truckload of infield conditioners to use as topdressing.

After the materials were dumped, Central Wisconsin Sod and Landscapes and Midwest Athletic Fields took over. With their state of the art laser graders, the fields were sloped at one degree within a 1/16 of an inch. To finish off, crews used a Turfco topdresser, Smithco infield groomer and infield ProGroomer to apply and drag the donated infield conditioner mix.

Spreading the infield mixes was just a part of what went on. Wisconsin Turf Equipment donated a Turfco edger to clean up the infield edges, while Reinders Inc. awed the crowd with the performance of the Toro ProCore 864 three point Toro aerator. Then Spring Valley showed just how quick and accurate fertilizing can be with our bulk spreader truck.

To top off the event, the Wilderness Hotel and Golf Resort and Great Wolf Lodge offered bargain rates to volunteers for those who needed to stay overnight. Monk's Bar & Grill catered an unbelievable lunch at no cost. "That's the best event lunch we ever had," said volunteer Todd Kagelman. And the Original Wisconsin Ducks provided rides for any volunteers who wanted to see the washout from the Wisconsin River.

"When a community like this has a problem, a disaster, this is the last place money's going to be channeled to. Yet it's probably one of the first places where people recover," Schlender said.

Thanks to all the volunteers for their time and efforts. A special thanks to those vendors for the use of the items listed. Without the generosity of the many people and companies who participated in this event, we would not have seen the great progress toward healing from this disaster in Lake Delton. ■



Wisconsin STMA member and project spearhead Craig Schlender is interviewed on the restoration at Lake Delton.

New STMA Industry Sourcebook launched!

As an enhancement to our member benefits, STMA has launched the STMA Industry Sourcebook as a replacement for Power Links. While Power Links was a useful resource for STMA members and commercial companies, the new Industry Sourcebook will provide a more robust and convenient solution for STMA members seeking information. STMA Commercial Members will also benefit from the Industry Sourcebook through increased exposure, as well as providing another avenue for customers to access their products or services.

Located on the homepage of the STMA website, www.stma.org, the Industry Sourcebook is an online buyer's guide that sports turf managers worldwide can use to find the equipment, products, and services they need. Every STMA Commercial Member's company is listed in the Industry Sourcebook, and they are noted as STMA Members. Exhibitors at the STMA Conference and Exhibition and Association Sponsors are recognized as well.

Links to hundreds of companies, that list thousands of products, make the new STMA Industry Sourcebook the online resource for sports turf managers in their buying cycle. Members can search by keyword, zip code, member-only, and many other user-defined criteria. Also, the Industry Sourcebook allows users to submit a Request for Information (RFI) to many companies at once with the simple click of a button.

"STMA clearly recognizes the benefits of aligning our members and decision makers with suppliers", said Dale Getz, CSE, CSFM, and STMA Commercial Vice President. "The Industry Sourcebook saves professionals who specialize in the industry an incredible amount of time as they seek the resources they need."

STMA has partnered with Multiview, Inc. of Irving, TX to develop this new online resource.

If you have any questions about STMA Industry Sourcebook, please contact Patrick Allen at 800.323.3875, or via email at pallen@stma.org. ■



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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.
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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.norecalstma.org.

Ozarks STMA: www.ozarksstma.org.

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

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

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

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

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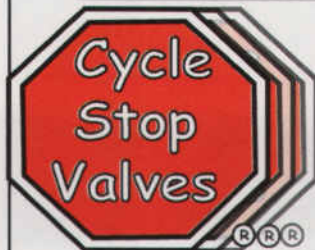
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Our college football field was sodded last year with Kentucky bluegrass and it has performed great. We want to build a strategy to control thatch build up and prevent annual bluegrass invasion. We are afraid that any annual bluegrass seed below the sod may reestablish as a weed if hollow coring is used, but we need to reduce thatch. Can we get by with just dethatching our sand-based Kentucky bluegrass field?

I like developing strategies and it sounds like you have put some thought into your specific needs and are on the right track. Let me just mention that I generally spend a lot of time convincing managers to increase thatch and biomass in high traffic areas that are normally devoid of turf and struggle with exposed bare soil. That's not your problem here. Instead, you have a highly managed field with enough fertility and irrigation to force growth and maintain continuous cover.

We often need to force growth with fertility, irrigation, and heavy seeding to meet the visual and playing demands of today's top fields. Fast recovery is imperative during the playing season; that's what you are hired to do. The down side of that is excessive thatch. Thatch accumulates when the rate of plant material production exceeds the rate at which it is removed or broken down by soil organisms such as bacteria, fungi, and earth worms.

Sand systems have low levels of these organisms and consequently thatch accumulates near the surface. In this situation the playing surface can develop excessive thatch that can lead to easier divoting. In the 2 inches just below the thatch excessive organic matter can also accumulate as roots decay. This causes more water holding and slower water infiltration.

Golf course superintendents battle the same problem on thatch prone sand-based putting greens. They use a catchy little phrase that can be adapted for your high performance sand-based field: "The solution to pollution is dilution." This means to dilute the thatchy pollution with frequent application of sand topdressing.

The best strategy in your situation to manage thatch and prevent annual bluegrass invasion on football fields would be to topdress more frequently with sand, use solid tines instead of hollow coring, and dethatch in the spring to avoid tearing up the field during the fall playing season.

In general, annual bluegrass invasion occurs mainly in late summer and fall at the same time you would normally seed cool-season grasses. Some annual bluegrass can also establish in the spring with summer being the least likely time that annual bluegrass would establish. Therefore, I would target your primary time for dethatching in the spring, just before your first mowing.

If you normally scalp the turf with your first mowing to remove all of the winter burned leaves, then this would also be the best time to dethatch. This can be combined with seeding and topdressing to fill in any weak areas that may exist. Spring dethatching is not normally recommended because it could encourage crabgrass germination. If you have a history of severe crabgrass then you may want to avoid spring dethatching; however, most high performance fields don't have much crabgrass pressure and a post-emergence application of Drive can be used if needed.

Solid tine each month from April through July with three-quarter inch diameter tines that are at least 3 inches long. Solid tine deep aeration could be justified in nearly any month of the year, but most athletic fields would use it at the end of the fall playing season to take advantage of winter heaving or even in the summer just before the fall playing season to create large coring channels that help remove puddles during the playing season. Apply a one-eighth inch of sand topdressing in April, May, August, and November.

Be creative and toss away some of the old rules to make it fit your specific playing season and circumstances. Since solid tining and light topdressing are don't severely stress grass you can get away with it in nearly any month of the year. You are accumulating thatch every day that grass is growing so if you are going to "dilute the pollution" then you'll need to frequently apply solid tine aerification and topdressing.

Correction: Several numbers in Dr. Minner's column in our August issue were missing due to an error by the editor. Here are the correct sentences from the 4th paragraph of "After the flood": "Silt layers can range from 1/4 to 1 1/2 inches thick; drag thin layers or remove thicker layers to sufficiently expose grass blades for recovery"; and, "Anticipate loosing 1/2 to 2 inches of the original skin material when removing silt contaminated skin areas." Our apologies to readers and Dr. Minner. ■