practicing sprints or anyone else, such activities tend to take place in the same area, and eventually, the field will look worn there. This can be a hard battle because many managers have to try to convince coaches, who thrive on routine that they do need to change up the location of practices.

"Moving repetitive routines around the field or just making slight adjustments from time to time will help keep the isolated damage from showing in specific spots," says John Schedler of Atlas Track & Tennis in Tualatin, OR. "Sprint and touch exercises with or without cones in the same spot can eventually move the turf by planting and accelerating again and again. This will show most on the yard lines."

» **TO KEEP A FIELD LOOKING ITS BEST,** educate users in proper use, footwear and more. Photo courtesy of Suburban Consulting Engineers, Mt. Arlington, NJ

GETTING OFF ON THE WRONG FOOT

Improper footwear is a huge enemy of artificial turf, adds Schedler, who says that the constant shoe/turf interaction can flatten and damage the surface. Surprisingly, flat-soled tennis shoes can be detrimental to the turf as well. Appropriate athletic footwear (many turf manufacturers recommend athletic shoes with rubber cleats) should be mandated.

"Flat soled shoes or street shoes can really damage areas on your field," Schedler says. "Most fields have a fiber that has some memory and after being compressed will want to go back to its original position. If

» **MANY TYPES** of users, not just athletes, will use a field. Ascertain that groups including spirit squads (such as cheerleaders, dance teams and baton twirlers), bands and support personnel understand the importance of proper footwear, and of not using the same areas in the turf on a continuing basis, as this can cause damage over time. Photo courtesy of Holcombe Norton Partners, Inc., Birmingham, AL

that fiber gets compressed again and again, or even worse, gets constant compression, the memory will start to fade and it will stay compressed. This is the beginning of the end for most forms of fiber. After an event that has compressed the fiber for an extended time, it is important to groom or brush that fiber back up as quickly as possible."

THROWING IT OUT THERE

Having field events on artificial turf can be great—provided they're the right events. With the increasing use of synthetic turf come concerns over whether throwing events can cause damage to the athletic surface. The UEFA, the European governing body for soccer, has guidelines on synthetic turf which state that shot put and discus do not cause damage, but that hammer and javelin can. Some events, therefore, may need to be shifted around during meets and competitions.

"One of the biggest questions I keep running into about turf is the field activities," says Sam Fisher of Fisher Tracks in Boone, IA. "It seems that some sales people will say anything to get a job but, in fact, the owner then finds that their warranty is invalidated by conducting such activities."

According to Fisher, a special tip has been developed for the javelin for use in synthetic turf, but he expresses doubts about the ability of such a product to protect the turf over repeated use. Facility managers are encouraged to protect their new facility, and to not expose it to unnecessary risks.

VANDALISM:

Because an artificial turf represents a substantial investment, keeping it safe should be a priority, says Dan Wright. Field managers should be as proactive as possible in order to head off mischief-makers.

"The damage a vandal can cause can be something simple to repair (usually some additional brooming) or something very expensive requiring a complete replacement of the field," says Wright. "Security of the facility is very important in keeping vandalism under control. I would recommend some video surveillance of the facility if the facility is in an area where vandalism is a high risk."

DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME:

According to Norris Legue of Synthetic Surfaces, Inc. in Scotch Plains, NJ some of the worst damage to fields can be inflicted by well-meaning managers, maintenance crew members and others. An example, he adds, would be the person trying to examine a seam which may or may not be coming loose.

"One of the biggest enemies of artificial turf is what I would call a 'good-intentioned investigator' (or overly curious user) whose curiosity exacerbates a small issue and creates a major problem," says Legue. "In such a case, the investigator might grab the edge of a loose piece of a turf seam and peel it back enough to cause the bond to fail and create a tripping hazard on the field. In the industry, we have terms we call 'shear strength' and 'peel strength' when referring to the adhesive or bonding of turf at seams. Peel strength is like peeling a banana or orange which is much lower in bond strength. Shear strength is like trying to pull the skin off the orange or banana from the middle of the fruit without an edge to grad onto. Turf seams are similar in nature and the bond is designed to withstand normal athletic competition and activity or force. The bonded seams are not intended to withstand the good intentioned investigator attempting to peel them open like a banana."

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

Turf managers often water fields in order to keep the playing area cooler; however, in many cases, says Lance Rosenberger of Medallion Athletic Products, Inc. in Mooresville, NC "watering does not seem to help temperatures, it only raises the humidity," creating an unpleasant playing environment.

In addition, depending upon the surface temperature, watering may not immediately create playable conditions, as it may not bring down the temperature quickly enough to reach a comfortable level. Many who are caring for a turf field for the first time find that it takes about a year to understand the ambient temperature, its relationship to the field temperature, and how long a field needs to be watered in order for a comfortable playing environment to prevail. ■

Mary Helen Sprecher wrote this on behalf of the American Sports Builders Association, a non-profit association helping designers, builders, owners, operators and users understand quality construction of many sports facilities, including sports fields. www.sportsbuilders.org.

Artificial Intelligence

A new range of professional artificial turf care machines have been developed by Redexim North America. Known worldwide for their reliable and effective range of natural turf care equipment such as the Verti-Drain®, Redexim North America has produced a complete range of equipment to meet the challenging needs of the artificial turf market.

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The Verti-Brush quickly and effectively levels and distributes applied or existing infill with powerful hydraulic brushes.

Verti-Top

The Verti-Top employs a highly effective synthetic rotary brush to remove debris and top layer infill from the turf, then sifts the debris out in a unique vibratory shaker which redistributes the clean infill back on the field.

Verti-Broom

For brushing and striping of artificial turf, nothing beats the proven Verti-Broom. The highly effective triangular arrangement of the brushes will straighten and groom each grass blade for an attractive and realistic finish.

Verti-Groom

To brush, loosen and decompact the hardest infill, the Verti-Groom is equipped with a variety of interchangeable tools.

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The Verti-Air utilizes a rotary brush and turbine compressed air to lift all material out of the turf, dry and filter the material, sift out the debris and return the clean, dry and decompacted infill back into the turf.

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SportsTurf MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

STC Synthetic Turf Council

So you want to write a newsletter article…

OKAY, SO YOU DON'T.

I know your type. The studious scientist. The detail-oriented,Type-A personality. You're more at home looking into a microscope than looking at a keyboard. You'd rather lay an acre of sod than write a report. You find writing a newsletter article something akin to chaperoning five of your daughter's 13-year old friends at a Justin Bieber concert.

I get it. You don't want to write a newsletter article. But let's suppose your chapter or the STMA says you need to write a newsletter article, kind of like when your spouse said you need to take those teenagers to the concert. You just line your pocket with some Extra Strength Tylenol tablets, grab the earplugs and gas up the minivan. "Justin, here we come."

So why not approach the newsletter assignment with that same level of enthusiasm? All you need to do is come up with a great story idea, gather the information and organize it into an interesting and intelligent story. It sounds so simple, but it's oh-so hard. But try to skip over this step, and it won't make any difference how effectively you execute the other steps. You can't write your way into a good story. It must start with a good story idea.

You probably won't get to that blood sweating stage over one little newsletter assignment, but you can make sure you don't go there by always being alert for story ideas and keeping a file of them. To help you get started on story ideas, it will probably be helpful to know the criteria most journalists use in determining if an idea is really newsworthy.

SO TELL ME, JUST WHAT IS THE NEWS?

First of all, a story idea must qualify on some basic measures of timeliness, proximity and audience. You must find a NOW element in the story you propose to tell. If you write about something that already happened and that your audience already knows all about, you are writing history—not news.

Proximity is quite easy to understand. Things that happen closer to home are more newsworthy than things that happen farther away. The development of a new mowing technique is more newsworthy if the innovation takes place in the U.S., or better yet, in your region, as opposed to the UK.

Finally, you must know your audience. If you are writing for other turf management association members, you can make certain assumptions about their base of knowledge. If you are writing for a more general audience such as the readers of your local newspaper, you must avoid those assumptions about those readers' understanding of your craft.

Once you've met the threshold on those three criteria, you should focus on the key elements of what makes an idea newsworthy, such as unusualness, prominence, conflict and impact.

The first time something happens we deem it unusual. The last time something happens we deem it unusual. Once an event happens with predictable regularity, you can't sell your idea to an audience on unusualness. So move on to another criterion.

Prominence is a significant element of newsworthiness. Names make news. If your are having a grand opening or launching a new program, get Sandra Bullock or Peyton Manning to make the announcement. That would give you something to write about.

Now consider conflict. This is one element you may have grown to hate. Love it and use it to your advantage. Many times conflict stems from battling bureaucracies. Let's say one state law requires you to do X and a federal law requires you to do an incompatible Y. That sounds like a story and one you can do without any hint of finding a villain or pointing a finger of blame.

Prominence is a significant element of newsworthiness. Names make news.

Mostly let's look for impact. If you find a story that affects a lot of people in a small way it's newsworthy. If you find a story that affects a small number of people in a significant way, that's also newsworthy. If you find a story that affects a large number of people in a very significant way, that is the most newsworthy of all. A drop in tax receipts leads to budget cuts which lead to the closing of two

parks which leads to cancellation of the entire fall youth soccer season. That would be big news, and it's big news based on impact.

Watch TV, listen to the radio, read the newspaper and surf the Web to learn the craft of news judgment. What kinds of stories interest you? In short, you must think like your audience to assess the newsworthiness of an idea.

The traditional standard of journalism demands a story cover the 5 W's and the H—who, what, why, when, where and how. Every story must include those elements. Often your previous experience and expertise will give you a head start on the fact base of the story. If the subject matter is an analysis of artificial turf vs. grass and the injury factor, you're probably pretty well-versed in the who, what, when and where of that story. Your additional information gathering will likely focus on more of the why and the how. That will help your story answer one key question, why would anyone want to read this?

As mentioned, some of the information base of your story can come from your previous knowledge. But be mindful of the need for attribution. You don't need attribution to state grass is green, but you do need to cite the study that shows a particular insecticide is harmful to the environment.

You're already quite aware of the vast number of Internet resources you can use to gather information. But once again, take the extra step of evaluation that information. First is the info believable; second, it is provable? Does it come from a reliable source, one without a vested interest?

To fill in the why and how you will need to interview knowledgeable sources, persons with first-hand information about your topic. Inexperienced writers often skip this step. They substitute their own opinion for the opinions of others. Unless you have great standing among the audience members you are writing for, you're best off taking the time to find experts other than yourself.

If you have done the proper work in gathering the who, what, when, where facts of the story, you should be able to conduct a concise and insightful interview. At the risk of oversimplification that means when you've found the right source, just ask that person why and how.

Actually, interviewing does have a more sophisticated set of protocols. Colleges offer entire courses in interviewing. But you can follow a few simple steps to make sure you cover the right ground.

• Open with a simple statement of who you are, why you are calling and the nature of your story. Ask the person if you've have him/her at a good time. Without showing off and without talking too much, you need to demonstrate you know enough about your topic that you will be asking good questions, understanding their answers and not spending time asking that person to do your basic homework. Friendly but business-like works every time.

• Zero in on the main issue you want to cover. This is where you really get into the why and how. Avoid questions that can be answered yes or no. Keep them open-ended so the interviewee can provide the context. Some good questions that often brings enlightened answers are, "What do you make of that?" or "Why do you think that way?" or "How did you arrive at that conclusion?"

• If you ever have to ask a pointed, controversial question, this is the time to do it. If the article is something of a controversial nature, you make have to challenge your source to explain the why and how. Be calm and be nice but be firm.

• If you had to ask your source a difficult question, don't end on that note. Ease out of that part of the conversation. Move into more neutral and non-controversial territory. Maybe follow up on something you covered earlier in the interview and ask for clarification.

• One of the best ways to close an interview is to ask the source if you left anything out. "Is there anything else I should know?" A final question might be, "Who else should I be talking to on this story?" The advantage of that question is that it gives you sponsorship when you call your next source.

Clearly, interviewing someone in person is the best choice. Think of it the same way you think of asking someone for a date. You not only get to hear what the person says, but can see how the person answers it. Notice, you rarely get turned down if you ask in person.

Don't go in with a list of prepared questions. Think of an interview as a conversation. You wouldn't bring notes to lunch with a friend. Don't use them in an interview situation. When you're reading your list, you're not listening, and listening is the key to a good interview.

You gathered the factual base. You interviewed the key sources to get the how and why so now you face a mountain of information and absolutely no clue in how to organize it. But organizing a story isn't as difficult as it may appear. One organizational scheme is called the Inverted Pyramid. Organize the story by starting with an opening sentence that delivers the most newsworthy elements of your story. (Go back and review the Story Idea section). We call that the lead sentence. Then follow it with information in descending order of importance. If you write a story that is 12 inches in length, and the editor only has room for an 11 inch story, you don't have to worry about the editor cutting off the final inch. It's the least important part of the story.

A more sophisticated way of writing a story goes by the name the Wall Street Journal Method, stemming from a style pioneered by, you guessed it, the Wall Street Journal. You have undoubtedly seen this form utilized numerous times. Every newspaper, magazine and Website uses it, at least on occasion. The WSJ method includes the following elements:

• Start with a descriptive, scene setting lead that focuses on a person most affected." No bureaucrats here, just common folk. If the story centers on "no fall soccer leagues," start with a description of a lone boy, dribbling his soccer ball in the back yard. Develop the idea that last year at this time he was playing on a team in a city parks and rec league and enjoying the competition with the other 10-year olds.

• Have the last line of the anecdotal lead set up a quote, in this case, from the young boy's Mom. "Larry was so active then and absolutely loved soccer. Without soccer this year, he seems to have lost interest in school."

• The origin of the term nut graf is a hard to nail down. The concept is easy. This paragraph should explain two things: why I am writing this story and why now. So the nut graf on our soccer story might be, "The other 10-year olds in Riverville are also stuck on the soccer sidelines this fall. A shortfall in tax collections led to cuts in the city budget. The Parks and Recreation Department had already spent most of its money for the year, so the only thing left to cut was the fall youth soccer program. The fallout over those cuts has been great."

• Use the nut graf as your outline for the rest of the story. In our soccer story, we would first explain the tax shortfall, then the budget cuts, then the dropping of the soccer program and finally, the fallout from that. In short, if you nail the nut graf, the story practically writes itself after that.

"On the other hand"—you may need to include a paragraph or two about the other side of the story. Perhaps the elimination of the city program has led to schools to look at starting soccer programs.

If you use the WSJ method of story organization, you are committing yourself to being a storyteller. And every good story must have an ending. Often that ending can evolve from your anecdotal lead. Maybe we go back to our young boy in the backyard with his soccer ball. Most often the close has a strong element of what lies ahead, what comes next. Maybe he's thinking about trying out for the flag football league or maybe he's looking at starting his own neighborhood soccer league.

You can also tell a story without a using the WSJ format. Just tell a story.

As mentioned before, inexperienced newsletter article writers often err by not interviewing any other sources and as a result, substitute their own opinions. Once the writer figures out he/she needs to interview other sources, the writer goes the opposite direction and becomes quote happy.

Regardless of the format of the story, put yourself on a quote diet. Be sparing. Do not use quotes to state facts, stats or data. Use quotes to bring out opinions, feelings, things that only that person could say. Do not use quotes to introduce a new piece of information. Use them only to reinforce a point you have already made. Keep your quotes short for better impact. Think of a quote as a punch line.

If you find yourself drifting into a sentence-quote- sentence-quote-sentence-quote- sentence-quote- sentence-quote pattern, usually in the back half of a story, change it. You can use information from a quote in narrative form, an indirect quote.

Remember, many professional journalists have taken four or five semesters of college course work in those elements of story ideas, gathering and story organization. Don't be frustrated if it doesn't come natural. You might want to invite a reporter over to your place of business and ask for some advice on the various approaches for fall overseeding. It won't help your writing, but you will feel better about your struggles with it. ■

Dr. Max Utsler teaches journalism at the University of Kansas. He is a former TV journalist and has trained business executives in how to deal with the media for the past 25 years.

This is the final in a series of seven articles in the 2010 Ewing Professional Development Series. STMA and Ewing have again partnered in this series to bring sports turf industry professional development and career issues to the forefront. For more information, go to www.STMA.org or www.Ewing1.com.

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STMA is the non-profit association for the men and women who manage athletic fields and facilities. The association has a very strict privacy policy and does not sell or give out its members' contact information.

Infill plays critical role in success of synthetic installations

Editor's note: *Randy Happel of Two Rivers Marketing in Des Moines wrote this article on behalf of CushionFall Sport, Ames, IA. We believe it contains good information on synthetic infill products and installation.*

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY since the early 1960s when the first artificial turf was installed; a surface that was essentially a crowned nylon carpet with accompanying pad that was likely installed on a concrete foundation. Now in their third generation, today's synthetic turf systems are highly sophisticated engineering and design accomplishments constructed of soft, natural-looking fibers that are lushly tufted and supported by a granular infill material, most often made from recycled rubber tires.

The complex designs of current synthetic turf systems can make planning a new installation somewhat of a laborious task. After all the feasibility studies, securing funding, site surveys, etc. those entrusted with deciding on all the specifics will soon discover there are a myriad of options available, and a saturated market of system builders and material suppliers eager to convince you that their offerings are better.

Beyond the obvious—choosing an architect, turf supplier and reputable installer—next come the specifics, paring down and finalizing the final details and specifications of what will become the recipe for the new surface. Do not underestimate the importance of some of the details, including the infill.

TYPES OF INFILL

Infill is a required component of all athletic synthetic turf systems. Some systems require only a single infill while others may specify a combination approach. The menu of infill schemes and options is as complex and diverse a coaching playbook. Add to the equation all of the different ratios of each substance and varying application depths, all designed to create a surface that exhibits a desired property, and it's easy to see why the infill decision can be so confusing, yet is also so critical.

There are essentially four types of infill materials to consider. The majority of synthetic turf systems installed today use styrene-butadiene rubber (SBR) crumb infill, a material that originates from recycled rubber tires ground or smashed into small pellet-like particles. SBR crumb has served as the primary topdressing on synthetic turf surfaces for nearly two decades and remains the infill of choice today primarily because of many attributes including elasticity, resiliency, durability and affordability.

An alternative to crumb rubber, a substance composed of a thermoplastic elastomer in the shape of tiny discs of exact and uniform specification has also emerged. In addition, silica-based granules coated with an acrylic liquid that exhibits some of the properties found in

➔ Infill is a required component of all athletic synthetic turf systems.

Encapsulated infill

Despite the affirmation of safety declared 20 years ago by the EPA and later substantiated by scores of independent research studies, Colorbiotics, a provider of colorants headquartered in Ames, IA challenged their team of research scientists and laboratory technicians to develop an infill alternative to traditional crumb rubber. The result is CushionFall Sport, an encapsulated crumb rubber infill that is among the most environmentally safe, VOC- and heavy metal- reducing crumb rubber infill products available.

The colored encapsulation coating that encompasses the individual crumb rubber particles repels water and moisture more readily than the traditional recycled crumb material. This allows fields to drain more quickly, promoting a drier playing surface. CushionFall Sport allows for 21% more water to pass through the playing surface than that of standard SBR crumb rubber.

When used as an infill component, ambient rubber has the propensity to float and scatter as the air bubbles located within the rubber facilitate simple infill migration. When SBR rubber is coated it fills the voids and makes the particles smooth and more rounded. This facilitates a consistent flow of water through the infill without raising and displacing any rubber.

Independent studies show the encapsulation process of CushionFall Sport reduces VOCs by 71 percent and heavy metal runoff by 80 percent.

Over time, traditional crumb rubber infill loses flexibility and elasticity after continuous exposure to bright sunlight. CushionFall Sport protects the properties of the rubber, extending longevity and durability. The material is also UV-resistant, helping fields retain their shock-absorption properties and reducing static charge often created by the various components common to synthetic turf surfaces.

The bright green encapsulation coating contributes to a more vibrant, realistic-appearing surface and eliminates the 5 o'clock shadow effect common with black crumb rubber.

www.cushionfallsport.com ■

crumb rubber have also entered the scene. Because these materials are produced specifically for synthetic turf applications, project owners should be aware that using either will add roughly 20% to the overall cost of a field compared to crumb rubber.

It's the infill in conjunction with varying fiber specifications that allows architects and system designers create a playing surface that exhibits a desired property with playability characteristics that are conducive to maximizing athletic performance. What you want to accomplish on the turf often dictates what will be specified of the various material components selected to construct the field.

The vast majority of infill materials are installed in combination with silica or natural sand, which serves to stabilize the playing surface. Sand promotes a firm and stable foundation and also helps maintain the integrity of the individual synthetic fibers by keeping them upright, evenly spaced and enhancing their resiliency. The infill is also essential to ensure seam integrity and eliminates the creation of wrinkles on the surfaces.

Typical infill ratios (sand versus crumb material, etc.) can vary from 40 to 80% blade coverage. Generally speaking, the more sand, the firmer and faster the surface. Tufting companies will work with the system's integrator and installer to specify the tufting style (who knew, right?); along with the infill ratio and materials for the field, all dictated by pre-determined formulas that they have established in order to warranty surface performance factors and to pass specific EPA, ASTM and other authorities' standards and testing.

Infill materials will vary in size, color, quality, shape and mass and will differ in their abrasiveness, which, if high, can affect the integrity of the yarn fibers, depending on frequency of use over time. Finer, rounder silica sand has replaced the everyday beach variety and is less abrasive to fibers and less susceptible to compaction.

Infill materials can often vary in quality; project owners should exercise caution to secure materials that meet or exceed the specifications recommended by ASTM standards. To meet warranty specifications, many system integrators will insist that infill materials meet or exceed their surface materials specification or surface warranties will likely be voided.

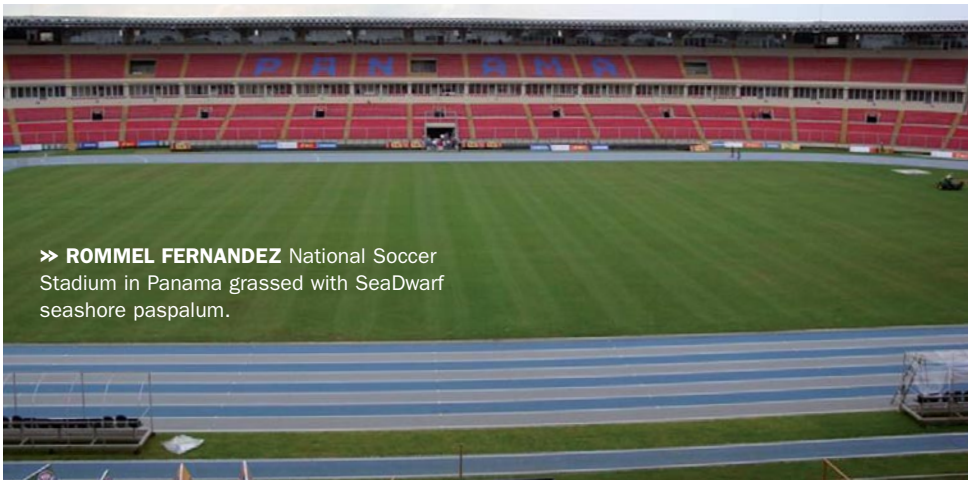
Infill providers will be able to provide material safety, handling, installation and manufacturing specifications, along with life expectancy. Typically, most infill components installed on synthetic turf systems retain their effective use properties for an average of seven to 10 years and few infill providers will carry any type of warranty on the infill component.

THE ENCAPSULATION EQUATION

Some infill offerings are also available in an encapsulated form, a process involving the application of a coating that encompasses the individual crumb particles. Encapsulation offers several advantages over standard "raw" infill material offerings. Often a colorant is added to the liquid encapsulation coating that can help to reduce the temperature of the playing surface and, as is the case with crumb rubber, disguises the dark black color inherent to the raw material source. This provides for an infill that blends with the hues of the synthetic turf fibers making the surface more realistic-appearing and aesthetically pleasing.

The bright green infill material also helps to eliminate the "five o'clock shadow" effect common with traditional crumb rubber, enhancing broadcasts of sporting events, many of which are transmitted via a high-definition signal. The coating often helps to minimize the electromagnetic properties of rubber, reducing the static cling tendencies resulting from the friction created by the rubber and synthetic materials in contact, and the magnetic attraction of athletic uniforms, the majority of which are composed of polyester or synthetic fibers.

The number of synthetic turf installations has exploded in recent years, but just as the popularity of these systems has grown so too has the scrutiny. Most targeted is the crumb rubber infill, especially since the substance is used in the vast majority of installations and the amount present on each field is substantial. Before the first field was ever installed using recycled rubber tires as an infill, safety has driven the development of synthetic surfaces incorporating recycled crumb rubber as a materials component. To date more than 75 studies have been completed, among the most recent and comprehensive, an in-depth analysis of crumb rubber completed by the Corporation for Manufacturing Excellence (MANEX), San Ramon, CA in conjunction with the Laboratory for Manufacturing and Sustainability (LMAS) at the University of California-Berkeley. The study, as do all those preceding the MANEX / UC-Berkeley testing, concludes that recycled crumb rubber is a safe material for use in synthetic turf applications. ■



» **ROMMEL FERNANDEZ** National Soccer Stadium in Panama grassed with SeaDwarf seashore paspalum.

Update on turfgrass varieties for 2011

Editor's note: *We asked some turfgrass seed experts for comments on the 2011 crop of varieties for sports turf use, specifically what will be available next spring and whether prices will be up or down.*

TIFSPORT

The bermudagrass picture for the University of Georgia's two mainstay varieties reflects the somewhat down economy. Plentiful supply of TifSport and Tifway 419 with suppressed demand and thus lower prices. That should be good news for sports turf managers looking to renovate or for new installations. You can expect excellent quality Tifway 419 from certified producers in all of the warm season states and certified TifSport will continue to be popular for its improved cold tolerance, dark green color and ability to handle heavy overseeding.

UGA's new TifGrand bermudagrass was developed by world-renowned turfgrass breeder Dr. Wayne Hanna and was released in limited quantities in 2010. TifGrand, which should be available in good supply in most markets for the 2011 season, is the world's first seed and pollen sterile (triploid hybrid) bermudagrass and thrives in up to 60% shade. With the modern trend to build ever more vertical stadiums to gain additional seating, shade issues on sports fields have become increasingly problematic. This new certified shade tolerant bermudagrass was developed to overcome traditional bermudagrass shade problems on sports fields. TifGrand also has naturally dark green blades, tawny-mole cricket non-preference and significantly lower nitrogen and water requirements. Currently there are licensed TifGrand producers in NC, SC, GA, FL, AL, TX, AZ, and HA.-Brian Schwartz

PENNINGTON SEED

We at Pennington Seed will not be releasing new cool season or warm season cultivars this spring though we do have a few in the pipeline for release in the fall of 2011 and spring 2012.

The production of perennial ryegrass has continued to decrease in Oregon production due to a few factors, i.e. the decrease in demand, the carry over of high cost seed from years past, and the current wheat prices. Wheat is a nice rotation crop for the farmers as it allows them to clean the field of grasses. Some farmers are continuing for the second year of wheat vs. the standard one year rotation due to low rye grass prices and adequate wheat prices.

Prices will remain low through the fall and possibly the spring of 2011 though many feel that fall of 2011 will see a price increase due to the smaller inventories and production.

The inventory of improved Bermuda cultivars is better than years past though production cost have increased. We will continue to hold our pricing stable despite the increased cost. Common bermuda prices will likely increase as the spring progresses and supplies dwindle.-Russ Nicholson

West Coast Turf

West Coast Turf is introducing Platinum TE in 2011, a Seashore Paspalum variety, says sales manager John Marman, who adds that "Costs are stagnant; they will remain the same in 2011."

ENVIRONMENTAL TURF, INC.

More and more professional stadiums as well as municipalities in warm-season turf zones are using seashore paspalum for their sports fields. Aloha seashore paspalum and SeaDwarf seashore paspalum are grown as sod or sprigs. The grasses are produced by licensed sod farms through Environmental Turf's network of licensed growers.

Aloha seashore paspalum was developed by breeders at the University of Florida. Aloha has a very vigorous growth rate that makes it heal

» **LOUISVILLE SLUGGER FIELD** featuring Turf Blue, a fast-germinating Kentucky bluegrass. Award-winning groundskeeper Tom Nielsen says, "The color is really good and looks awesome from the stands. Considering how hot it's been the grass is doing amazingly well. The wear tolerance has been very good too. Good early spring green up as well' it was green by March 27."