

Benefits of certification verified

Editor's note: This is the second of six installments on how becoming a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) can benefit turf managers professionally as well as improve their facilities.

HOW DID YOU PREPARE FOR THE CSFM EXAM?

Savard: I read and reread the 20-page, detailed CSFM Competency list. It became clear to me which areas I knew and which I needed to work on. I acquired and read most of the books and materials that are recommended as study guides. I used the internet and read everything I could about sports field management. I even took an online soils course at the local community college. In total, I spent about a year preparing for the exam. Besides passing the test, the real payoff was that I actually learned things that I use every day.

HOW DID YOU APPROACH YOUR EMPLOYER TO SUPPORT YOUR CERTIFICATION, BOTH FINANCIALLY AND IN THE TIME NEEDED TO PREPARE FOR THE EXAM?


Savard: My employer had little involvement in my pursuit of my certification. I had my own motivation to seek and ultimately become certified.

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO PURSUE CERTIFICATION?

Savard: It had been a goal of mine for some time. I really wanted to see how I measured up against other sports field managers. Presently there are more than 20 CSFMs representing the various segments of our membership. Each CSFM passed a difficult test proving that they possess a level of knowledge. All of the questions on the test are things that sports field managers actually encounter. Passing the CSFM exam boosted my confidence and validated my knowledge and skill set.

HOW HAS CERTIFICATION HELPED YOUR CAREER?


Savard: I work for a private high school. Whenever I request funding or make a proposal, I found I have more credibility as a CSFM than I would have as "the guy who works outside taking care of the fields." In addition, it has expanded my network through my involvement with my local Chapter and by serving on STMA committees. I have become acquainted with people who I otherwise would not have met. Not only do I have trusted colleagues I can call when I need answers, but some of them even consult with me. ■



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Field of the Year



Lambeau Field's evolution is the product of shared knowledge and experience from STMA members. The Field of the Year Award for Lambeau is an award for the industry.



◀From L to R: Allen Johnson, Bart Bartelme, Derek Paris and Joel Hunt.

A LLEN JOHNSON, FIELDS MANAGER FOR THE GREEN BAY PACKERS, has for 13 years been responsible for one of his community's most prized assets—53-year-old Lambeau Field's playing surface. He and his full-time staff, Bart Bartelme, Derek Paris, and Joel Hunt, oversaw the overall reconstruction of the field in 2007 and won the 2009 STMA Professional Football Field of the Year Award.

Improved drainage was the goal and the Packers spent \$3 million on the project. Before reconstruction, the field had a multitude of layers: compacted clay subgrade, 4-inch layer of pea gravel, 10 inches of 90/10 sand/peat rootzone mix, 5 inches of fine-graded soil, and 1 ½-inch thick sod from Tuckahoe Turf Farms. After the project, the soil composition was 90/10 sand/peat mix over 4 inches of pea gravel, the crown was reduced to a .65% slope, a new heat system (hydronic [circulating glycol] with pex) expanded the zones to include the Mondo surface apron surrounding the field, and GrassMaster fibers were inserted into the rootzone.

The new drainage system is a traditional drain tile, surrounded with pea gravel in the trenches and arranged in a gridiron pattern perpendicular to the field's crown.

Johnson wrote in his FOY entry: "The challenges at Lambeau Field change as often as the weather in northeast Wisconsin. During October 2008, three home games into our regular season, some players were starting to slip [on the surface]. We discovered that the turf canopy was too dense and their cleats weren't penetrating into the soil surface where they could anchor into the sand and GrassMaster fibers for optimum footing.

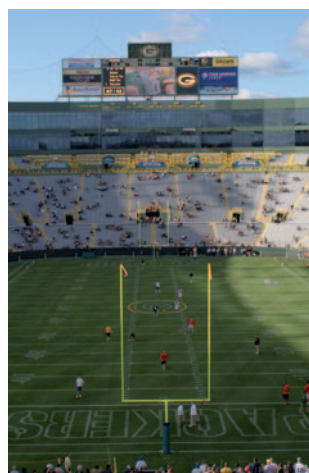
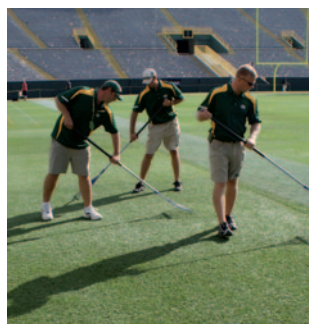
"We decided to prioritize safety and performance over aesthetics after that game and commenced aggressive verticutting to thin the canopy and used a Soil Reliever (Southern Green) with 7-inch solid tines to alleviate compaction and help open up the surface. It was somewhat risky to beat up a high-profile field that late in the season because our growing season was winding down; for the next game, on October 19, Lambeau wasn't quite up to its usual aesthetic standard but performed well and by the next game, in November, it looked great again and played well the rest of the year.

"Our next challenge reoccurs every winter, when night temperatures dip below the mid-20's and we tarp the field for snow, or to assist the underground heat system. Either moisture accumulates on the underside of the tarp, creating a frost layer that ends up on the field surface after the tarp is removed, or the tarp is frozen to the field and has to be torn from the surface, which takes with it a lot of turf. To solve this, we force a warm cushion of air under the tarp to prevent that frost layer from forming. This very laborious endeavor has absolutely improved the surface late in the year.

"Another big challenge greeted us in spring 2009. Being in the third year with the system, it was time to "grind" off the natural turf with our Koro Top Maker and regenerate the surface from seed. This was our first attempt at this, so with nervous stomachs, we removed the natural grass and exposed the fibers April 1, then immediately slit-seeded with a blend of Kentucky bluegrass at a rate of 8.3 pounds/1000 sq. ft., split evenly in two directions. We turned on the underground heat system and covered it with Evergreen turf blankets (Covermaster) for 5 weeks to assist germination, and monitored the surface temperatures closely when the sun came out. It was covered and uncovered often. At 5 weeks we shut off the heat and just used the turf blankets for another 3 weeks. Seven weeks after seeding the bluegrass we added 8.9 pounds/1000 sq. ft. of perennial ryegrass.

"This year we began collecting clippings to prevent snot layers, picking *poa annua* by hand, using the Soil Reliever 2 days before each game to alleviate compaction, and increasing our dethatching activity.

"Many of the practices we employ have been suggested by our peers. Lambeau Field's evolution is the product of shared knowledge and experience from STMA



members. The Field of the Year Award for Lambeau is an award for the industry.”

SportsTurf: Has modern technology rendered the term “frozen tundra” obsolete in Green Bay? How do you keep the field in good condition late in the season?

Johnson: For the most part, I would say yes. On an average winter day, we are able to keep the field completely thawed. However, there are those situations like we had a few years back when we hosted an NFC Championship game and had some extremely cold temperatures; by the end of the game the surface was starting to stiffen up a little, especially in areas where the natural canopy was a little thin. It was so cold during that game that I’m sure the perception was that everything was frozen. I know I was.

The condition of the field late in the season has a lot to do with how much success we have during the month of October regenerating turf in the wear areas. Aside from those early preparations of trying to keep good canopy cover, we use a Soil Reliever on the field a few days before every game to soften the surface, and we cover the field with a tarp the night before, while blowing a cushion of warm air under it to prevent frost and any surface moisture from accumulating on the field.

ST: What changes to your maintenance plans are you making this year, if any?

Johnson: If we can duplicate our success last year I’d definitely take

it. We started soil relieving before every game last year and I think that improved the performance of our field a lot, the process of blowing air under our tarp has also given us a better surface for those late games. Aside from replicating our practices last year, we will be experimenting with some artificial lighting.

ST: What’s the best piece of turf management advice you have ever received?

Johnson: Not specifically turf advice but work-related advice in general: “It is better to be proactive than reactive.”

ST: How do you balance your work and personal time?

Johnson: Luckily, I really enjoy work and consider my crew an extension of my family. Derek Paris, Bart Bartelme, and Joel Hunt are like brothers to me, so that camaraderie really helps when we work the amount of hours that we do. I am no longer married, but a father of an awesome 7-year-old son. I share that time equally with his mother, so when I am not working, I am busy being a single parent; if there is ever a conflict I simply bring Ethan along and put him to work. I also look forward to the off-season.

ST: How do you deal with the pressure of being in such a high-profile position?

Johnson: For some reason, I’ve never looked at it that way and that probably helps. I take a lot of pride in everything I do and hope that it is reflected in what people perceive. To relieve stress I try to exercise and incorporate a little long distance running. ■



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Consider STMA Board Service

Each year, STMA presents a "Call for Nominations" for STMA voting members to indicate interest in board service. Please take a moment to consider serving on the STMA Board of Directors, or urging a qualified colleague to consider service. The benefits are many. By serving on the board, you'll:

- Contribute to your professional association.
- Be a part of a decision-making body.
- Hone your listening, collaborative and other personal development skills.
- Strengthen your leadership abilities.
- Make a difference in the strategic direction of the profession.
- Garner respect from your employer, your peers and your staff.

For 2011, Directors representing Facilities used by Professional Athletes, Schools K-12, and the Commercial membership segments and one At-Large position is up for election. Because the At-Large Director is not membership segment-specific, STMA is seeking nominations from all voting categories of membership. These Directors will be elected to a two-year term, except for the Director At-Large, which is a one-year term. The elections take place via a ballot sent by U.S. mail in November to every voting member.

The STMA Board of Directors sets policy and strategic direction for the programs and services STMA provides and is accountable to its membership. Individual Board Member responsibilities are to:

- Attend and actively participate in quarter-

ly board meetings (4 per year): January, March, July, and October.

- Chair one or more committees.
- Attend special events, as needed.
- Attend and actively participate in the annual conference.

For more information on board member duties, please contact headquarters for a copy of the Board Handbook. To have your name considered by the Nominating Committee, please fill out the Nominations Form in this issue, or go to www.STMA.org to fill out an electronic Word document. Be sure to answer the two brief questions included on the form. The STMA Nominating Committee encourages you to also share this form with your peers. The deadline to submit your interest is Aug. 31. ■

STMA thanks you for 6 years of membership

The following have been members of STMA since 2004. STMA appreciates your commitment and support of the profession!

Cliff Abrams	Devin Conway	Matt Henn	Ron Matakitis	J.W. Reed	Alan Taylor
Scott Abrahamson	Philip Cooper	Michael Henry	Joe McDermott	David Renner	James Taylor
Dave Allgood	Michael Coyle	J. Brian Hill	Patrick McDonald	Larry Rhodes, CSFM	Jim Terenzio
Chad Alterio	Jesse Cuevas	James Hodgdon	Chris McGinty	Larry Rider	Carrie Thomas
Scott Ashworth	Troy Crawford	Rodney Hopkins	Grant McKnight	Curtis Roberts	Wayne Thorson
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Scott Conrad	Randy Heilman	Stacy Martin	Aaron Ramella	Steve Tassinari	Steve Zimmerman ■

Commercial Members: Enter the Innovative Awards Program

STMA has created a new awards program for its commercial members. The Innovative Awards Program will recognize those companies that have developed a product, service, equipment or technology that substantially enhances the effectiveness of the Sports Turf Manager. The innovation could also make playing surfaces safer and more playable for athletes.

STMA's Innovative Awards Task Group, led by chair Dale Getz, CSFM, CSE, developed the award to recognize companies that improve the sports turf management profession.



Any STMA Commercial member who is exhibiting at the upcoming STMA Annual Conference and Exhibition is eligible to submit one entry annually. The company must display the innovation in its booth and have introduced it for sale between the close of the current year's STMA show and the close of the following year's show. The

only criteria that the innovation must meet is that it should substantially enhance the effectiveness of the sports turf manager and/or make the surfaces safer and more playable for athletes.

For more information about the program or to complete the simple entry form go to www.STMA.org. Submittals must be sent electronically by Oct. 1.

Winners will receive substantial recognition by STMA and have the right to use the special logo in conjunction with its winning innovation. ■



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List any STMA Committee Service

List any Chapter or Local Association Service

Please answer the following questions: (350 words or less)

- What qualities would you bring to board service?
- What is your vision for STMA?

Chapters Highlights

GOOD NEWS!

The former Indiana Chapter of the STMA is being re-established. For more information on how to become active in the reformation of this chapter, contact Joey Stevenson, Indianapolis Indians, at ph. 317-610-1602, or by e-mail, jstevenson@indyindians.co.

THIS MONTH'S PROFILE: THE MINNESOTA CHAPTER

Two Minnesota sports turf managers have been in the local and national spotlight. Mike McDonald at the University of Minnesota and Larry DiVito with the Minnesota Twins. Last fall, the University of Minnesota opened TCF Bank Stadium and this spring, The Minnesota Twins opened Target Field. Both facilities are beautifully maintained.

The Minnesota Sports Turf Managers Association (MSTMA) serves the entire Minnesota sports turf industry. MSTMA focuses on people who are engaged in the construction, maintenance and use of sports turf areas for high quality and safe playing conditions.

MSTMA provides educational grants that promote the sports turf industry, support research and development of superior playing surfaces for sports turf facilities and promotes the development, design and use of related materials and equipment for the sports turf industry.

Here is a summary of their chapter events:

SPRING WORKSHOP: On March 31, MSTMA held a Spring Workshop in conjunction with the Minnesota Park Supervisors Association

(MPSA). This was an educational seminar that also included table displays from vendors.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: In June 2010, the MSTMA provided the labor for a Community Service Project. Each year, MSTMA members spend a day sprucing up a field. This year, the field is a neighborhood baseball/soccer field at Weland Park in the City of Grant, Minn.

CHAPTER CLASH: On July 16-17 members of the MSTMA will play sports turf managers from Iowa in an annual softball game and golf match. The clash host alternates each year between Iowa and Minnesota. In the summer of 2009, Minnesota won the annual softball game 18-17. The host lowans left the bases loaded in the bottom of the ninth. The lowans beat MSTMA in golf the next day by winning 8 of 10 matches. The golf format is a 2-person scramble. This year, the Chapter Clash takes place in Woodbury.

TOUR-ON-WHEELS: On August 4, MSTMA members will board a bus and make tour stops at various high schools, fields and parks. The stops take place where recent construction has been done or currently happening.

FALL WORKSHOP: On September 15, the MSTMA and MPSA will host a Fall Workshop at McMurray Fields in St. Paul. Vendors will display equipment on the wide-open fields. This is also a great educational opportunity for anyone involved in the turf industry. All members of MTGF are welcome to attend.

(Editor's Note: For more information, contact MSTMA at 952-473-3722, info@mstma.com or go to www.mstma.com.)

STMA Affiliated Chapters Contact Information

Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona:

Chris Walsh cwalsh@scottsdaleaz.gov or Johnathan Knight, CSFM johnathan.knight@peoriaaz.gov.

Colorado Sports Turf Managers Association:

www.cstma.org.

Florida #1 Chapter (South):

305-235-5101 (Bruce Bates)

Florida #2 Chapter (North):

850/580-4026.

Florida #3 Chapter (Central):

863-665-5800

Gateway Chapter Sports Turf Managers Association:

www.gatewaystma.org.

Georgia Sports Turf Managers Association:

www.gstma.org.

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.

Kentucky Sports Turf Managers Association:

www.kystma.org.

Keystone Athletic Field Managers Org. (KAFMO/STMA):

www.kafmo.org.

Michigan Sports Turf Managers Association (MiSTMA):

www.mistma.org.

Mid Atlantic Sports Turf Managers Association (MASTMA) (formerly the Chesapeake Chapter STMA)

Ph. 410-704-2197
www.mastma.org

Minnesota Chapter STMA:

www.mstma.com. (See Expanded Profile included in Chapter Highlights)

MO-KAN Sports Turf Managers Association:

www.mokanstma.com.

Nebraska Sports Turf Managers Association:

402/441-4425.

New England STMA (NESTMA):

www.nestma.org.

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey:

www.sfmnj.org.

Sports Turf Managers of New York:

www.stmony.org.

North Carolina Chapter of STMA:

www.ncsportsturf.org.

Northern California STMA:

www.norcalstma.org.

Ohio Sports Turf Managers Association (OSTMA):

www.ostma.org.

Oregon STMA Chapter:

503/953-9406

Ozarks STMA:

www.ozarksstma.org.

Pacific Northwest Sports Turf Managers Association:

www.pnwstma.org.

Southern California Chapter:

www.socalstma.com.

South Carolina Chapter of STMA:

www.scstma.org.

Tennessee Valley Sports Turf Managers Association (TVSTMA):

www.tvstma.com.

Texas Sports Turf Managers Association:

866/897-8621.

Virginia Sports Turf Managers Association:

www.vstma.org.

Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association:

www.wstma.org.

Forming Chapters:

Gulf Coast Chapter: 225/757-9136.

Indiana Chapter: Joey Stevenson, jstevenson@indyindians.com (See more information in the Chapter Highlights)

Nevada STMA Chapter: 702/884-2987.

STMA International Affiliate Organizations:

National Parks, Singapore: www.nparks.gov.sg

Sports Turf Association, ON, CANADA
www.sportsturfassociation.com

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B ☐ MANAGER/SUPERINTENDENT — Superintendent, Landscape/Ground Maintenance Manager, Foreman, Supervisor
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Q&A

Blood on the field



Our town safety coordinator asked about blood borne pathogens and how to decontaminate our athletic fields [natural grass]. During a PONY tournament, blood got on the grass and the employees did not know what they should do. I was not sure how to answer it either. Can you help us with this issue?

North Carolina

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Well this is a question that when first asked, I had to shrug my shoulders as I did not know what to recommend. Over the past several months I have done some reading and asked a couple of sports trainers what they are asked (or required) to do for blood cleanup. An early realization is that the recommendation for cleaning blood from soft, highly permeable surfaces like turfgrass vary depending on who you listen to and/or what you read. There seems to be no standard recommendations.

So, let's take a step or two backward and look at the issue at hand. First, the concern over infectious diseases related to pathogens found in blood (and other body fluids) has grown due to the fears of contacting HIV and hepatitis B or C (HBV and HCV). But I actually found no report that HBV, HCV, or HIV has ever been transmitted to humans from a soft floor covering such as a carpet or from a surface such as turfgrass. Nonetheless, disinfection of an area contaminated by blood seems to be a prudent infection-control practice.

The greater risk for infection transfer is from the direct contact with blood from an injured person. Blood that is splashed into the eyes or mouth or contact with broken skin is a more significant issue. As a safety precaution, it is suggested that you do not come in contact with someone else's blood or attempt to clean a blood spill if you have a cut or abrasion on your skin.

If you must deal with cuts or

blood spills, it is strongly suggested that impervious gloves be worn. So, keep your first aid kits stocked with gloves. For public facilities it is also suggested (mandated for some) that you have a National Standard Body Fluid Clean Up kit. These kits contain gloves, disinfectants, and a bio-hazard bag. While this may sound excessive, the kits are in small first-aid boxes and are available for less than \$15 from online retailers or sports medicine companies.

Blood cleanup is easiest on non-permeable surfaces, such as floors and counter tops. Complications arise when cleaning permeable or absorbent surfaces. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and public health community recommends that contaminated carpet be carefully (without splashing) pre-treated with a mild detergent solution, allowing approximately 10 minutes of time for the disinfectant to work. Blot up treated blood with paper towels (wearing gloves) and then immediately place contaminated paper towels in a plastic bag and seal for disposal. Then the treated area should be thoroughly saturated with a standard EPA-registered chemical germicide, used according to label directions, to further inactivate pathogens of concern. Then the carpet should be cleaned . . . To me, turfgrass has some similarity to carpet and could be disinfected in a similar fashion. One difference is that we are not so worried about stains. Our concern is decontamination first and turf health second. So, I kept searching out other cleanup recommendations.

It seems that California has the most extensive legislation associated with cleanup of human blood. The California Medical Waste Management Act has provisions for cleaning up "trauma scene waste." The cleanup procedure focuses on using a 10 percent solution of ordinary household bleach (sodium

hypochlorite). The bleach solution is applied to the blood and allowed 30 minutes contact time. Afterwards the area should be cleaned using absorbent paper towels. Bag used cleanup materials as solid waste, discard gloves, and wash hands thoroughly using hand soap.

A prominent US university had directions for a response team to use for blood cleanup with "small outdoor spills" on their Environmental Management Department's website. Their procedure also suggested using a 10 percent bleach solution to flood the spill area, allowing it to stay in place for 15 minutes. Then they suggested that a 5-gallon bucket of clear water be used to disperse the disinfected spill. This certainly seems easy enough as bleach is readily available and inexpensive. Making a 10% solution (1 part bleach with 9 parts water) is fast and easy. In addition, it should not cause any long-term negative effects on the turfgrass health, especially once it is further diluted with water.

The one issue that will potentially cause some folks problems is delaying the sporting event for the cleanup. It seems callous to mention this issue since the cause of the problem is an injured person, but I know this will come up. Sorry, I can't help you with that one.

Note: Some synthetic turf manufacturers do not endorse bleach use on their synthetic fields. I doubt a 10% bleach solution followed by clean water would cause any issues with synthetic fields. But to be on the safe side, check your field warranty before adopting that as a standard procedure. If bleach is not suitable, ask your company representative to recommend a commercial disinfectant that you can include in your "spill kit." Follow those label directions when cleaning a spill. ■