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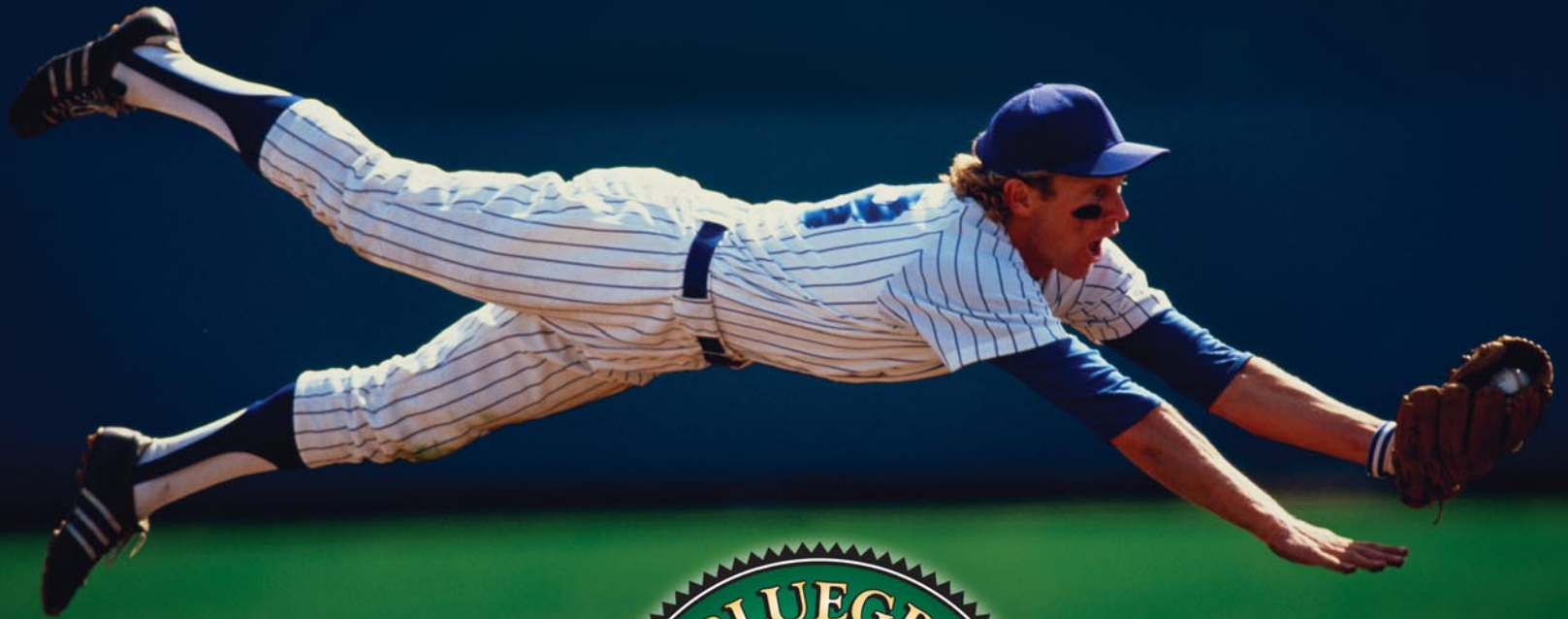
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SportsTurf

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On the cover: War Memorial Stadium Field, Union City High School, Union City, TN, tended to by Stephen Crockett, CSFM and Robin Francis.

Football image courtesy istockphoto/Pgiam

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From the Sidelines



Eric Schroder
Editor

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This magazine helped save the STMA

Dr. Dave Minner, grizzled veteran if there ever was one, replied to my request regarding “Where were you in 1985?” (see page 10) as part of this magazine’s 25th anniversary story. Part of his response I’ve pasted here:

“I also remember the role that *SportsTurf* magazine played around 1985 when STMA was financially struggling and we were going through the growing pains of finding out how to manage a young and promising professional organization. Specifically we had about \$300 in the kitty and the discussion of closing the organization for a while was a distinct possibility. *SportsTurf* stepped up to the plate and donated enough money each year for the next 2 years to keep the organization moving forward.”

As Johnny Carson used to say, “I did not know that!” Three cheers for us.

The magazine’s first editor, Bruce Shank, and I crossed paths briefly; he was the managing editor of *Weeds, Trees & Turf* at Harcourt Brace Jovanovich in Cleveland in the early 1980’s before leaving to lead the effort at a new magazine, then known as *sportsTURF*. We worked in the same building for about 6 months, into early 1985 I believe, after HBJ bought my employer and I transferred from Chicago to Cleveland.

The late, great Bob Earley was Bruce’s mentor there as he was to many people, including Jerry Roche, the long-time editor of our sister publication *Landscape & Irrigation*, and Ron Hall, editor emeritus at *Landscape Management*. In fact, I replaced Bruce as another editor’s partner in the company golf league. Small world.

Thanks to the STMA, Michigan State’s Turfgrass Information File, and our own Joanne Juda, VP of Everything, you can see all the back issues of *SportsTurf* on the TGIF website. Like magazines that print “better abs quick” articles year after year, the subjects that were important to sports turf managers in 1985 mostly remain important today; the difference is that so many of you today are in charge of multi-million dollar venues.

Good segue: Speaking of venues, a few months ago we conducted an online survey with 23 different job responsibilities such as Event Management, Employee Training, Purchasing, etc., in other words, things not directly related to your turf. A lot of you apparently are responsible for a lot more than turf only. As *SportsTurf* begins its next 25 years, we’ll be paying attention to topics that matter to those folks as well as updating the subjects that matter to many of you the most, your “abs”—the playing fields.

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President's Message

Chris Calcaterra,
CSFM, CPRP

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Help users understand your work

As you look around, you can see evidence of fall sports everywhere. The year-around work of our members in planning and preparing for this season may not be evident to the coaches, fans and players, but I believe that there is general recognition that fields have been cared for and made ready for play.

Is it necessary that these user groups know our exact management programs for these fields? Probably not. It is critical, however, that we all take a leadership role in helping our constituents to understand how we manage the fields to protect players from unsafe conditions and our efforts to be good environmental stewards. I encourage you to keep these two elements of your work at the forefront of your communications. Most of us are not wired to promote ourselves. However, we must proactively remind our employers and our users of the value they receive by having a professional sports turf manager oversee their athletic facilities.

Another group that I know is not into self-promotion is our headquarters staff. I want to recognize their work on our behalf, and congratulate them and our entire association on our 6th anniversary of bringing the management of STMA in-house. Many good things have resulted from this move, which was at the direction of visionary past board members. Making fundamental changes can be difficult and intimidating unless the right person is steering the bus, the right people are sitting in the right seats, and a clear map is directing them to where they need to go. All were in place in 2004; all are still working together today to guide STMA to even greater success.

Your Board of Directors recently met for its summer board meeting. One item on our radar screen is our headquarters facility. We currently lease space in a charming, renovated building (oldest seed house west of the Mississippi) at a cost per square foot that is very affordable. Your Board has started to define the benchmarks that could drive the need to seek other space, i.e. membership size and program growth. Your Board is in agreement that STMA has not reached these targets, but I want to assure you that we are doing our due diligence and planning for the association's future.

We are also developing a plan to bring our conference in-house. Our contract with Marketing and Events ends after the 2012 conference, and we are evaluating the pros and cons of in-house versus contract management. The decision hinges on what is in the best interest of the STMA membership. We'll be making our decision over the next 12 months. The 2011 Conference and Exhibition brochure should be in your inbox. I hope that you agree that the program is excellent, Austin is inexpensive, and travel costs are reasonable. I thank the many volunteers who worked on the conference education, tours, exhibition and other conference events. This is the premier learning experience for sports turf managers for 2011. Make plans now to attend.



SportsTurf marks 25 years of serving readers and advertisers

We aren't big on self-promotion here at *SportsTurf*, but we do not want to ignore the fact that this issue marks 25 years since the magazine was first published, in September 1985. Over the years, like any business venture, we have been fortunate to survive market ups and downs, new owners, publishers and editors, and all the changes Father Time presents. Thank you to all of our readers, our advertisers, and especially to the members and staff of the Sports Turf Managers Association for your continued support and contributions to our efforts.-Eric Schroder, Editor

First editorial celebrates sports turf "having its day"
Reprinted here in full is Editor Bruce Shank's column in the first issue of this magazine:

"The sportsTURF Advisors: These Men Knew All Along Sports Turf Would Have Its Day"

ATHLETIC FIELD MANAGERS have been defending public and private turf from a remote outpost for many years, while golf course superintendents and lawn care operators have received most of the attention. They have been provided with low budgets, outdated weaponry, and little consideration by the rest of the industry.

Now that the world has discovered the importance of their outpost, we have also discovered a few agronomists who never forgot them, never stopped developing new weapons for them, and helped these legionnaires make do with technology designed for other types of war.

Six of these wise men sit on the editorial advisory board of sportsTURF magazine.

Fred Grau is the dean of the advisory board. He was the first extension turf specialist in the U.S. in 1938 serving golf course greenskeepers, park superintendents, and sod growers in Pennsylvania.

Fred worked with Burton Musser, a research agronomist at Pennsylvania State University, whose work in turf breeding and maintenance would put him in a turf hall of fame if there was such an honor. Fred's accomplishments would fill three pages single-spaced if we had room.

They include the development of Penngift crown vetch for highway erosion control, the co-development of the turf aerifier for West Point Products (later purchased by Hahn), directorship of the United States Golf Association Green Section from 1948 to 1953, early promotion of ureaformaldehyde nitrogen for turf, and most recently the development of the Sports Turf Research and Education Committee of the Musser International Turfgrass Foundation, a nonprofit organization for turf. In his eighties, Fred never lets up. I'll never forget Bill Daniel's retirement dinner at the Midwest Turf Conference last March at Purdue University. In one room sat the Who's Who of turf, all former students of Bill during his 30 plus years of teaching agronomy.

If his name sounds familiar, it may be because he is the co-developer of the Prescription Athletic Turf (PAT) system, probably the best known natural turf design on the market. It would be hard to find a sod grower, golf superintendent, or athletic field manager in the Midwest who is not aware of Bill Daniel. He helped start the Midwest Turf Foundation, the Midwest

Sod Producers Association, and the Sports Turf Managers Association. His turf curricula at Purdue were copied by many other state universities.

Henry Indyk, professor of soils and crops at Rutgers University, has also developed a national

reputation for his work in sports turf and sod production. He is part of the Rutgers's turf brain trust which includes turf breeder Dr. Reed Funk and weed scientist Dr. Ralph Engle. Henry is a person who doesn't stand for sloppy construction or maintenance. His attention to detail made him the best candidate for executive director of the American Sod Producers Association when it was new and the New Jersey Turfgrass Foundation for more than 20 years. That same trait propels him energetically into the area of safer sports turf. He will outline his views of basic field requirements in the November issue of sportsTURF.

Roy Goss, extension agronomist for Washington State University in Puyallup, has been helping natural turf survive overuse and too much rain since 1958. Roy has authored some of the best extension publications available on sports field construction and maintenance. He has also been the architect for more than 15 golf courses in Washington and Vancouver, Canada. One of the courses he designed is listed as one of the top 75 public courses in the U.S. by *Golf Digest*.

Another leader in writing publications for sports turf is Bill Knoop from Texas A&M University's Dallas campus. He joins the sportsTURF board to represent southern sports turf. Bill works closely with the Texas Rangers baseball club and will host a sports turf conference at Ranger Stadium this coming spring with the help of field manager Jim Anglea. sportsTURF magazine is proud to sponsor this important event.

Finally, everyone in California knows him as Vic ... Gibeault, that is. Vic Gibeault too is part of a brain trust. The California extension service has been blessed with the

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likes of John Madisen, Bill Davis, Vic Youngner, Kent Kurtz, and Gibeault. Vic is closely involved with some major developments in sports turf. He is a close observer of sod grown on sand for resodding sand-based

sports fields, combinations of warm and cool season grasses, and fertigation. Vic is a leader in educating sports turf managers in Southern California on proper field construction and care. His research emphasis is

important to sports turf technology as it enters a new growth phase.

These six innovative veterans of sports turf provide a strong foundation of guidance for this magazine. ■

Where were you in 1985?

GREG PETRY, Waukegan (IL) Park District

I was working for the Park Ridge Recreation and Park District as the Coordinator of Park Services. Our big project was sodding 10 acres of athletic fields and keeping them alive during the summer/fall drought. Those were the days; working out in the field with the guys and seeing a project come to fruition!

HEATHER NABOZNY, Detroit Tigers

In 1985 I was a sophomore at Milford High School in Michigan. I had tall hair and wore too much makeup. I was the captain of the downhill ski racing team and had a thoroughbred horse that I showed equestrian.

I remember that year I took great pride in mowing my parents property on a 1939 Ford tractor with a PTO-driven flail mower attached to the back.

STEVE COCKERHAM, University of California, Riverside

I was Superintendent of Agricultural Operations at the University of California, Riverside, full-time and well into my own turfgrass research program for my academic appointment. In that year, we finished the first phase of the turfgrass research facility at UCR. I had just been through the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles as consultant for the LA Memorial Coliseum and the Rose Bowl. George Toma had been working with me on the Rose Bowl as the soccer venue.

"Turfgrass Water Conservation" was published in 1985. Dr. Victor Gibeault and I had edited the papers of a 1983 Symposium that we organized and conducted, which was sponsored by the (then) American Sod Producer's Association. The book became

one of the most frequently cited publications in our industry for many years. I attended the International Turfgrass Society Meetings in France and gave a paper on water use in turf. At that meeting I met researchers from England and, in discussions with them the idea for the design of a sports turf traffic simulator was born. The Brinkman Traffic Simulator was built that fall. I gave some papers at various meetings and had some publications. All in all, I recall it being a busy year.

As a note, I continue consulting with the LA Memorial Coliseum and, this year, celebrate my 28th year with that facility.

KIM HECK, CEO of STMA

In 1985, I was hired by McCaw Communications and placed on the team that brought cellular technology to the Kansas City market. My job was marketing and advertising. McCaw was heavily into acquiring communications companies as its growth strategy, and I traveled when necessary to the acquisitions to help integrate the marketing plans. Travel was often on the corporate jet! I had just had my first child and was still figuring out the "new mom" stuff and work/life balance.

DR. DAVE MINNER, Iowa State

In 1985 I was in my second year as a faculty member at the University of Missouri. It seems like yesterday and I can still probably locate every head we placed ourselves in the new irrigation system at the research facility, with lots of good information generously donated by the turfgrass industry. Things haven't changed much; this industry and its professional organizations

have grown, but they have never lost the desire to share information.

I was a newly elected STMA board member in 1985 and most of our meetings were in Chicago. I was fortunate to serve on board at the same time as the late Harry Gill. Harry taught me a lesson about how to communicate with sports turf managers and it has certainly influenced how I listen and react to a group of professionals who are really the true experts.

At my first board meeting as the representative for academics I wanted to show my superior knowledge, so I was describing something and used the scientific name for two grasses and followed it up the term "verdure." (Look it up if you don't know it, I learned my lesson once.) When I was done with my scientific pontification, Harry looked at the group and said, "I don't have a clue to what he just said but what we really need is someone to help us find answers to the problems we can't solve and also a way to get advice to the little guy" (his way of saying we should share our information with smaller organizations that didn't yet have a dedicated groundskeeper).

Well, I took off my tie, along with my cap and gown, and it has been a wonderfully rewarding 25 years of learning and teaching and listening and doing with the sports turf industry. Thanks Harry, for setting the kid on a straight and better path.

ABBY MCNEAL, CSFM, Wake Forest University

1985—the time when big hair, preppy clothes, parachute pants and being a high school freshman at Queen Anne's County (MD) High School were all that I knew. I was actually destroying grass as a member of

Continued on page 38