

JOHN MASCARO'S PHOTO QUIZ



Answers from page 17

Although at first glance, it might appear that the helicopter is trying to dry out this field after heavy spring rains. Upon closer inspection, you can see large hoppers on the sides of the helicopter. This was sold to me on Facebook as a new way to apply fertilizer to waterlogged fields. I have actually heard of helicopters being used as a fertilization technique so I have to admit, I bit on the fertilizer premise, hook line and sinker.

As it turns out, this is not a field drying technique or a fertilization delivery method, the helicopters were part of the Northeast Mosquito Control Association. They were using these athletic fields as staging areas to fill the hoppers with a bio-control agent and then spreading it in the nearby wetlands to control mosquitos after the heavy rains. This adds a new dimension to "multi-use fields" as they used the fields as a fueling station and loading zone to apply the material. They ran probably eight "missions" that day that included two helicopters, one fuel truck and one truck with product. The fields were no worse for wear when they were finished.

Photos and comments by Peter Thibeault CSFM, Sports Turf Manager at Noble and Greenough School, Dedham, MA.

If you would like to submit a photograph for John Mascaro's Photo Quiz please send it to John Mascaro, 1471 Capital Circle NW, Ste # 13, Tallahassee, FL 32303 call (850) 580-4026 or email to john@turf-tec.com. If your photograph is selected, you will receive full credit. All photos submitted will become property of SportsTurf magazine and the Sports Turf Managers Association.

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SETTING THE STANDARD

Towable topdressers continue to evolve

Editor's note: This article was written by Bruce Carmichael of TrynEx International.



startup and shutdown, some manufacturers have developed an automatic procedure for when the unit is turned on and off. When all topdresser components are shut off at the same time, a buildup of material is typically left on the spinner. Then, when the unit is started, the operator experiences a sudden rush of material that leaves a clump of sand on the ground. To prevent this, some machines will automatically power up the spinners before the feed system starts, and then shut the spin-

Not only has the industry seen advancements in feed designs, but the drive systems that power them have also improved. Because of these changes, the environmental issues associated with traditional topdressers have been diminished.

» **HOPPERS** constructed of polyethylene help reduce the physical footprint of topdressers.

As sports turf managers adapt to new turfgrass recommendations, equipment manufacturers incorporate new technology in their latest designs of small, towable topdressers.

Topdressing has been evolving since the early days of golf. What began as a generous application of sand, which was applied only a couple times each year, has developed into a process that is practiced much more frequently with a very precise amount of material.

The United States Golf Association has been recommending lighter applications of topdressing material, and some superintendents are spreading sand at only 1/32 of an inch. To maintain such a light depth in a uniform application, a topdresser's feed system, gate, spinner

and controller all must work together to achieve results that are on target with individual needs.

Manufacturers have developed auger systems that feed a more accurate amount of material onto a precise spot on the spinner. With the help of a digital readout, the operator is able to see exactly how many pounds of material he is spreading per minute according to his auger speed setting. This technology can handle materials other than just pure sand. Since the auger diameter used in these units is typically 3-7 inches, they don't have the capacity to deliver as much material as large conveyors.

LESS WASTE

Material waste is another important consideration in many new designs. Again, auger feeds should be more efficient than conveyors. But in order to reduce material waste upon

ners off a few seconds after the material flow stops.

New spinner enhancements have been developed to help accommodate personal preferences, including tiltable spinners, which help control how material is propelled into the turf canopy. Some designs incorporate spinners with adjustable paddles for further fine-tuning the spread pattern.

Even the gate plays an important part in the feeding process. It helps regulate material flow, and in some topdressers it can be electronically actuated from the seat of the towing vehicle. The positive locking feature on these electronic units is especially handy for quickly closing and opening the gate when moving from one green to the next. This prevents material from bouncing out during transport.

Regardless of the feed system used, any topdresser can be inhibited by material that lumps together, especially wet sand so now

many units now contain vibrators to eliminate the problem.

Finally, to manage all of these components, controllers have become more sophisticated. New technology allows the operator can mount electronic controls in the towing vehicle and manage each of the components independently from the cab.

Not only has the industry seen advancements in feed designs, but the drive systems that power them have also improved. Because of these changes, the environmental issues associated with traditional topdressers have been diminished.

Until recently, most topdressers have been driven by an independent hydraulic system, but just as in every other industry, the big push to go green has changed the way turf managers think about purchasing equipment. They're beginning to favor self-contained equipment or avoiding hydraulic systems altogether in order to help prevent the spill of hydraulic oil. Electric motors can eliminate spills, lower gas consumption, reduce emissions and operate quieter.

By using the central hydraulic unit of the towing machine, they reduce the number of hydraulic components to maintain

HOW HEAVY?

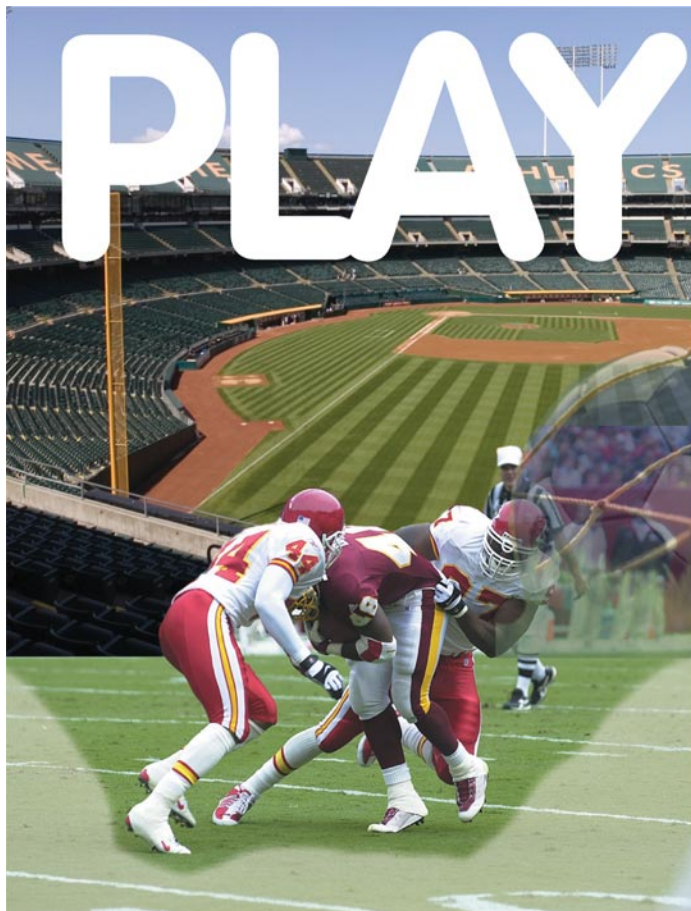
Manufacturers have taken strides in reducing the physical footprint. This is largely done by two methods: increasing the surface area of the machine's contact with the ground and, reducing the overall weight of the unit.

To spread out a machine's weight over a larger surface area, all topdressers use a similar type of wide turf tire. However, the biggest breakthroughs in reducing a physical footprint come in the weight reduction techniques by manufacturers. Obviously, the weight of material in the hopper cannot be reduced, but lightweight drive systems and hopper designs can make a huge impact in weight reduction without leaving an impact in the ground.

Hydraulic fluid alone can contribute more than 75 pounds to the machine. And if the

hydraulic system is powered by a separate gas engine, significantly more weight is added. Some manufacturers have eliminated the engine weight by designing their machines to hook up to the towing vehicle's central hydraulic unit, but even more, new models have replaced all hydraulic components with a lighter electric motor. By using the central hydraulic unit of the towing machine, they reduce the number of hydraulic components to maintain. And, by going to a completely electric-powered unit, they virtually eliminate the need for service on the drive system altogether.

Also, some turf managers are beginning to take advantage of lightweight hopper designs. They're looking beyond steel to new materials like polyethylene, which don't corrode. ■



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www.turfco.com

SafeMark field layout system

Newstripe's SafeMark field layout system is the safest way to layout any athletic field and never have to measure again. There are no holes to catch cleats or plugs to trip over. Key layout points are measured out and the UV protected high-density foam locators are installed flush with the ground. The unique locators have no holes or plugs and are held permanently in place eliminating the need to re-measure each time the field is striped. The SafeMark locators match the surrounding turf density so they can be safely

used even in the field of play. The locators can't be stolen, destroyed by aerators, vehicles or rust from sprinklers. Backed by a 36-month warranty, each SafeMark set comes complete with layout spikes, 600' of cord and the installation auger.

www.newstripe.com



Nozzle irrigates narrow areas

Traditional circular, semi-circular or wedge-shaped spray patterns can often result in inefficient overspray and runoff in these oddly-shaped areas, wasting water and creating dangerously slick conditions on paved surfaces nearby. Now, Rain Bird is making it possible to easily tackle those challenging spaces with the innovative SQ Series Nozzle. Featuring a square spray pattern with a throw radius of 2.5 or 4 feet, the SQ Series is designed specifically for watering small, narrow areas of turf and ornamental plantings like those found near walkways, parkways and street medians. Because these unique, low-volume nozzles offer pressure compensation, they use less water and eliminate inefficient overspray, saving time, money and water for both new and existing installations.

www.rainbird.com

Thatch Master field upgrade kit available

TurfTime Equipment has developed a field upgrade kit to owners that will bring their current Thatch Master up to 2010 specifications at roughly half the cost, says Glenn Musser of TurfTime. The kit includes a heavy hex shaft with new stackable spacers that interlock with the new seven-point carbide-tipped blades that come in 1, 2, and 3 mm thickness. The kit also includes a heavier drive line chain and sprockets.

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-Richard T. Moffitt,
Principal
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Introducing GreenParksUSA

GreenParksUSA, presented by EnviroLogic Resources, Inc., is an environmental stewardship website that provides tools for creating Integrated Pest Management Plans and documenting Best Management Practices for park facilities. Developed by GreenCloudUSA, the developers of GreenGolfUSA, the park version of these tools allows a park manager to create a site-specific IPM Plan and BMP document for each park in the system.

The IPM Plan development tool works with drop-down menus and fill-in-the-blanks to allow you to create an IPM plan that accurately reflects the park or athletic field conditions and standard of care. Action thresholds, a primary basis for the IPM approach, are customizable to the way you operate. The result is an IPM Plan that makes sense for the different parks in your system. The BMP Generator allows you to select from a menu of best management practices to document how you manage the park. The tools are customizable so that you are able to add any pests, weeds, diseases, or pesticides that are not currently in the database to your IPM Plan. The data you enter are saved at the GreenParksUSA server, so when we prepare upgrades you can update your documents with only a few keystrokes. Maintain and update your IPM Plan as often as you wish.

www.GreenParksUSA.com

New clamp-on snow blades

Earth & Turf Products LLC introduces three new easy to install clamp-on snow blades for Compact Tractors. The SC series available in a 60" and a 72", wide 19.5" high blade designed for compact tractors under 35 hp. The S series is a 90" wide 26" high, clamp-on blade for tractors 35hp and over. All three are full featured blades with manual angle 30 degrees left or right, full blade spring trip that can be locked out for light grading jobs and bolt on reversible cutting edges to save money.

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F.O.Y.

Field of the Year

Crockett, Francis overcome increased use, rain & less money to win Field of the Year Award



Fertility Program

2-24-09

Regalstar 20-0-21 at rate 200 lbs/A, 1% Ronstar, 0.2% Prodiamine

3-13-09

Revolver (20 oz/A), Certainty (1.5 oz/A), MSMA (84 oz/A), and Trillium at 96oz/A

7-1-09

Harness & Regal Crown at rates 11 lb/A and 32 oz/A, respectively

7-13-09

Solace (12 oz/A) & MultiGreen II (128 oz/A)

8-25-09

Oasis wetting agent at rate 8 oz/A

8-31-09

Regalstar 2 20-2-20 preemerge at rate 200 lbs/A, 1% Ronstar, 0.2% Prodiamine

9-16-09

Harness & Regal Crown at rates 11 lb/A and 32 oz/A, respectively

WAR MEMORIAL STADIUM Field in Union City, TN won the Sports Turf Managers Association's 2009 Football Field of the Year in the Schools/Parks category. Stephen C. Crockett, CSFM and his cohort Robin Francis are the only two full-time employees in a department formed in 2005 that is dedicated to all municipal athletic fields within both the park and school systems, an uncommon arrangement.

The native soil, sandy loam field, last renovated in 1988 when a drain system and sub-surface irrigation were put in, serves the band in practices and competitions and also sees Phys Ed classes. Crockett reports the Tifton 419 bermudagrass is not overseeded.

Crockett and Francis also maintain the municipal baseball stadium and field; an eight-field baseball/softball complex; the municipal

soccer complex (five fields); the band practice field and three school football practice fields.

Crockett reported that after several drought years, 2009 brought lots of rain and cool temperatures. The rainfall altered his water budgeting and mowing schedule throughout the summer, and the cool temps led to recovery time problems, he said. "With cool nights we started using the wetting agent Oasis in an attempt to improve recovery after play. This saw some limited success and led to an increased number of divot replacements with actual hex sod patching rather than filling in with sand, a practice we usually reserve for later in the season."

SportsTurf: What changes have you made to your maintenance plan this year?

Crockett: In 2008, we discovered toxicity due to iron; we adjusted the pH with three tons of lime, and no longer use iron. We switched to MultiGreen as part of our Regal Chemical plan. With this change we no longer have a problem.

Due to changes in our style of football from the spread set to the mid-line veer, and the fact that our team advanced to the state championship, for the first time we had to sod the field in the spring following graduation. We also had extensive winter kill due to an unusually harsh winter. Other than this our plan has stayed much the same.

ST: What is the best piece of turf management advice you've ever received?

Crockett: "You're only as big time as where you are." I had to think about this for a while and then it hit me. It doesn't matter what facility, or at what level you work; it is how much effort and time you put in where you are that matters. You have to take your facility to the next level, because that is why you are there. That one, perhaps, has had the greatest impact on my personal management philosophy.

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

Crockett: Managing work and personal time can be a challenge; however, having strong support staff members and an outstanding supervisor allows for time to get away on some weekends and vacation between spring/summer and fall sports seasons. Robin Francis and I work as a management team, and this allows us to have some time away from the facilities. From February through December it can be a grind, and in major tournament years there is no break between the summer and fall sports seasons. I have balance because of the talent level of our staff.

ST: How much input do you have regarding administration decisions?

Crockett: Our administrative system is unique to having an actual municipal turf management department that does not fall under the administration of the parks and recreation department or the school system.

In regards to the turf and facilities I have control of all decisions within the set budget. With full input on the budget, we are allowed to make decisions that will not jeopardize field quality. As the head of the department, I have the opportunity to make final decisions on all aspects of maintenance, building projects and employees with the approval of the city council and the support of the city manager. Over the past 5 years our city council and city manager have been extremely supportive of the department, which has allowed us to greatly improve our facilities and our athletic fields.

ST: How do you establish good working relationships with supervisors and end users?

Crockett: I maintain constant contact with all coaches and field users in regards to playing conditions. The coaches and other field users know to contact me regarding using the playing surface, and they also greatly respect the "Field closed" signs. They have come to understand that we do not put the sign out unless we are working on the surface or have sprayed the field. My staff also understands our goals and we communicate regularly as to what we are going to do to the field in both the short term and long term.

ST: How has the economic climate affected your operations?

Crockett: For the most part there has been little effect on our operations due to the economy; but it was a pivotal year to win the Field of the Year Award, and a football state championship going into the July budget meetings. These two factors probably had a

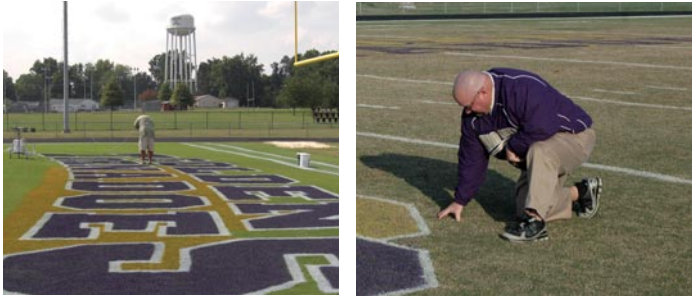


Southern Athletic Fields
would like to congratulate
Stephen Crockett, CSFM, and his Staff
at **Union City Turf Management,**
for winning the
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Schools/Park, Football Division
War Memorial Stadium,
Union City, TN

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TORNADOES

major impact on the field maintenance budget staying the same. On other fronts we have become more frugal in our chemical and painting budgets so as to not go over on what we spent in the previous year.



Maintenance and Mowing Schedule

March

Mow as needed
Field Prep for Soccer

April

Mow as needed
Field Prep for Soccer

May

Mow Tues & Thurs
Aerate & Drag Cores after soccer season

June

Mow Mon/Wed/Fri
Aerate/Topdress 125 tons (80% sand/20 peat)
Verticut if necessary (three directions on June 15)
(Core aeration/topdressing on July 3, pushed back by weather)

July

Mow Mon/Wed/Fri
Aerate & Drag Cores
Verticut if necessary

August

Mow Mon/Wed/Fri
Aerate with Slitter Tines

September

Mow Mon/Wed/Fri
Aerate with Slitter Tines

October

Mow Tue & Thur
Irrigate to prevent frost

November

Mow if needed
Irrigate to prevent frost through playoffs ■

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GIE+EXPO Workshops

Thursday, October 28

Session A, 10:00-11:30 a.m.
(Will be repeated in session C)
**"Adding Hardscape Installation to Your Company's Success"
Pat McCrindle, MW Hardscapes, Inc.

Session B, 3:00-5:00 p.m.
"Xtreme Service = Xtreme Profits"
Ed Laflamme, The Harvest Group

Friday, October 29

Session C, 10:00-11:30 a.m.
(A repeat of Session A)
**"Adding Hardscape Installation to Your Company's Success"
Pat McCrindle, MW Hardscapes, Inc.

Session D, 3:00-5:00 p.m.
"Growing Revenues in a Crowded/Price-Driven Market"
Kevin Kehoe, Three Point Group, Inc.

Saturday, October 30

Session E, 9:00-11:00 a.m.
"27 Tips to Making Some Sales RIGHT NOW!"
Marty Grunder, Marty Grunder, Inc.

* As a bonus for signing up for Session A or C, you can attend - FREE - a series of eight live demos about hardscape installation and applications on Thursday and Friday afternoons.

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Continued from page 10

our marching band but did not realize it. Our band was more successful than our football team. As the youngest of four, I was left with most of the chores that nobody wanted to do and had been mowing the yard for about 6 years by then. I still did not know what I was planning to do with my life but I enjoyed sailing, playing basketball, and playing trumpet.”

MIKE ANDRESEN, CSFM, Iowa State University

In 1985 I was employed as a Grounds Supervisor for Des Moines Area Community College. At the time the college was in an extensive building phase and my job was to implement the new master landscape plan. We also had some simple recreation athletic fields and our crew was charged with maintaining them.

A couple years before the college allowed me to attend a PGMS conference in Chicago where I met an early group of STMA members and founders. I was blown away with their openness and willingness to engage a young guy that didn't know a field drag from a mower! Though it seemed impossible to even imagine it happening, 1985 was about the time I set a clear goal to get into this profession. It's a cliché but it's true: "If you can dream it, you can do it."

BOB CURRY, President of Covermaster

In 1985, the year before we joined STMA, we were introducing a new lightweight tarp for the sports field market. Even though this new material was half the weight of traditional tarps it was a new concept; we were having some success but the old theory SHOW ME was taking time.

By getting involved with STMA we had the opportunity to reach the market, the actual people who dealt with the tarps and prove our concept. Nowadays the majority of sports fields use lightweight covers and it is satisfying to know those early efforts played a role in what you see today on TV.

DR. A. J. POWELL, JR., University of Kentucky

In 1985 I was in my 16th of 41 years working for University Extension in the tran-

sition climatic zone of the US. Most turf-grass educational programs and publications before 1985 were related to golf course and home lawn management. Sports turf concerns were mainly limited to professional game fields and university football game fields. High School and Parks & Rec fields were pretty much ignored. A transition period occurred around 1985 where we became much more concerned about safe and aesthetic sports turf and realized that it all started at the high school level.

It is hard to believe now, but before 1985 we had very few game fields with automatic irrigation. We had no sports turf contractors for construction and maintenance for high school fields; fields were constructed with a road grader or small bulldozer, without laser technology. Most fields were seeded with Kentucky 31 tall fescue or traffic-intolerant Kentucky bluegrass. Sprigging or seeding with a winter hardy bermudagrass was only a dream. Farm fertilizers and farm herbicides were the norm. Core aerifiers and reel mowers were very scarce on high school and Parks & Rec fields.

The transition from these inexpensive, mediocre fields to our outstanding show-fields of today is a tribute to research and development of better products and equipment, and certainly to magazines like SportsTurf that promoted the best in product purchasing and maintenance practices. This transition was greatly complicated by increased traffic imposed by the introduction of soccer and girls sports in the late 80's and early 90's, and also by the increasingly restrictive land resources for field construction. This increased the necessity for quality research and educational programs through universities, private associations like STMA and magazines like SportsTurf, all inexpensive methods of getting out the word. Thank you, SportsTurf magazine.

STEVE WIGHTMAN, Qualcomm Stadium

Wow! 1985 was a long time ago! I'm at that age now when I can remember things that happened 25 years ago but not things that happened this morning. Of course, those things that I remember 25 years ago have now expanded into memories that have

been stretched, grown and expanded into more significant and extraordinary happenings and experiences than what was reality at the time. And another thing, I had hair and it was blonde 25 years ago!

Twenty five years ago I was in my 10th year as Head Groundskeeper at Mile High Stadium in Denver. The Broncos were becoming the force to beat in the AFC-Western Division led by Head Coach Dan Reeves along with a potent offense that included John Elway, Sammy Winder and Steve Watson. However, the defense, dubbed the Orange Crush, was the team's foundation that most opponents found difficult to score against.

On November 17, 1985 the Broncos were host to the San Diego Chargers on a day that brought 18 inches of snow to the Mile High City. It was a very long weekend that was spent entirely at the stadium plowing snow and repainting lines in Bronco orange paint. Denver won 30-24 in OT.

In 1985 Mile High Stadium was also home to the Denver Zephyrs Triple A baseball team that kept my summer busy with baseball and the Bruce Springsteen concert. Then came August and September, with baseball and football sharing the same space and making it very difficult to have a quality playing surface for either team...some of you know what that's like!

1985 I was also busy with STMA. As President, I spent a great deal of time attending Board meetings and helping plan how STMA could better serve its members. The Association became incorporated and we established the first official office in a small complex in Upland, CA with the late Dr. Kent Kurtz as Executive Director. At the national conference STMA presented Tony Burnett, Groundskeeper at RFK Stadium, with the "Lawn Ranger Award" (later renamed the "Harry C. Gill Memorial Award").

Twenty five years seems like a long time ago. My sons were 8 and 5, I weighed much less and the days seemed to go by more slowly then. 1985 brings back many fond memories, both personally and professionally. My experiences were gratifying—challenging, yet gratifying. ■

STMA Northwest Regional Conference features top sports turf professionals

SEATTLE HOSTED some sports turf VIPs July 21-22 as the Sports Turf Managers Association partnered with the Intermountain, Northern California, Oregon, and Pacific Northwest chapters to produce an STMA Northwest Regional Conference that featured sports turf specific education, a trade show, hands-on demonstrations, and tours of some of the city's major league facilities.

The sponsors handed out Seattle Mariner tickets to the more than 175 attendees who enjoyed a beautiful evening at the ballpark while watching the home team beat the Chicago White Sox in extra innings. Attendees earlier that day had walked on the field (outside the lines of course!) while meeting with head groundskeeper Bob Christofferson and his crew during a tour of Safeco Field.

Another highlight was a drop-in visit from new Seahawks coach Pete Carroll during the group's visit to the Virginia Mason Athletic Center, the team's practice facility and office in Renton. Carroll snuck up on an unsuspecting Seahawk fields & grounds manager Sean Vanos as he was leading a tour of the cool site on the shores of huge Lake Washington and told the crowd how much he and his team appreciate the turf care.

On another stop the group visited and lunched at Starfire Sports, a non-profit soccer complex in Tukwila, which was most impressive. The facility is open 24/7 and sees action from Major League Soccer's Seattle Sounders and every other level imaginable. Here the group had a chance to meet with vendors and their number included several nationally known sports turf advocates, including Lynda Wightman of Hunter Industries, Boyd Montgomery of Toro, Christiaan Arends of Barenbrug USA, Jay Warnick of World Class and Charlie Vestal of Turface Athletics.

Starfire also allowed some painting demonstrations on one of their synthetic surfaces. Scott MacVicar from the University of Washington painted some logos while John Wright from the Seahawks and some of his guys showed how to remove those logos from the carpet.

This regional event featured two other nationally recognized bigwigs in sports turf, Dr. Dave Minner from Ames, IA and Dr. Andy McNitt from State College, PA. Minner held court on repairing high traffic areas and presided over a lively give and take panel discussion on natural turf, while McNitt led the group covering synthetic turf issues.

The event included a chance to get on the FieldTurf at Qwest Field and see some of the equipment the crew led by Jason Kingrey use on a surface that now serves as home of the MLS Sounders as well as the 12th Man-led Seahawks. Kingrey also presented on converting his field from synthetic to natural back to synthetic in a matter of days.

STMA's 22nd Annual Conference & Exhibition will be in Austin, TX January 11-15, 2011. For information see www.stma.org ■



Above: **SCOTT MACVICAR**, Grounds Supervisor for University of Washington Athletics, demonstrates how to paint a logo on synthetic turf.



Above Left: **DR. DAVE MINNER** has put a lot of traffic on fields in preparing his talks on repairing high traffic areas of fields. Above Right: **SEAHAWKS COACH PETE CARROLL** surprised turfman Sean Vanos (right) during a tour of the team's training facility.

Innovative Awards deadline is October 1

THE DEADLINE for STMA's new Innovative Awards Program, October 1, is approaching. This program will recognize those member companies that have a product, piece of equipment, a service or technology that advances the profession. Specifically, entries will be judged on how well the effectiveness of the sports turf manager is enhanced or if the play-

ing surface is made safer or more playable. The STMA Awards Committee will judge the entries and the winners will be announced during the opening of the STMA Exhibition Thursday, January 13, 2011 in Austin. For a complete description of the program and to access the on-line form, go to STMA's home page, www.STMA.org. ■

Terry Mellor Grant to be presented by SAFE, Turface Again this Year

A GAIN THIS YEAR the SAFE Foundation, STMA's philanthropic arm, will award the Terry Mellor Continuing Education Grant, sponsored by Turface Athletics. This \$1,000 grant is intended to fund a portion of the winner's attendance at the STMA Conference in January. In addition to the \$1,000 grant, STMA will provide a complimentary conference registration to the winner, and the winner will be recognized at the Association's annual Awards Banquet.

The deadline to apply for the Terry Mellor

Continuing Education Grant is November 15. All members of an STMA affiliated chapter are eligible to win, and must be nominated through a letter of recommendation by a National STMA Member. Last year's winner, Eddie Atherton of the City of Owensboro, KY was selected from a highly qualified and very active pool of applicants for his "outstanding dedication, efficiency and attitude." Atherton was also featured in the February 2010 issue of this magazine.

The STMA Scholarship Committee, who

judges the SAFE Scholarship winners each year, will be involved in the selection of this grant's winner. Go to www.stma.org/professionalism/schol to download the form. The form includes the criteria for eligibility and guidance for writing your nomination. If you have any questions about the SAFE Terry Mellor Continuing Education Grant, sponsored by Turface Athletics, please contact STMA headquarters at 800.323.3875 or STMAinfo@stma.org. ■

Ask a CSFM ► Jeff Salmond, CSFM, Athletic Turf Manager, University of Oklahoma

Benefits of certification verified

Editor's note: This is the third 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?

Salmond: I got together all my turfgrass and soils books and notes from college and just began going through them as a refresher. I acquired a few pesticide books and studied from books in the library. I also used the CSFM exam guidelines, competencies and practice exam that are online on the STMA website. Discussing the exam with other CSFMs along with a seminar at the Annual Conference was very helpful.

How did you approach your employer to support your certification, both financially and in the time needed to prepare for the exam?

Salmond: My employer understood the professional-

ism of the certification process and supportive in my advancement to pursue certification. A lot of the preparation for the exam took place in the evening hours away from work. Since I decided to take the exam at the STMA Annual Conference, there was a little more time to prepare for the exam over Christmas during a less hectic work schedule. My employer now is very supportive in maintaining certification and having a CSFM on staff.

Why did you decide to pursue certification?

Salmond: I received a graduate degree, but was not in my nature to pursue an academia career. Becoming a CSFM at the time was fairly new, but was a personal and professional goal of mine if I wanted to get to that next

step in the industry. Becoming certified was a great way for me to advance what I had learned in my schooling and use that education along with my past work experiences to help invoke professionalism across our industry and in the daily workplace.

How has certification helped your career?

Salmond: Attaining certification has helped get me to where I am today. Employers are now more familiarized with the CSFM and use certification as a preferred requirement when hiring. With having to maintain certification, it has allowed me to stay active in learning new things each and every day, staying current with the industry through CEUs and ISPs and helping me serve with the STMA. ■