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Membership Category:

- Sports Turf Manager \$110
 Sports Turf Manager Associate* (Additional member(s) from the same facility) \$75

Please select the primary facility type where you are employed:

- Professional Sports Higher Education Schools K-12 Parks and Recreation

- Academic \$95
 Student (verification of enrollment) \$25
 Commercial \$295
 Commercial Associate* (Additional member(s) from the same commercial company) \$75

- Affiliate (Person who is indirectly or on a part-time basis, involved in the maintenance/management of sports fields) \$50

- Chapter Dues (contact headquarters for amount)
Chapter name: _____ \$ _____

- Contribution To SAFE Foundation (research, education and scholarship): \$ _____

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*There must already be a national sports turf manager from your facility or commercial member from your company before you may sign up in the Associate category.

"I know I am a better sports turf manager because of this association. As sports turf managers, we take the challenge seriously to make our fields the best possible for the next game. The resources I have access to through STMA helps me do it."

— Bob Campbell, CSFM
Higher Education
Membership Segment

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www.STMA.org

Benefits of certification verified

Editor's note: This is another installment 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?

Brewer: I prepared for the exam by going over the competencies posted online. I reviewed all of the information on the lists. With my education and experience I felt pretty comfortable with most of the information. There was stuff I wasn't sure about, and stuff I just didn't know or remember (sorry, professors!). I spent a majority of my study time on these topics reviewing different books, online resources, and old class notes. The couple of months leading up to the test, which I took at the national conference, are pretty laid back here in Burlington... not much to do outside when it is 0° with snow on the ground so I had time to review all of the information. When I showed up for the test I was a little nervous, but confident in my studies!

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

Brewer: My employer was supportive in

my certification. It was no problem for me to spend work time studying (remember... 0° and snow). If he didn't agree with the time spent for certification at least I was using the time to sharpen my mind and further my knowledge. Financially my employer paid for my trip to Orlando and my full conference registration, I paid for the certification myself. A fair trade I believe.

Why did you decide to pursue certification?

Brewer: I decided to pursue certification to show my dedication to professionalism and continuing education. I wanted to show that I am serious about my career. I wanted to challenge myself by taking the test and proving to myself that I could pass it. I also wanted to do something that will hopefully bring me more opportunities in the future.

How has certification helped your career?

Brewer: At this point I don't know if my career has been boosted by my certifica-



tion. I don't make a lot more money, haven't gotten "the" job, people don't salute me when I walk into a room, and nobody is asking me harder questions. I know that the value of my certification is there, I wouldn't have gotten it if I didn't think so. It will take time for more employers to recognize the benefits of having a certified manager, but don't worry there are a lot of employers that are already seeing the light. ■

STMA Affiliated Chapters Contact Information

Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona:
Chris Walsh cwalsh@scottsdaleaz.gov

Colorado Sports Turf Managers Association:
www.cstma.org

Florida #1 Chapter (South): 305-235-5101
(Bruce Bates) or Tom Curran CTomSell@aol.com

Florida #2 Chapter (North): 850/580-4026,
John Mascaro, john@turf-tec.com

Florida #3 Chapter (Central): 407-518-2347,
Scott Grace, scott@sundome.org

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: www.ILSTMA.org

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 Park and Sports Turf Managers Association: www.mpstma.org

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.sfmanj.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: www.oregonsportsturfmanagers.org oregonstma@gmail.com

Ozarks STMA: www.ozarksstma.org

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

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www.STMA.org—same address, new look & utility

STMA has launched its new website.

Visit it at www.STMA.org and check out its new features. The home page photos rotate, STMA News is encapsulated into short headlines, which are links to more information, and an RSS feed brings you topical industry news. Everything is accessible from the drop down tabs at the top of the page—the left navigation feature has been

removed for a cleaner, less cluttered look and greater utility.

The STMA members' only-section continues to expand. To access this and your very important membership benefit, TGIF, you simply put in your username and password in the member log in box on the home page. Click log-in and you will be taken to your individual home page,

where you'll find messages specific to you.

The new site will allow us to offer greater interactivity and multi-media. After conference, you will find videos of a dozen educational sessions from conference and short clips from our speakers on topical issues. The site will continue to expand and provide more relevant information. Check back often! ■

STMA Important dates

October 15 is the deadline for submitting applications for many of STMA's programs. To find each specific application and its criteria, go on line at www.STMA.org

Oct. 5	STMA online Conference Registration Opens
Oct. 15	Gary Vanden Berg Internship Application Due* Field of the Year Application Due Student Scholarship Application Due Minor League Baseball Sports Turf Manager of the Year Application Due Terry Mellor Educational Grant Application Due Founders' Awards Application Due Innovative Award Application Due

Dec. 15	Last Day for Early Bird Discount Conference Rates
Dec. 20	STMA Election Ballots & Bylaws Vote Due
Jan. 10-14, 2012	STMA Annual Conference & Exhibition, Long Beach, CA

*This is a new educational grant for students. This \$1,000 grant was created to honor Gary Vanden Berg, CSFM for his commitment to providing excellent internship experiences for many students throughout the years and for developing the 'gold standard' of internship practices. ■

Members to Vote on New Retired Category

STMA voting members will have the opportunity to approve an amendment to the Bylaws that creates a Retired Category of membership. The amendment will be included as part of the election process that will be conducted in late November.

In 2010, the STMA Membership Committee was charged by the Board of Directors to develop a category of membership for those who retire, yet still wish to remain involved in the association. The Board wants to insure that STMA has a viable category of membership to keep our retired members engaged.

The Membership Committee completed its work in early 2011, and it made its recommendation to the Board at its spring board meeting. The recommendation includes two qualifications for eligibility in this category: 1) the person must be retired and no longer seeking full-time employment within the scope of activities of any STMA membership category; and 2) must have been a member for 5 years.

The board agrees with this concept and

in the spring of this year asked the Bylaws Committee to draft language for this category that includes these criteria.

The Bylaws Committee completed its work and at the summer board meeting the Board approved the following language, which will be presented to the membership for approval:

Category X – Retired: Person who is retired and no longer seeking full-time employment within the scope of activities of any STMA membership category, and who has been a member of STMA for five years, may become a non-voting member of STMA and is not eligible to hold elective office.

If this amendment passes, the new Bylaws will be active January 1, 2012.

As the Bylaws Committee finalized the language, it determined that some questions may arise regarding this category. To keep from constricting the Bylaws, they subsequently developed a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to better clarify this category. SOPs are internal documents that

can be amended by the Board and do not require a vote of the membership. The Board has approved the SOP.

The Retired Category SOP further explains eligibility and sets this categories' membership fee:

- The Retired category is meant to be inclusive.
 - To be eligible, the person must not be employed in a full-time position, which is defined as 30 hours per week or more.
 - The five years does not need to be consecutive. A person is eligible if they had a break in membership, but their years of membership add up to five years or more.
 - A person does not have to be a current member to take advantage of this category. If they let their membership lapse, and then retire, but meet the requirements of a retired member, they are eligible to renew membership in this category.
 - Age does not play a role in this category.
- Dues shall be \$50 annually. ■

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CHECK THE REEL FIRST

Before doing any grinding, Sides advises that you thoroughly clean the reel and cylinder. Next, always check to make sure the reel and roller bearings are good and reel has proper end play.

"It's virtually impossible to get a good, consistent grind if there are worn bearings," he said. "Save yourself the headache and check these before wasting time at the grinder."

You should also look for a "coned" reel by using a pi-tape or other measuring device to check circumference. An uneven reel can affect cut quality as well as lead to contact with the bed knife. If you find a coned reel, Sides recommends following the directions for your specific grinding equipment to get the reel back to true.

MAINTAIN PROPER CLEARANCE

"Easily the most overlooked, but key component of reel maintenance is to make sure bedknife clearances are maintained," Sides said. A couple of minutes spent ensuring the reel blades are not coming into contact with the bedknife can save hours of grinding time down the road.

"We definitely promote daily clearance checks," Sides said. "As a rule, you want between one-thousandth to two-thousandths clearance between the bed knife and reel blades. Avoid metal-to-metal contact, as that quickly wears down a reel." Pulling a reel, mounting it in the grinder and replacing the unit can take up to an hour per reel. Daily clearance checks take just a few minutes and can help extend reel life and save shop time by extending the duration between spin grinds.

DON'T OVERLOOK THE RELIEF ANGLE

When you do have to grind, Sides says, don't overlook the relief angle. "There are two distinct schools of thought on grinding," he said. "Those that spin grind only and those that relief grind in addition to spin grinding. I recommend everyone maintain the relief angle throughout the life of the reel."

The relief is key to keeping the reels and the tractor working the most effi-

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1 What is your company's primary business? (check ONLY ONE)

- F Sports Complex G Athletic Field and/or Park Architect/Designer
T School, College or University P Park
H Other (please specify) _____

2 Which of the following best describes your title? (check ONLY ONE)

- A EXECUTIVE/ADMINISTRATOR — President, Owner, Partner, Director, General Manager, Chairman of the Board, Purchasing Agent, Athletic Director
B MANAGER/SUPERINTENDENT — Superintendent, Landscape/Ground Maintenance Manager, Foreman, Supervisor
C GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL — Government Commissioner, Agent, Other Government Official
D SPECIALIST — Architect, Designer, Consultant, Agronomist, Horticulturist, Certified Specialist
F COACH E Other (please specify) _____

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Y Yes N No

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ciently. "Without the relief angle, you potentially increase drag on the reels or increase the likelihood of metal-to-metal contact," Sides said. "This puts more strain on the entire tractor and generates more heat in the hydraulic or electrical systems."

In addition to adding wear to the unit as a whole, this additional strain can also start to have a negative impact on fuel economy.

"Drag, wear and heat are minimized with a relief angle and proper bedknife clearances," Sides said.

The proper angles for reels can generally be found in manufacturer's manuals.

How often to grind is another question Sides is frequently asked. While there

is no hard and fast rule, this is a major factor that a lot of folks overlook.

"How often and how heavy you topdress will dictate how often you'll need to grind," he said. "The more sand that goes down, the more frequently you'll have to grind."

One way to extend reel life and still aggressively topdress is to make sure the sand gets worked in well before mowing. Brushing or dragging will help keep the sand down at the root level where it belongs and not up eroding the reels on your mowers.

LAY OUT A GRINDING SCHEDULE

Finally, Sides recommends setting up a

grinding schedule. This will help ensure that units get taken care of regularly as well as allow turf managers to plan enough time to get the job done.

"Too often, we see reels get overlooked because there's just no time to grind," Sides said.

This schedule should be flexible, however, to deal with changing conditions. For example, a change in the topdressing program should lead to a review of the grinding schedule.

"Most people go too long between grinds," Sides said. "Having an established timeline helps keep reels in optimum mowing condition." ■

Q&A



BY DR. DAVID MINNER

Professor, Iowa State University

Questions?

Send them to
David Minner at
Iowa State University, 106 Horti-
culture Hall,
Ames, IA 50011
or email
dminner@iastate.edu.

Or, send your
question to
Grady Miller at
North Carolina State University,
Box 7620, Raleigh, NC
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What's an inch of sand worth?

Our high school is considering a new synthetic field vs. renovating our existing native soil field. We have cost estimates for the synthetic field but I don't think we can afford it. My athletic director wants me to put together some cost estimates and performance criteria for improving a natural grass field. They are unhappy with the worn out grass and muddy games that we have been having over the past few years. We have native soil and irrigation but no real sub-surface drainage. The crown is still there but years of wear have made the middle of the field and sidelines puddle with only slight rain. Can you give me some general guidelines and estimates for various sand-type systems and the performance we should expect?

The recent wave of synthetic fields constructed at the high school level have certainly inspired natural grass field suppliers to develop better fields at a lower cost. I'll work my way from the most expensive to the least expensive and give a few comments on maintenance and expected field performance. A newly installed synthetic field ranges from \$600,000 to \$1 million with a typical annual maintenance cost of \$5,000 to \$22,000. They can be built in 30 to 90 days and immediately ready for play as soon as the glue is dry and the infill is placed.

Next is the sand-based field at \$400,000 to \$600,000. This is similar to a USGA putting green construction containing a 4-inch gravel drainage blanket and 12-inch sand rootzone. Anticipate an internal drainage rate of 10 inches

per hour and no puddles on the field a half hour after the rain has stopped. The cost of sand and trucking is a significant part of any sand-type field. We found that reducing the sand depth still provided satisfactory drainage and substantially reduced the overall cost of field construction.

Next is the sand-cap field at \$200,000 to \$300,000 which uses a 4-6 inch pad of sand placed directly on topsoil fitted with drains on 15-20 foot centers. A wide gradation of sand, with particles distributed across a range of sizes, containing 90% sand/10% silt+clay, is important to optimize stability and drainage.

North Scott High School in Eldridge, IA has a 12-inch sand-based soccer field and a 4-inch sand-cap football field; both are maintained for 15 to 17 cents per square foot. Sand-cap fields can be built in 20 to 40 days. The North Scott field was seeded on May 1 and completely ready for play by the end of August. From my perspective the 12-inch sand-based fields and the 4-6 inch sand-cap fields provide the same level of performance, playability, and required management inputs. The 12-inch sand-base may be more appropriate for professional and college fields where some forced air systems, maximum drainage, synthetic stabilization, and possible use of 2-inch thick-cut-sod may be used. Anticipate an internal drainage rate of 5 inches per hour and no puddles on the field a half hour after rain has stopped.

Athletic field and golf course turf has been topdressed for years to build up a layer of sand over na-

tive soil. Michigan State University's turfgrass team of Kowalewski, Crum, and Rogers have solidified this concept with the Spartan Cap system, \$60,000 to \$100,000, that does not require excavation or the field being taken out of play. This built-up sand-capped system uses drain lines placed on 20-foot centers or less, followed by aggressive sand topdressing. The goal is to apply 2 inches of sand topdressing in 2 years by topdressing in the off season, i.e. May through August for football. Use aeration methods that do not mix the existing field soil with the sand topdressing layer.

Some of you already have an inch or more of accumulated sand on your fields but have never installed drain tiles. Simply put in the drains, backfilled with sand or gravel, and continue to topdress with sand to develop the 2-inch Spartan Cap System. Anticipate the field to absorb a half inch rain without puddles on the field and expect the field to be ready for play after a rain in half the time compared to a native soil field without a built-up sand cap. Once the cap has reached 2 inches or more this should eliminate muddy games, but my advice is to continue with topdressing until you achieve a 4-inch depth so you can have a larger drainage reservoir and to facilitate use of a 4-inch hollow tine aeration.

Necessity is the mother of invention and thanks to a push from the synthetic industry the creative use of sand on athletic fields has developed several low cost and effective renovation techniques for grass fields. ■



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