

agreed to sponsor me, and the fact that I didn't need a stipend or tuition paid for probably helped that decision.

During my first fall in East Lansing, I met Paula Manderfield. She was a district judge, and we were married within 2 years. We then had three children, with the last two being twins that required my wife to be on bed rest for the last 5 months of the pregnancy. So, I was caring for her and our 18-month-old daughter. Then, about a year after the twins were born, she decided to run for circuit court, in which she came in first against two incumbents and a sitting state representative. I had never been in a big campaign like that, but think goodness she had. It was a great experience, and I think my 2 years I'd worked as a roadie really helped our drive and perseverance.

So, all along I'm taking a course each semester and putting out treatments all summer and fall. Vargas's grad student ahead of me, Rob Golembiewski, now with Bayer, was in the process of documenting the first instances of dollar spot resistance to DMI fungicides and how to manage it. I helped him finish up and then started a study to try and determine how long it would take for the same resistance to develop in a virgin sward, so to speak.

After 5 years of spraying Banner at 4x rates four times a year, I did see enough of a shift that my committee approved me going forward with writing my thesis. After awhile my wife said she was tired of hearing about it and that I should either get the thing done or forget about it. With that blessing, I focused on my writing and often slept in my office when I was on a roll.

Looking back at the qualifying written and oral exams, and especially at the oral defense of the thesis, I think that getting through the process, particularly for a terminal degree, is a form of intellectual hazing. At any rate, I finally got my Ph D in 2007, and 6 months later I doubt if more than a handful of people in my department even knew what I had done it on. At any rate, I had finally joined the club, so to speak, at 59 years of age and I'm glad I persevered.

**ST: What accomplishments in your career make you the most proud?**

**Gilstrap:** My first answer has to do with the successes of my students both on and off the field. Back in 1993, there were only a handful of people in sports turf that I knew had formal turf educations. So I began my quest of putting more of them into and onto the field. By the early 2000s, I was making the claim that MSU had more graduates in the industry than all the other states' programs combined. While this is no longer the case since nearly all the other turf programs have and have had at least some sports turf students, I will say that MSU still has the most out there.

Also, I volunteered to be the director of our dual degree program with four Chinese universities. I took it from its inception in 2003 through graduating its first class in 2008. It was our university president's idea and she chose turf to be the guinea pig. It's still going on and has more than 400 grads, some of which are actually working on golf courses in China.

Finally, I'm still continuing to research the bermudagrass that was brought to MSU by W. J. Beal as part of the nation's first turfgrass research in the 1880s. It's now spread throughout the campus and looks

quite good where it's mowed regularly and fertilized. The cultivar has been documented in the scientific literature as being the most cold tolerant. Through DNA fingerprinting, I've discovered that it is a clone. This means it has the potential to be patented, and I'm working toward securing the funding to do that.

**ST: Do you have any major career disappointments?**

**Gilstrap:** Sure I do, and not being able to recruit and graduate more students tops the list. My incoming class sizes ranged from eighteen to six. My graduating class size ranged from twelve to five. I had greater attrition with the larger groups because I wasn't giving all of them the attention they needed. With the smaller classes, I did my best to make sure none of them fell by the wayside. Also, I regret not leaving a program big enough that it necessitates its own coordinator, instead of the shared model it's going to.

**ST: Is there something you wish you had done that you did not?**

**Gilstrap:** I know I should have published more, but I was lazy in this regard since it didn't count much in my year-end evaluations because I didn't have a research appointment.

**ST: What are your plans in retirement?**

**Gilstrap:** First, of all I'm not retiring! My kids are 16, 14, and 14. So, how can I? Instead, I'm moving to a 9-month appointment with my primary duties being the teaching of an online course entitled World of Turf, which I designed and developed it for non-turf students across the campus. Enrollment numbers have grown remarkably since I shifted the format to an entirely online offering. In fact I have 300 students taking the course this spring.

**ST: What about the program's future?**

**Gilstrap:** Coordination of the sports turf program will transition to Dr. Trey Rogers, who has been in charge of the highly successful 2-year golf turf management program since the late eighties. Dr. Rogers has been a leader in sports turf research having pioneered and perfected the portable field concept. He has assured me and wants all of our graduates to be secure in knowing that the two programs will remain separate, and that the only change that may take place is that the commercial turf part of the program's name may be dropped, since the primary interest of its students lately has indeed been on the sports side.

**ST: What's the greatest challenge facing the STMA as an organization?**

**Gilstrap:** In my opinion, the STMA is conspicuously incomplete or it's fractured at best. This is because the MLB and the NFL have their own distinctly separate meetings, and for this reason many of them don't attend the STMA conference and consequently, some of them are no longer members, if they ever were. You don't hear about the superintendents who host PGA Tour events going off and meeting by themselves instead of attending the Golf Industry Show. So, until the STMA can figure out how to get as many of the elite practitioners as possible to participate, the organization can't be truly representative of the profession. ■

# KOBS FIELD, MCLANE BASEBALL STADIUM,

*Michigan State University, East Lansing*



● **Level of Submission:** College  
● **Category of Submission:** Baseball  
● **Sports Turf Managers:** Jared Knoodle, CSFM and Amy Fouty, CSFM  
● **Title:** **Jared:** Groundskeeper; **Amy:** Athletic Turf Manager  
● **Education:** **Jared:** BS in turfgrass management; **Amy:** 2-year degree, turfgrass management  
● **Experience:** **Jared:** I have worked in the sports turf industry since 2006. As a student at MSU I worked 3 of 4 years on campus on athletic fields at MSU. I was involved in the renovations of the baseball, softball, and soccer field while I was a student. As a student I went on an internship working for the San Francisco Giants. I was hired full time the next year and I spent 3 seasons as an assistant groundskeeper. I then spent a summer at Comerica Park working for the Detroit Tigers as a member on the grounds crew. Currently I have been working back at MSU as a Groundskeeper

1 since January 2012. I manage the daily operations of the Old College Field Complex on campus.

**Amy:** I have been a sports turf manager for 15 years: 5 years at the University of Michigan in charge of daily field operations for football and soccer, and 10 years at Michigan State in charge of athletic field management and field construction for the athletic department.

● **Staff:** We do not have staff that is just dedicated to the field. Jared is a seasonal groundskeeper who handles daily operations at our Old College field complex from March 1 through November 31. We have another seasonal staff person who assists Jared on baseball softball, soccer, and general grounds during that same time frame 40 hours per week as well, Marc Novicki. His responsibilities center on the soccer and grounds portion of the complex; Jared primarily handles softball and baseball.

Each year we have two sports turf management interns from our turfgrass management program at

MSU. This year Tom Ellis, 2 year turf, and Evan Rogers, 4 year turf, worked with Jared and Marc from March 1 through November 31 at the complex part time during the school year and 40 hours a week during the summer. In addition to this staff we have two student-athletes who work part time in the summer at the complex. These are typically baseball, softball, track, or soccer student-athletes. We have staff scheduled 258 days a year for the Old College field complex.

● **Original construction:** The site of Kobs Field was originally purchased by Michigan State's Board of Agriculture in 1900 for \$1,137.50. Kobs Field was dedicated in 1969 to John Herman Kobs, who served as head coach at Michigan State for 39 seasons (1925-63).

● **Turfgrass variety:** Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, annual bluegrass.

● **Rootzone composition:** Sandy loam native soil; 75% sand.





## Equipment List

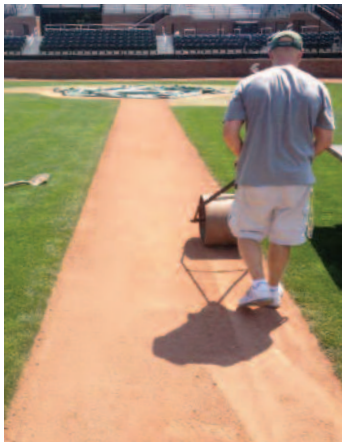
- Toro Workman
- Harper Field vacuum
- Toro Multi-pro 1200 sprayer
- John Deer Tractor 4300
- Toro Sand Pro (marketing agreement demo)

- Honda Rotary push mower
- Toro 3500-D Sidewinder (marketing agreement demo)
- Toro Greensmaster walk behind (bought used)
- Toro Procore 648 (borrow from golf course)
- Toro Procore 864 (demo)
- Ty-Crop topdresser drop style
- Tow behind drum roller

- Walking roller
- Gandy drop spreader
- Anderson broadcast spreader
- Field striper
- Edger
- Hand tools
- Two Bow Dry water removers



# Kobs Field, McLane Baseball Stadium



## WHY STMA SHOULD CONSIDER YOUR FIELD A WINNER?

**Fouty:** I cannot express how proud I am each day to work with an outstanding turf staff who has taken the lead in proper communication with coaches, staff, and players to create a “team” working environment for the success of the field as well as the team. In addition to this, the time, effort, and care taken each day by the staff and students to make Kobs Field the best in the Big Ten, makes me proud to be a part of our operation and help these young folks learn their trade for future success. We have continually strived to be the best with limited resources and staff and have the support and understand of our administration and baseball team during the 4 seasons of the year we experience during the Big Ten baseball season.

**Knoodle:** I feel that Kobs Field should be considered Field of the Year because of the progress we have made in the playing surface. As a student I was a part of the initial renovation and now 6 years later I lead the daily operations on the field. Although we do not have a full time staff even a quarter of a Major League Baseball facility I feel we manage the field and teach our interns, students, coaches, and players the same techniques used in order to give them the look and feel of playing on a Major League Baseball field. That being said, it takes a great deal of communication on behalf of myself, crew members and coaches to discuss the proper technique and daily tasks that need to be completed in order to keep the field playing at its very best.

With many games finishing and almost every practice taking place after work hours, it is very important that players help us by tarping the mound and home plate, dragging the infield and base paths. We hold a “groundskeeper hour” where I train the players and coaches on the way we like to maintain the field. Another reason I feel we should all be considered a winner is the extra time we take to pay attention to the “little things” that many spectators and players do not see but expect to be completed. We pack holes with clay everyday in the season, we nail drag and drag every single day, bases are cleaned after every game, dugouts are cleaned everyday, bullpen turf areas are cleaned everyday. These are just a few of the things we take great pride in. The main reason I feel we should be considered a winner is we bring a big league playing surface to college athletics with minimal staff.

**SportsTurf:** What channels of communication do you use to reach coaches, administrators, and users of your facility? Any tips for communicating well?

**Fouty:** Communication has been a critical piece to the puzzle for the success we have shared in the field’s operations area. One of my communication

strategies is always, communicate early and often. I try to always plan for challenges and discuss them with those around me to come up with acceptable solutions prior to the problem. With a small staff and limited resources, organization in key to getting the job done professionally. There is so much technology with smart phones, computers, etc. Communication is fast and easy, my office is always on my hip.

**ST:** What are your specific responsibilities?

**Fouty:** Our area is responsible for maintaining all the outdoor athletic fields for the Athletic Department here at MSU. This includes a grass practice football field, an artificial practice football field, a stadium football field, a practice soccer field, a soccer game field, a softball field, and a baseball stadium. In addition to this we maintain the hitting and pitching building, indoor practice football facility, and various general grounds and landscaping in and around these areas. I am also involved in projects as assigned related to outdoor facilities which could be anything from field renovation, concert preparation and planning, to stadium maintenance projects.

**Knoodle:** I manage the day to day operations of the Old College Field Complex on campus which include a practice and game soccer field, softball field and baseball field. We also maintain all the general use turf areas and landscaping inside the complex.

**ST:** What tasks do you find most enjoyable?

**Fouty:** I enjoy the opportunity to work on a variety of projects and mentor staff and students whether they are turf students or student-athletes.

**Knoodle:** The most enjoyable part to me is being outside and being able to work with my hands and using teamwork with staff to perform and complete a task. I also enjoy being at MSU with a great turf program, allowing me to teach new turf students while they are in school.

**ST:** What task is your least favorite and why?

**Fouty:** My least favorite task would be all the paper work. I am not much of an office person.

**Knoodle:** My least favorite part or task is telling coaches and players due to weather the game will have to be canceled. We do not have many of these issues but whenever they come up it is a challenge to make everyone understand the safety of the player is always number 1 and the playability of the field is very important as well. Sometimes Mother Nature wins.

**ST:** How did you get your start in turf management? What was your first job?

**Fouty:** I have always loved sports and being outside. I began my career at a golf course taking care of clubhouse grounds 22 years ago. I worked on the golf side for 8 years and attended Michigan State University earning a Turfgrass Management degree in 1996. As time went on, I was given the opportunity to take care of the daily operations for football and soccer field management at the University of Michigan for 5 seasons. The ultimate opportunity to return to my alma mater came in December of 2003 when I was offered the Athletic Turf Manager position at Michigan State University for the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics. I have been here 10 seasons and take great pride and pleasure doing what I love for MSU. I became CSFM in 2004.

**Knoodle:** I have worked in the sports turf Industry since 2005. As a student at MSU I worked for 3-4 years on the athletic fields. I was involved in

*Continued on page 49*



▲ **2014 STMA Board of Directors L to R:** Jeff Salmond, CSFM; Jeffrey Fowler; Phil McQuade; Tim Van Loo, CSFM; Sarah Martin, CSFM; Andrew Gossel; Mike Tarantino, CSFM; James Graff; President David Pinsonneault, CSFM, CPRP; Bradley Jakubowski; Immediate Past President James Michael Goatley, Jr., PhD; President-Elect Allen Johnson, CSFM; and Doug Schattinger.

## Meet the 2014 STMA Board of Directors

The 2014 Board of Directors took office January 23 during the STMA Annual Meeting, which was held in conjunction with the association's annual conference in San Antonio. STMA's new President, David Pinsonneault, CSFM, CPRP made two appointments, as required by the bylaws, as his first official duty of the office.

### Elected to the board were:

President, David Pinsonneault, CSFM, CPRP, Town of Lexington, MA  
 President-Elect, Allen Johnson, CSFM, Green Bay Packers, Green Bay, WI  
 Immediate Past President, James Michael Goatley, Jr., PhD, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, Vice President Commercial, James Graff, Graff's Turf Farms, Ft. Morgan, CO  
 Secretary/Treasurer, Jeff Salmond, CSFM, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK  
 Director representing Higher Education, Tim Van Loo, CSFM, Iowa State University, Ames, IA  
 Director representing Parks & Recreation, Sarah Martin, CSFM, City of Phoenix, AZ  
 Director representing the Academic category, Jeffrey Fowler, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Franklin, PA  
 Elected-at-Large Director, Bradley Jakubowski, Doane College, Crete, NE

### The Directors who are fulfilling their second year of their terms are:

Professional facilities category, Phil McQuade, Kroenke Sports Enterprise/Colorado Rockies, Commerce City, CO  
 Schools K-12 Andrew Gossel, Covenant Christian High School, Indianapolis, IN

### Those appointed to the Board include:

Appointed Director At-Large Mike Tarantino, CSFM, Poway Unified School District, Poway, CA  
 Commercial Director Doug Schattinger, Pioneer Manufacturing, Cleveland, OH

Officers serve one year terms; Directors serve 2-year terms. STMA conducts its annual elections electronically in late November.

## STMA'S Silver Anniversary Conference experiences record international growth

The Sports Turf Managers Association, 2,600 members strong, hosted the 25th annual Conference & Exhibition in San Antonio Tex. with nearly 1,600 attendees and 164 exhibitors from eight countries. The crowd included sports turf managers, academics, and other industry professionals from across the globe converging on a sometimes-icy but never boring San Antonio to celebrate the profession.

The 5-day event featured seminars, lectures, general sessions and exhibits from sports turf and environmental science leaders in 11 conference tracts: agronomic, construction / renovation, facility management, industry developments, pest control, professional development, safety, synthetic and water.

"Our annual Conference brings heightened awareness to the sports turf profession and the individuals who provide safe playing surfaces for millions of athletes every day," says **David Pinsonneault, CSFM, CPRP**, newly elected STMA President and Public Grounds Superintendent for the Town of Lexington, MA. "We hope the educational experiences and best practices shared throughout the week will be implemented in communities across the nation to enhance safety and quality in sports fields."

The Foundation for Safer Athletic Fields (SAFE), STMA's charitable foundation, raised more than \$30,000 during the conference through its Jan. 21 golf tournament at The Republic Golf Club; Jan. 22 "Casino Night" with close to 70 players; and silent and live auctions throughout the week. Proceeds benefit educational programs, scholarships and grants with the goal of enriching communities through safe, sustainable sports and recreation fields for all athletes. The golf hole in one sponsor was Carolina Green.

STMA Conference sponsors included Arysta LifeScience; Barenbrug USA; Covermaster; Diamond Pro; Hunter Industries; John Deere; Toro; and World Class Athletic Surfaces. A big thank you to all sponsors for their continued supported of the association and sports turf managers nationwide.

Next year's event will be held in Denver, January 13-16, 2015. Additional future sites include San Diego (2016); Orlando (2017) and Fort Worth, TX (2018).

### Founders Award winners

Friday night's Awards Banquet was topped off with a presentation of the industry's most prestigious awards, STMA's Founders Awards, with a special guest: one of the founders, Dick Ericson, was on hand to say a few words about his time with a growing STMA and to co-present the award with last year's winner, Amy Fouty. Honored were: Dick Ericson Award – **Rich Watson**, Pine Hill Schools in New Jersey; George Toma "Golden Rake" Award – **Matt Tobin**, Pioneer Athletics; Dr. William H. Daniel Award – **Brad Fresenburg, PhD**, University



▲ **Conference attendees** enjoying renewed acquaintances. L to R: Tom Burns, Diamond Pro; Dale Getz, CSFM, Toro, and Amy Fouty, CSFM, athletic turf manager at Michigan State.

of Missouri; and Harry C. Gill Memorial Award – **Willis “Bucky” Trotter**, Sports Facilities Insights, LLC.

### Dr. Rick Rigsby, keynote speaker

Dr. Rick Rigsby officially kicked off the conference in the opening General Session with a rousing, impactful speech about the virtue in pushing past the superficiality that can sometimes be prevalent in our “social media-focused” society. His talk was entitled “Making an Impact: Being the Best You Can Be” and he did make his own impact on all who were present and lucky enough to hear him speak. He celebrated the “behind-the-scenes” folks who make a difference, which sports turf managers do every day, and encouraged listeners to always make a mark in their own unique ways. Dr. Rigsby graciously remained after the talk to speak to attendees, shake hands and answer questions about his own remarkable journey.

### Education

Education began on Tuesday with 2.5 hour Academy sessions and finished on Friday. Attendees were introduced to brand new technology in “New Trends and Technology in Sports Turf” and Amy Fouty, CSFM’s “Using Soil Moisture & Temperature Sensors as a Part of an Integrated Approach to Managing Athletic Fields.” Pest control sessions such as “Insect Control Update for Sports Fields – Current & Future Programs” presented by Dr. David Shetlar and “Managing Sports Fields without Conventional Pesticides” by Dr. Eric Lyons, gave the latest updates on Integrated Pest Management programs and what to expect for the upcoming year. Many sessions were

standing room-only, as attendees wanted tips and advice from some of the nation’s top professionals. In addition to a first class line-up of educational topics on sports field management, professional development sessions were also on the program to provide attendees education on personal improvement as well as improving workplace relationships and communication. Tim VanLoo, CSFM and Joel Rieker addressed relationships between different generations in “Bridging the Generation Gap in the Turf Industry.” Jerry Balistreri instructed attendees on how to read non-verbal communication in “Reading the Tells – Learning How to Read Body Language.” Other topical areas such as construction/renovation, synthetic fields, water, safety, agronomy, and facility management were covered as different tracks to meet the needs of sports turf managers across the country. STMA thanks the speakers that were able to share their knowledge and experiences to continue to help shape and grow the professionalism of the sports turf industry.

### Congratulations, Indiana Chapter!

During the Chapter Officers Training session (COTS), the Indiana Chapter was formally (re)installed. The previous incarnation of the Indiana chapter folded in 2005 with less than 10 members. In 2013, it completed all of the processes to re-establish and now boasts a remarkable 127 members. Congratulations, Indiana Chapter!

### President’s Award for Leadership

STMA Past-President Dr. Mike Goatley presented the 2013 President’s Award for Leadership at Friday’s Awards Banquet. In his remarks before announcing his selection, he said “This year’s President’s Award for Leadership recipient was the first Certified Sports Field Builder, and he will also proudly tell you that he is a CSFM. He is asked by folks like me on a very regular basis to contribute both professionally and financially to educational programs, field days, conferences etc. and he has always shared his experiences and his support over and over again. He regularly gives of his time and finances in support of numerous projects at all levels, but particularly goes above and beyond for lower budgeted high school and parks and rec facilities in what he delivers. I constantly cite him as a

resource when I am consulting with sports field managers when I tell them that this man certainly has a service or products that he would like to sell you, but he will not try to sell you anything. He has filled in the gaps for me far too many times to mention as a tremendous resource with vast experience in construction, renovation, and maintenance.

“Although I did not know it until I met him in 2008, this man also turns out to be a Hokie alum, even touting a football career at VT (although I don’t see his name on any of the flags flying above Lane Stadium).

It is my honor and privilege to recognize **Chad Price, CSFM, CFB**, of Carolina Green Inc. as this year’s recipient of the STMA President’s Award for Leadership.”

### Student Challenge

Congratulations to all STMA Student Challenge participants for their exceptional performance on the 2014 exam, conducted at conference! The Student Challenge is presented by SAFE and founding partner Hunter Industries. Ten 2-year teams and 21 4-year teams competed for \$4,000 awards in each division.

2-year Competition: First place, **Mt. San Antonio College, Team 202**; second place, Kirkwood Community College, Team 201; third place tie, Kirkwood Community College, Team 204 and Mt. San Antonio College, Team 209.

4-year Competition: First place, **University of Maryland, Team 410**; second place, Virginia Tech University, Team 412; third place (tie), Purdue University, Team 419 and Colorado State University, Team 402.

The funds provided by SAFE are meant to benefit the turfgrass science programs at the winner’s schools. Use of the awards can include creating an Athletic Sports Field learning lab, purchasing athletic sports field specific equipment and products, or other items or projects approved by the STMA Student Challenge Committee. Funds are required to be spent before the next year’s STMA annual conference.

### Grant & scholarship winners

All grants and scholarships were presented at the Awards Banquet, which took place this year in the Lone Star Ballroom of the San Antonio Grand Hyatt.



**Zachary Avers** of The Ohio State University was the winner of the 2013 Gary Vanden Berg Internship Grant. Avers interned at Emirates Stadium in London for the Arsenal Football Club.

**Don Scholl, CSFM**, superintendent of parks, sports fields & trees for the city of Tracy, CA won The Terry Mellor Continuing Education Grant, sponsored by Turface Athletics. This grant funds an STMA affiliated chapter member's attendance to the Conference and honors the importance of continuing education that Terry strongly supported his entire life.

SAFE's top scholarship in a 2-year program is named after Fred Grau, the first turfgrass extension specialist in the US. This year's Fred Grau winner was **Danielle Booth** from Mt. San Antonio College.

The SAFE undergraduate winner from a 4-year institution was **Evan Fowler**. He attends The Pennsylvania State University and, as the top scorer, received the James R. Watson Undergraduate SAFE scholarship sponsored by the Toro Company. Additional winners of SAFE undergraduate scholarships include **Josh Alleman** from Michigan State

University; **Josh Lenz**, from Iowa State University; and **oel Rieker**, from Iowa State University.

There were three graduate winners of SAFE scholarships: the top scorer was **Chase Straw** from the University of Georgia. He won the Watson Graduate SAFE Scholarship, sponsored by The Toro Company. The other SAFE graduate winners were **Kyle Dickson**, from the University of Tennessee and **Kevin Hansen**, from Iowa State University.

As a tribute to the Dr. Watson, Master of Ceremonies Tim Moore had everyone who ever received a Watson Scholarship stand to be recognized. Dr. Watson, a long-time agronomist at Toro, passed away in late 2013. The James R. Watson Scholarship program was established in 1998 in his honor.

Since 1989, STMA has hosted its annual convention at major cities across the U.S. including Daytona Beach, Fla. in 2013. Next year's event will be held in Denver, Colo. Jan. 13-16, 2015. Additional future sites include San Diego, Calif. (2016); Orlando, Fla. (2017) and Fort Worth, Tex. (2018). ■



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**Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona:** www.azstma.org

**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:**  
http://imstma.blogspot.com/

**Indiana -** Contact Clayton Dame, Clayton-dame@hotmail.com or Brian Bornino, bornino@purdue.edu or Contact Joey Stevenson, jstevenson@indyindians.com

**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.

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

**MO-KAN Sports Turf Managers Association:** www.mokanstma.com.

**Nebraska Sports Turf Managers Association:** sphillips4@unlnotes.unl.edu

**New England STMA (NESTMA):** www.nestma.org.

**Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey:** www.sfanj.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.

**Oklahoma Chapter STMA:** 405-744-5729;  
Contact: Dr. Justin Moss okstma@gmail.com

**Oregon STMA Chapter:**  
www.oregonsportsturfmanagers.org  
oregonstma@gmail.com

**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.sc-stma.org.

**Tennessee Valley Sports Turf Managers Association (TVSTMA):** www.tvstma.com.

**Texas Sports Turf Managers Association:** www.txstma.org

**Virginia Sports Turf Managers Association:** www.vstma.org.

**Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association:** www.wstma.org.

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the renovation of the baseball, softball, and soccer complex while I was a student. As a student I also went on an internship in San Francisco working for the Giants. I was hired full time the next year and I spent 3 seasons as an assistant groundskeeper for the Giants. I then spent a summer at Comerica Park working for the Detroit Tigers as a member of the grounds crew and returned to MSU to be the groundskeeper for baseball, softball, and soccer in 2012. I just became a CSFM in January 2014.

**ST:** What practices do you use to keep your infield skin in peak condition?

**Fouty:** We feel it is key to start with a good base, which we add plenty of conditioner preseason and nail drag, mat drag, roll, repeat a couple times. We then add conditioner as needed throughout the season. We try to keep it about 70% calcined clay, 30% vitrified clay for a great surface. Whenever we have an event i.e., practice, game, or camp we nail drag, mat drag and water first thing in the morning, and depending on time we may mat drag and water again right before the event. After the event we nail drag to again to get all the clear marks and get us back

to level as best we can, followed again by mat drag and water. We also leaf rake edges after every event and broom every other and completely blow out edges with water two times a year. Usually right after the MSU baseball season and right before the fall ball season starts.

**ST:** What changes if any are you considering or implementing for the winning field in 2014?

**Fouty:** We are always striving to get a more consistent playing surface and we will continue to try new things if we think we can save some time or become more efficient in the way we manage and implement our management practices

**ST:** How do you see the Sports Turf Manager's job changing in the future?

**Fouty:** The job has, and will continue to, become more scientific and more professional. I would like to think that there will be a return to natural grass playing surfaces as field management gets better and construction of fields continues to get better. ■



## Getting rid of your ryegrass overseed

*Can you tell me more about getting rid of my ryegrass overseed? My fields will be used this spring but I have a break in play at the beginning of summer. What is good to use to get overseed out quick once play has stopped (May)? Why do we not use natural transition anymore?*

*North Carolina*

It is still cold outside as I write this but it is a great time to be thinking about the health of your bermudagrass. Often when overseeded ryegrass looks so good in the spring, people cannot believe that we want to kill it to “make room” for the bermudagrass. Many turf users do not understand the complex relationship between the overseed grass and the base bermudagrass.

There was a time when overseeding consisted mostly of dumping huge quantities of annual ryegrass seed onto our bermudagrass fields. Back then overseed grasses were primarily coarse-textured, forage-based annual ryegrasses that had to be planted at high seeding rates so that competition for space would provide a finer texture turf. The combination of more immature plants and poor genetics (for turf use) resulted in a plant more susceptible to heat and disease. The result was often a quick dying stand of ryegrass. Then turf managers started using more resilient perennial ryegrasses for the better color and texture. Despite the name, perennial ryegrass was still managed as an annual.

With increased popularity of overseeding, plant breeders put great effort into developing darker, finer-textured grasses that were more heat and drought tolerant. It did not take long before perennial ryegrasses used for overseeding were not so susceptible to temperature and diseases and they began hanging around longer and longer into the summer, particularly in the transition zone. But for an overseed grass, we still

want it to perform like an annual, not a perennial.

Traditional cultural practices used to facilitate transition include reduced mowing height, increased fertility, verticutting, and topdressing with sand. These can help put stress on the ryegrass that can help facilitate transition, but they still may not be enough. So, it is now more common to use selective herbicides as a transition aid.

When I was still a faculty member in Florida, the late Dr. A.J. Powell told me that in the northern reaches of the transition zone, there is no such thing as natural transition from overseeded perennial ryegrass to bermudagrass. He said that no amount of nitrogen fertilization, verticutting, scalping, etc., would ever kill the ryegrasses. Over the past 8 years in North Carolina, I have experienced the truth in his comments many times.

In the upper transition zone, ideal bermudagrass-growing weather only last for about three months (June, July, and August) and any competition greatly shortens that period. So to maintain a healthy stand of bermudagrass, we must either omit overseeding or chemically remove the ryegrass in spring or early summer.

Various herbicides and plant growth regulators (PGRs) have been tried through the years to try to hasten transition. Several chemicals are currently on the market for reducing perennial ryegrass with no adverse effect on bermudagrass color or overall turfgrass quality. The products currently include Certainty, Katana, Kerb, Manor/MSM, Monument, Revolver, and TranXit. All of these products except for Kerb belong to the sulfonylurea family of herbicides. Kerb is by far the slowest-acting product of the group and Manor/MSM the next slowest.

While the products for transition have gotten better over the past 10 years, they are still not foolproof.

Depending on where you are located and timing of your events, most managers apply a product between mid-April (e.g., Florida) and mid-May (upper transition zone). Repeat applications may be necessary for complete control. The sulfonylureas are rate and temperature sensitive. So, higher-labeled rates and warmer temperatures (>65 degrees) will result in faster perennial ryegrass removal.

So even with selective herbicides, temperature is still a dominant factor facilitating transition, since it is responsible for the increased effects from the herbicides, natural decline of cool-season grasses, and the green-up of dormant warm-season grasses. One should never forget that for a smooth transition, we need the bermudagrass to green up before the ryegrass goes away.

This is important since once these products are applied, there is no undoing their damage to the cool-season grass. So, if your early spring turns out to be a late winter, then you can be left with thin bermudagrass (or worse, no bermudagrass) until it gets warm. Response from the sulfonylureas is usually seen within 14 to 21 days. It should also be noted that these products are not very effective at removing healthy annual ryegrass.

Naturally, there is an economic cost to using these products versus more natural methods. In the end, decision to use these products may depend on your location. In more southern areas, cultural practices typically result in a smooth transition. If you feel that the transition is taking too long, or you have too many “renegade” plants, you could apply a sulfonylurea product for late-season transition. If you are further north and have limited time to grow in your dormant bermudagrass, then one of these products can effectively reduce perennial ryegrass density with no adverse effect on bermudagrass. ■

**BY DR. GRADY MILLER**

Professor, North Carolina State University

### Questions?

Send them to Grady Miller at North Carolina State University, Box 7620, Raleigh, NC 27695-7620, or email [grady\\_miller@ncsu.edu](mailto:grady_miller@ncsu.edu)

Or, send your question to David Minner at Iowa State University, 106 Horticulture Hall, Ames, IA 50011 or email [dminner@iastate.edu](mailto:dminner@iastate.edu).