

# FROM THE PUBLISHER



**B**efore we started to publish *sportsTURF*, many people questioned the need for such a publication. "Who will read it?" "Why are you starting it?" and "Is it necessary?" were among the questions asked. Each time I answered, I grew even more excited about what we were doing. I will try to answer each question as simply and succinctly as I can, in hopes you will share some of that excitement. After all, this magazine is for you.

First, *sportsTURF* is a trade journal that addresses the entire sports and institutional market. Our reason for publishing is to stimulate and inform our readers with vital knowledge that translates into added success.

The landscape, turf and irrigation industry has grown over the years to a \$17-billion-a-year market. For some time now I have felt that no one publication could serve all the needs of such a diverse readership. Building a golf course or a baseball field differs substantially from constructing a lush landscape environment for an industrial park or condominium complex. Maintaining the grounds of these complexes is quite different from managing golf courses or sports stadiums. Billions of dollars are spent annually on golf courses, sports stadiums, university and college grounds and parks and recreational areas. Why should the professional manager of such projects be a stepchild and read only periodically in other trade publications about what he or she does daily?

*sportsTURF* magazine was conceived to be the voice of this segment of the industry, addressing the needs of the sports turf professional—not just once in a while but on a full-time basis.

Was it necessary? You bet! We have received more inquiries from *sportsTURF* than any other startup we've had. Many of the professional football and baseball clubs have paid for subscriptions to *sportsTURF*. Some major golf course companies have done the same. Even the Little League in Williamsport, PA, has sent in for a subscription. These, of course, are just a few of the many thousands who have subscribed. The reader response to our advertisers and to our product news section is another indication that these professionals are thirsting for fresh information.

As we enter a new year, we also enter a new era. We can no longer afford to do business the way we did only five years ago. New chemical formulations, new seed varieties and new equipment continually appear on the market. Keeping the professional manager informed is our job.

One area that will have to be addressed in the near future is how to make the most of our precious natural resource—water. Everyone would rather play on a lush, green golf course than on one that is dry and browned out. The television media will not accept brown turf when televising a ball game. Even selecting a house of higher learning for your child is favorably affected by a neat, green turf.

So water plays a key role. Against this background we are all painfully aware of the water shortages that plague various parts of this country. Solid state controllers coupled with computers allow accurate timing, and new sprinkler heads give better coverage. We must have water to keep our plant material healthy and green—but do we have to use or even waste as much as we do? When water was readily available, the old philosophy of "if a little is good, a lot is better" worked. Professional managers now have to learn to conserve water and still have playable courses and fields.

This problem and many others will be addressed in the ensuing months. Our job is to help educate and inform. That is why *sportsTURF* will be "must" reading.