

# THE FRONT OFFICE

## OPINION PAGE



### Desert Gridiron Gets Maximum Exposure

Last month in the STMA news section of *sportsTURF*, we listed the organization's award-winning athletic fields for 1992. Those honors were presented at the STMA Conference and Exhibit in Indianapolis last December. The STMA award for the year's best gridiron, however, was inadvertently left off the list in the magazine. That was our mistake, one we regret deeply.

The University of Arizona in Tucson received the 1992 STMA Football Field of the Year Award. Although Chuck Raetzman, assistant director of Operations Services Department/Facilities Management Division, actually accepted the award in Indianapolis, he is quick to credit the field's superb crew.

"It's just a team effort," he says. "I don't think you can point to any one person. Our success is the result of a combined effort of members within the grounds department."

Recognition for those often unrecognized — namely sports turf managers — is vital, both for the individuals honored and the profession itself. The individuals are acknowledged for a job well done — sometimes, that's their only significant reward. Sports turf management profits from the exposure because such awards bring the under-acknowledged profession into the public spotlight.

Case in point: The Copper Bowl was held at the University of Arizona on December 29 and televised nationally by ESPN. Moments before the opening kickoff, it was announced over the stadium's public address system that the gridiron had won the Football Field of the Year Award sponsored by the Sports Turf Managers Association.

"Apparently the crowd, about 43,000 or 44,000 people, was *listening*, and they really responded to it with a loud ovation," says Raetzman with a touch of incredulity. "It kind of surprised me."

That kind of attention and publicity is priceless, much like when NFL turf consultant George Toma is shown plying his trade on national television while high-profile commentators like John Madden praise him. Both do more good for the profession than a hundred issues of this magazine. Sports turf management excellence cannot get *enough* public exposure.

Most of the fans at the University of Arizona that day probably hadn't even considered the effort that went into the field. Most certainly had never heard of the STMA. And yet, when it was pointed out to them, they applauded and, what's more, they *appreciated* a job well-done and the professionals who did it. The public isn't blind — it just needs a nudge now and then.

Matthew Trulio

# EVENTS

## CALENDAR

### MAY

**10-12** Lecture, "Trees from the Inside Out," by Dr. Alex Shigo. Bellevue Conference Center, Bellevue, WA, (May 10) and Clackamas Community College, Portland, OR (May 12). Contact: John Kirkland (503) 254-0482.

**11-13** Lecture, "Modern Arboriculture in Practice," by Dr. Alex Shigo. Bellevue Conference Center, Bellevue, WA, (May 11) and Clackamas Community College, Portland, OR (May 13). Contact: John Kirkland (503) 254-0482.

**12** The Turfgrass Council of North Carolina (TCNC) and the North Carolina Landscape Contractors Association's "Professional Turf and Landscape Field Day." Turfgrass Field Laboratory (Field Center), North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC. Contact: TCNC (919) 695-1333.

**14** Workshop, "A Closer Look at Trees," by Dr. Alex Shigo. Clackamas Community College, Portland, OR. Contact: John Kirkland (503) 254-0482.

### JUNE

**22** Seminar, "Diagnosing Landscape Disorders." University Theater, University of California, Riverside, Riverside, CA. Contact: U.C. Seminar Coordinator, P.O. Box 1719, Wickenburg, AZ 85358 or call (602) 684-7308.

### JULY

**8** University of Georgia Turfgrass Field Day. Georgia Station, Griffin, GA. Contact: Georgia Turfgrass Association (404) 975-4123 or Extension Conference Office (912) 681-5189.

Send announcements on your events  
**two months in advance to:**  
editor, *sportsTURF* magazine,  
68-860 Perez Road, Suite J,  
Cathedral City, CA, 92234.  
Fax (619) 770-8019.