

# South Texas Chapter growing

BY LARRY RIDER

The South Texas Chapter had their October meeting at the campus of Texas A&M University. The morning sessions were held at the Turfgrass Field Lab and the afternoon sessions were conducted by Leo Goertz, head sports turf manager for the A&M campus, and Craig Potts, the assistant turf manager.

Dusty Robinson is a graduate student seeking his M.S in Agronomy—Turfgrass Management as well as being the research technician for the turfgrass field lab. He began the morning sessions explaining his research project. Dusty is working with seeded bermudagrasses, hybrid bermudagrasses, and a few zoysia-grasses. His project is comparing wear tolerances, fertility regimes, and cutting heights of the grasses as they pertain to athletic field use. His presentation gave an overview of his research and some of the more interesting observations to date on his project.

Dr. Dave Zuberer, professor of soil microbiology at Texas A&M, gave an excellent talk about microbiology as it applies to athletic field managers. His presentation included an overview about the microbiology of soil systems, the ways that athletic field managers can increase soil microbial populations, and frequently asked questions concerning soil microbes and their importance in turfgrass management.

Mark Hall, research associate and director of the Field Lab, provided information



Leo Goertz is in the red jacket and light colored pants, Craig Potts in hat, red shirt and shorts. Photo by Dr. Richard White.

about the NTEP trials that are being conducted as they relate to athletic field managers. He shared results about an overseeding study with perennial ryegrasses and *Poa trivialis*. Hall also went over the ongoing NTEP trial with seeded and hybrid bermudagrasses. The South Texas group was able to see, feel, and walk on the research plots, which provided a wonderful opportunity to compare the merits of the various grasses.

Lunch was a Bar-B-Q meal provided by two commercial members. The afternoon sessions were on the athletic fields managed by Leo Goertz and Craig Potts. Leo provided a tour of the football practice field, baseball field, and Kyle Field. He explained the annual maintenance procedures and many of the practices that are unique to Texas A&M. Craig went over the annual maintenance practices of the soccer field (which has recently received the Soccer

Field of the Year award from STMA) and the girls softball field. Craig talked about routine maintenance as well as the procedures to solve the soil and drainage problems due to the sodic water supply and native soil used for construction.

The event was well attended by a Chapter that is less than 1 year old and considered a success by all. Many thanks to Dusty Robinson, Dr. Zuberer, Mark Hall, Leo Goertz, and Craig Potts for sharing so much information. The members were able to take back helpful information that will improve their own facilities.

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