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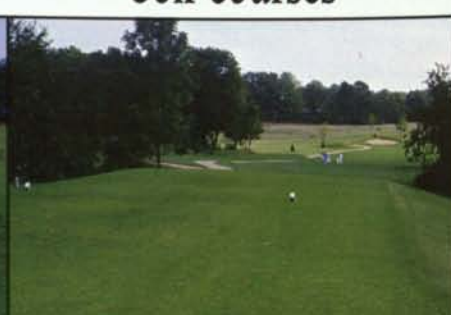
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STMA OFFICE

401 N. MICHIGAN AVE., CHICAGO, IL 60611 (312) 644-6610

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(619) 770-4370; Fax (619) 770-8019

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VOLUME TEN, NUMBER TWO

FEBRUARY 1994

MAIN EVENTS

8 REEL VERSUS ROTARY MOWERS: STRENGTHS IN DIFFERENCES

No one mower can "do it all" — there are applications to which reel mowers are better-suited than rotary mowers, and vice-versa. Making an informed choice between the two means knowing their individual strengths, as well as your own cutting needs.

14 BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL FERTILIZATION PROGRAM

A carefully design fertilizer program makes other aspects of turfgrass management easier. Still, it's critical for the fertilization schedule to be flexible enough to account for changing conditions. John Wildmon, an instructor at Lake City Community College, Lake City, FL, explains and reviews key factors that will affect your fertilization decisions.

18 SPEED SEED OUTPACES PREGERMINATION AND LIMITED PRIMING

Todd Detzel, head groundskeeper for the Laytonville Unified School District in northern California, didn't have much luck with seed pregermination or priming. Then he began experimenting. The result was "Speed Seed" pregermination, a process Detzel says makes his seeding chores faster and easier.

22 STMA FOOTBALL FIELD OF THE YEAR: GOING LONG AT FITTON FIELD

Commitment to excellence is the driving force behind the 1993 Sports Turf Managers Association Football Field of the Year — Fitton Field, the varsity gridiron of the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA. Just ask Superintendent of Grounds James D. Long who has been with the department for 35 years.

LINE-UP

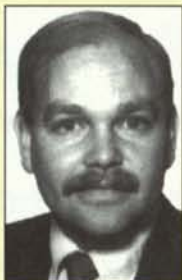
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ON THE COVER: Fitton Field at the College of Holy Cross in Worcester, MA.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Greg Petry

Believe me, being president of an organization such as STMA isn't fun or what most people perceive it to be. It's not glamorous. You just don't sit back and watch all the work get done. You also don't come up with a lot of ideas and expect them to be done at the snap of a finger. I'm constantly being bombarded with problems that take a lot of time and thought.



Don't get me wrong. I love the challenge. STMA has been a challenge worth pursuing. It's a great cause to fight for. In the words of Claude Davis in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, "The only causes worth fighting for are lost causes." STMA was a lost cause when a group of us decided to grab the bull by the horns and get the job done.

While serving as president, I find it difficult to champion a specific cause. That's what I love to do. When the odds are 100 to 1 that something can't be done, I'll work like heck to find that one way to accomplish the task.

As president, you deal with a lot of issues. At times, you're like a captain of a ship. Your responsibility is to get the boat from point A to point B safely and on schedule. You're not actually sailing the ship. That's what I love doing, actually sailing the ship. To me, being part of the "means to the end" is fulfilling.

You see, I think it's in our blood as groundskeepers to roll up our sleeves and get the job done. We love to get in the trenches and get our hands dirty.

So, I'm going to roll up my sleeves each month and send a message that—hopefully—will inspire my shipmates to work harder and smarter.

One thing that's fun about being actively involved in STMA is that you get to meet a lot of interesting people along the way. I've been able to develop life-long relationships with the people I've admired and looked up to.

As I talk with these people (and I love talking to and watching people!), I've decided one thing—the times have changed! When I talk with my old boss and mentor, Bill Neuman of the Park Ridge Park District, we often say it's not

like the good old days. The days of just taking care of the parks or sports turf areas are gone. We now spend our time managing. After all, we are now called Sports Turf Managers.

To manage and overcome our challenges, there are several things you and I need to do along the way:

1.) Know from the start of a project what you want to do and how to get the job done; do your thinking up front.

2.) Before you act, have a clear understanding of what you have to do and a plan to achieve it.

3.) Inventory your abilities: use your strengths to your advantage and act to eliminate your weaknesses.

4.) Get up and go—be a self starter and follow jobs through to completion.

5.) Take on responsibility and be willing to work hard to get the job done.

So as president, I've taken on the responsibility to keep our organization moving full steam ahead. And along the way, I hope the messages I send to you make you think, make you smarter, make you work harder and make you more effective as a sports turf manager.

STMA Chapter News

The New England Chapter: STMA — Special Reminder — The Massachusetts Turf Conference will be held February 28-March 2. NESTMA is one of the co-sponsors, along with the Massachusetts Lawngrass Association. Included in the conference will be sessions geared toward athletic field maintenance and other issues of concern to sports turf managers. NESTMA will hold both a breakfast and midday meeting in conjunction with the conference.

For information on the conference, the NESTMA breakfast and meeting, or other chapter activities contact Mary Owen, University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension System, (508) 892-0382.

STMA Florida Chapter #1 — The South Florida Chapter will hold a meeting on March 9 at Brian Piccolo Park. Included in the meeting will be a tour of the facilities and Velodrome. Mike Carrocia will host this event.

For more information on this meeting, the South Florida Chapter, and other upcoming activities contact John Mascaro, (305) 938-7477 or Ed Birch, (305) 938-0217.

Midwest Chapter: STMA — The Midwest Chapter will hold its annual meeting and luncheon on March 24 at the Schaumburg Golf Club in Schaumburg, IL. The tentative meeting time is 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The meeting will include a morning educational session, the awards luncheon, and a special keynote presentation. Further details will be announced soon.

For information on this meeting or other chapter activities call The Chapter Hotline, (708) 439-4727.

Chesapeake Chapter: STMA — January's East Coast snows forced postponement of the previously scheduled meeting to set the chapter agenda for 1994. An alternative meeting date, place, and time will be announced soon. All members are invited to take part.

One event "in the works" is a regional workshop that will be held in conjunction with the National STMA.

For information on the chapter or upcoming activities contact The Chapter Hotline, (301) 865-0667.

The Heartland Chapter: STMA — Progress continues as STMA's newest regional chapter takes shape in the Kansas City area. Those in the heartland area interested in finding out more about the chapter, and especially those willing and able to pitch in during these formative stages, are urged to contact Mark Diller, sports turf manager, Johnson County Parks and Recreation, (913) 782-7625 or Jack Schwarz, JS Sports Turf, Liberty, MO, (816) 792-2808 or (800) 344-8870.

The Southern California Chapter: STMA — For information on the Southern California Chapter and its activities contact Chris Bunnell, (619) 432-2421.

The Colorado Chapter: STMA — For information on the chapter of future activities call Joe Adams, Greeley Parks and Recreation, (303) 350-9390.

Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association — For information on the Iowa Chapter or its future activities contact Gary Peterson at (515) 791-0765.

**Sports
Turf
Managers Association**

THE FRONT OFFICE

OPINION PAGE

Aspiring Writers Need Apply



Have you ever read an article in a magazine and thought, "How pathetic. I could do better than that"?

Last month, a reader from one of the other magazines I work on called me with exactly that complaint. The article in question, he insisted, was too academic. "It looks like something out of a textbook," he said and then went on, in great detail, to tell me what he'd "like to see."

I listened closely. Criticism fosters growth, particularly in this business. You'd have to be arrogant or foolish

not to at least listen to it. This reader not only had a specific complaint, but also offered a solution.

"I'd like to see that article written," he said, "from a real-world, practical point of view." He then discussed, in point-by-point detail, both the content and structure of the hypothetical article.

His ideas were terrific, and he explained them clearly. His concept of article structure was basic but sound.

"Sounds great," I said. "When can you start working?"

Dead air filled a long, fat pause. When he broke the silence, he wanted to know what I meant by when "he" could start working. Even though he'd already written the article in his head, he couldn't yet see himself putting it to paper.

I explained to him that quite a few of our articles are written by readers, like this month's "Speed Seed" piece by Todd Detzel, who are not "professional writers" per se, but are concerned professionals with good ideas and the basic tools for expressing them in print. The fundamentals of spoken and written communication are the same, I said, and I would enjoy helping him through any rough spots. He could call me any time, day or night, with a question or an idea as he assembled his article.

By the time he hung up, I could hear the creative wheels turning in his head. I imagine he hit his typewriter or word processor running. The article isn't finished yet, but I know that regardless of structural or stylistic problems, which can be handled in editing, if he sticks to his proposal the article will be well-worth printing.

Got an idea for a feature? Call me. About the only ideas I'll shoot down, or redirect, are opinions thinly (or cleverly) disguised as topics.

In 1993 more sports turf professionals wrote for *sportsTURF* than in 1992. A number of landscape architects are now frequent contributors, a fact for which I am indeed grateful. Will a 1994 issue contain your byline or the byline of a colleague? It's your call, and I'd love to answer it.

Matthew Trulio

EVENTS

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

26 63rd Massachusetts Turfgrass Conference. Springfield Civic Center, Springfield MA. Contact: Dr. Joseph Troll, (413) 549-5295.

MARCH

2 26th Annual Professional Turf and Plant Conference. Huntington Town House, Huntington, NY. Contact: Nassau/Suffolk Landscape Gardeners Association, (516) 665-2250

4-5 American Landscape Maintenance Association 6th Annual ALMA Lawn Equipment Expo. Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Contact: ALMA, (305) 925-7966.

5-8 45th Canadian Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show. Calgary Convention Centre, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Contact: Julie Law (for the conference) and Chuck Desveaux (for the trade show) (416) 602-8873. (Effective October 4, 1993, area code becomes 905.)

10 Third Biennial Integrated Pest Management Conference. Swarthmore College, PA. Contact: Penn State Cooperative Extension, (215) 489-4315

11 Turf Management Seminar, El Cajon Community Center, El Cajon, CA. Contact: David Shaw, (619) 694-2845.

APRIL

11-12 Southeast Turfgrass Conference, Tifton, GA. Contact: (912) 386-3353



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.

Miles Inc., Adds to Research Staff



Jim Dotson has accepted the position of research product manager for turf and ornamental products at Miles, Inc. Since joining the Kansas City, MO, company Dotson has been involved in product research on several levels. Most recently, he was field R&D coordinator for Specialty Products in the north-eastern United States. Before that he worked as Miles field development representative for the state of Missouri and as a biologist and insecticide research group leader at Miles Research Park in Stillwell, KS.

In his new role, Dotson is involved in research activities involving Merit insecticide, which awaiting Environmental Protection Agency registration. He has also worked closely with other departments on label development and registration activities for Merit.

Dotson holds a master of science degree in entomology from the University of Missouri-Columbia. He earned a bachelor of science degree in zoology with a minor in agriculture from Southwest Missouri State University.

New Certification Program for Turfgrass Professionals

At a November 17 press conference, the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) announced the

availability of the new *Principles of Turfgrass Management* training course and certification program. The program, developed in conjunction with the University of Georgia, leads to the designation of Certified Turfgrass Professional. It is the first comprehensive national training course and certification program available for the lawn care industry. Structured a home-study, correspondence course, it covers 14 topics appropriate for all regions of the United States.

In addition, Georgia has become the first state to recognize the new certification program as satisfying its requirements for pesticide recertification credit. The Georgia Department of Agriculture approved the new *Principles of Turfgrass Management* course for nine hours of recertification credit (out of the 10-hour requirement over five years). Successful completion of the course (by passing two monitored exams), earns participants the designation of Certified Turfgrass Professional. □

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REEL VERSUS ROTARY MOWERS: *Strengths In Differences*

Reel mowers deliver the high-quality demanded by golf courses and other sports turf areas.
Photos courtesy: John Deere Company

By Steve and Suz Trusty

The first "lawn mowers" were grazing animals such as sheep, cattle, and rabbits. Following that, turf areas were maintained with manpower and the scythe — basically to keep grasses at "manageable" heights.

According to the booklet, "Lawns and Sports Turf History" by Beverly C. Roberts and Eliot C. Roberts (formerly with The Lawn Institute), the first patented lawn mower originated around 1830. It was a reel design, based on the spiral cutting mechanism used to shear napped fabrics in textile mills.

The first mowers were pushed by hand. Then, larger mowers were developed that were pulled by horses or donkeys, and guided by a person walking behind. Motor-driven units first appeared around the turn of the century.

Rotary mowers came on the scene around the 1930s — first as walk-behind units and later with mower decks suspended from tractors to cover larger areas.

Obviously, mowing has made major advances since those early stages.

Agronomic Perspective

It's the nature of grasses that makes mowing an option in turf control. The growing regions of grass are located immediately above the nodes and in the leaf at the base of the sheaths and at the base of a blade. Grass vegetative growth consists mostly of leaves, with little elongation of stems. The stems and growing points (buds) are concentrated near ground level. This allows the mower to cut away the tips of the leaves without stopping their growth or hindering the formation of new leaves.

Lawns, golf courses, and sport turf are produced by the cultivation of large numbers of small plants of specific grass cultivars within a small space (eight to 10 plants per square inch). These close-grown plants are then clipped to the desired height to fit the needs of turf users.

Though the growth patterns of grass make mowing possible, mowing does alter natural conditions. Each mowing removes some of the grass blade, the leaf area which is necessary for photosynthesis (photosynthesis manufactures food for

growth and other life processes). As the mower cuts the grass, it inflicts a wound, increasing the susceptibility to certain insects and disease organisms. To minimize these effects, mower blades must be sharp to deliver a clean cut, rather than tear or shred the grass blade. Also, mowing should be done frequently so that as little of the grass blade as possible is removed. The "One-Third Rule," cutting off no more than one-third of the grass blade at any one mowing, is recommended for all grass types.

Just as there's no one grass to fit all turf needs, there's no one mower right for all mowing situations. Each mower must ultimately deliver the desired cut quality at the desired turf height. No matter how impressive other features of a mower may be, if the cutting unit doesn't deliver a cut that consistently meets standards, the mower will be unacceptable.

Various grasses have different tolerance to mowing. The blades of some grasses are easier to cut cleanly than the more fibrous blades of other grasses. Creeping, stolon-producing grasses, such

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Day 1

“The Tree System Above and Below Ground”

Friday, March 11
Los Angeles
and
Monday, March 14
Santa Clara
9 a.m. to 4 p.m. both locations

Dr. Shigo will look at not only the biological workings of trees, but how the elements of whole ecosystems—trees, plants, and humans—interact with and affect each other.

Day 2

“Chemicals, Chemistry and Trees”

Saturday, March 12
Los Angeles
and
Tuesday, March 15
Santa Clara
9 a.m. to 4 p.m. both locations

Chemicals can help or harm trees, but one doesn't have to be a chemist to understand them. Dr. Shigo will examine herbicides, pesticides, fungicides, and how they work.

To reserve space call John Kirkland at (503) 254-0482

◆ Cost: \$68 per class ◆

◆ Take Day 1 and Day 2 for \$120.00 ◆

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Coming April 6 & 7

Dr. Alex Shigo and Dr. Claus Mattheck present “Tree Hazards: The Ultimate Session.”

A blending of biology and physics by these two world authorities makes this a not-to-be-missed seminar on the physical structure of trees. A truly rare opportunity. Contact John Kirkland at Tree Care Educators, 605 SE 70th Ave., Portland, OR 97215, (503) 254-0482.

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Dr. Alex L. Shigo is the world's foremost authority on trees: their structure, their health, their care. He is the author of A New Tree Biology and Modern Arboriculture, two of the most important texts in tree care today. His latest book, 100 Tree Myths, debunks many old beliefs about trees and their treatments.

Dr. Shigo spent 26 years as a plant pathologist for the U.S. Forest Service, where he was a chief scientist and leader of a pioneering project on tree decay. He is currently in private practice as a researcher, lecturer, author and consultant with his company, Shigo & Trees, Associates, based in Durham, NH.

He has a distinctive hands-on approach to the subject of tree study, urging his students to "touch trees" in order to learn. His engaging and animated teaching style has made his lectures much-sought events among those who work with trees the world over.

REGISTRATION FORM

These events are being produced by **Tree Care Educators**. Pre-registration is required. Payment can be made in full, or with a non-refundable \$25 deposit per class. If you reserve space with a deposit, the remaining payment is due to Tree Care Educators by February 28.

Complete the registration form below, and return with your check by March 4, 1994. We'll send you a confirmation and a map to the conference facility.

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Organization _____

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☐ "Chemicals, Chemistry and Trees" on March 12 (\$68.00)
☐ Both sessions (\$120.00)

Santa Clara

- ☐ "The Tree System Above and Below Ground" on March 14 (\$68.00)
☐ "Chemicals, Chemistry and Trees" on March 15 (\$68.00)
☐ Both sessions (\$120.00)

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