The test will also be offered under similar supervised conditions at STMA's annual conference in January 2000.

Applicants must pass each section of the test to achieve certification. A score of 80 percent is considered a passing grade. Individuals who do not receive a passing grade in one or more sections of the test will have to repeat these sections within the parameters outlined in the credentials booklet. Individuals who fail to pass a secmultiple times or fail to complete the testing process within the established time limitation will need to start

According to legal guidelines, any association or profession is able to certify only that an individual has met the outlined requirements for testing and has correctly answered the required exam questions. STMA will further certify that test questions were developed from competencies established by educators. professionals. and researchers within the industry. STMA will not certify such things as an individual's work ethic, job performance, judgment, or decision making aptitude.

Once individuals become certified, they can keep their status active through a certification renewal process. They will be asked to meet specific standards within a three-year cycle.

Standards will include Continuing Education Units (CEUs), as defined and accepted by national educational accreditation standards. These credits will require pre-approval and proof of participation.

The certification renewal process will require members to meet specified levels of industry service points (ISPs). These points will be earned through participation in such activities as sports field related service projects.

Contributions to the sports turf industry will also help applicants earn points toward certification. These include such activities as providing articles for newsletters, magazines, or other publications; coordinating, hosting, or speaking at chapter or green industry events; or serving as an officer, board member, or committee chair within the sports turf industry.

Specific CEU and ISP requirements will be provided in the application packet, and they'll be sent to all newly certified individuals. STMA Headquarters will serve as the hub for information on certification and the certification process.

#### When?

The updated Certification Program is scheduled for presentation at the 10th annual STMA Conference & Exhibition in Mesa, AZ, January 1999. Fine-tuning of the program was taking place as this issue was going to press. The Certification Committee anticipates that the initial call for applications will be issued during the first half of 1999.

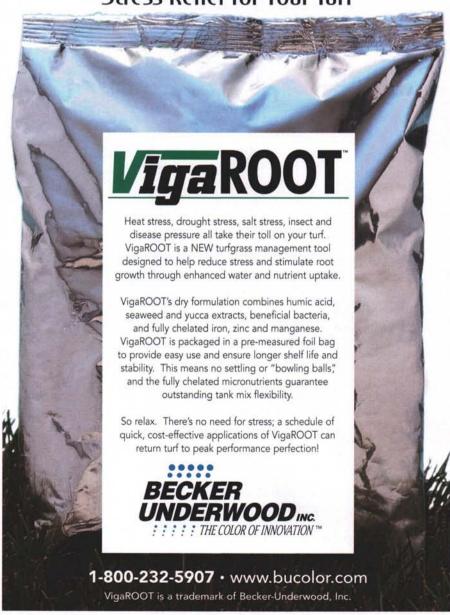
Will the program be perfect as presented? No. Will continued fine-tuning be necessary? Yes.

Sports turf management is a complex and multi-faceted profession. With continual introduction of new technology and increasing demands for field use, STMA's Certification Program will seek to reflect and be responsive to industry progress. The three-year certification renewal cycle will ensure that certified individuals remain responsive to industry progress as well.

Dale Getz and Steve Trusty co-chair STMA's Certification Committee. Getz is Athletic Facilities Manager for the University of Notre Dame. Trusty is a partner in Trusty & Associates based in Council Bluffs, IA, and he's executive director of the Sports Turf Managers Association.

### IT'S IN THE BAG!

Stress Relief for Your Turf



Circle 105 on Inquiry Card

## Surviving \*\* Winter Injury by Steve and Suz Trusty

ports turf managers across the country describe their athletic field winter survival strategy similarly: Prepare for the

worst, and monitor, monitor, moni-

El Niño turned normal weather conditions upside-down in 1997-98. The challenge continues with La Niña, and meteorologists predict a season of regional extremes in 1999.

### Prepare for the worst

Fields that enter winter in top shape have the best chance of emerging from winter stress in playable condi-Survival strategies tion. include a well-managed, yearround maintenance program, and as much fall preparation as field use schedules, weather, time, and funding allow.

Ideally, baseball and softball fields should be completely ready for play when they are put to bed for the winter. Repair lip areas and basepaths; prep batter's boxes and pitching mound areas: and where turf covers are available, blanket skinned areas prior to heavy snow cover. When basepath covers aren't in the budget, it may help to erect an upright screen of landscape-type fabric to reduce wind and storm damage.

Whenever possible, aerate turf to reduce compaction and improve water infiltration and percolation. Timing of core aeration is critical. This is especially true for uncovered fields with high exposure to winter winds because of the desiccation factor. Take into consideration existing field conditions, soil profile, turfgrass varieties and cultivars, tradiwinter and early-spring weather conditions, and reliability of long-range weather forecasts.

Topdress after core aeration to reduce desiccation around core holes. Alternative aeration methods may be

necessary to relieve late-season compaction in extremely harsh climates on fields where play starts before turf begins active growth in the spring.

Remove excess thatch prior to the onset of winter to avoid disease infestation. But be careful, too little thatch can expose turfgrass crowns to desiccation, especially in areas with multiple freeze-thaw cycles. On fields subjected to winter play or other traffic, some thatch is needed



A well-managed, year-round maintenance program will help your field survive harsh winter weather. Courtesy: Trusty & Assoc.

to cushion turfgrass crowns from

Lower mowing heights late in the season to reduce surface injury from traffic, and to reduce disease susceptibility. But again, be careful. Dropping the height of cut too early may reduce leaf surface enough to drop carbohydrate production to an unacceptable level. The height of cut and timing of height reduction depends on the turfgrasses involved, soil profile, field use, and off-season traffic.

For late-season overseeding of cool-season turf, time your program based on whether you want germination during the current season or early the following spring. Some sports turf managers make one lateseason overseeding with a mix of turfgrasses to cover both needs. Highuse, multi-sport, low- to mediummaintenance fields can be overseeded with turf-type tall fescues, perennial ryegrasses, and bluegrasses. The fescues and ryegrasses will germinate late, while bluegrass germination will follow in the spring.

Evaluate late-season turf fertility

before setting a fertilization strategy. Provide adequate phosphorus for strong root development and support of new seedlings. Adequate potash will help overall turf vigor and provide resistance to stress.

Late-season nitrogen (N) applications depend on existing levels, turf development, types of turfgrasses, type of N, and weather conditions. Cool-season turf needs a period of lower N levels to harden off, but levels must be sufficient to support fall growth and to start spring green-up.

Apply preventive fungicide for snow molds on high-profile, high-maintenance fields air movement is restricted by a stadium enclosure, snow cover, or tarping.

Moisture and temperature conditions leading into winter dictate the number and timing of applications.

Tarps protect turfgrasses from snow and ice buildup, excess moisture, extreme cold, and desiccation. They retain warmth, keeping turf growing longer into the fall and giving it an earlier start in the spring.

### Monitor, monitor, monitor

Monitor conditions throughout the winter and into the spring to guard against potential problems. Remove excess snow periodically during the winter. This is especially beneficial where accumulated snow

Continued on pg. 14

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could produce enough moisture to delay spring field use. The process will impact the field less when the ground is frozen.

Sustained periods of above-normal temperatures can combine with lack of air movement to produce excess heat beneath a tarp. This promotes inappropriate turf growth and anaerobic decomposition in the thatch layer, and it creates favorable conditions for disease.

Temporarily increase air circulation across the turf to prevent these problems. You can lift a portion of the tarp to introduce air flow beneath it, or temporarily remove the tarp if conditions are severe enough to warrant it.

Drying winds moving across open fields may combine with lack of precipitation to produce damaging

conditions. If temperatures are high enough to allow acceptable water penetration, irrigate to counteract the lack of moisture.

Check turf and soil conditions frequently as temperatures warm. If conditions are favorable for disease,



In cold-weather regions, periodic snow removal can be beneficial. Courtesy: Dave Mellor

consider alternatives to change one or more of the contributing factors. Increase air movement, reduce temperatures, or reduce moisture. If these conditions can't be changed and signs of disease are present, a preventive spray may be cost effec-

tive.

Consider overseeding these areas in spring to counteract turf loss. Match spring tarp removal to appropriate weather conditions: cool, cloudy, and still. Too much sun, heat, or wind can desiccate newly uncovered turf, especially when soil temperatures are too cool to allow roots to replace surface moisture loss. Be prepared to syringe the field lightly, but frequently, to avoid desiccation.

A competent, vigilant sports turf manager is the greatest factor in winter field survival.

Steve and Suz Trusty are partners in Trusty & Associates based in Council Bluffs, IA. Steve is executive director of the Sports Turf Managers Association.





#### FIELD PREPARATION/PRE-GAME APPLICATION

5 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. will prepare the sports turf for the stress of play, building up the root system and encouraging a strong leaf system without flush growth. Apply one to three days before play. Water in if practical.

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### Special

### Memo to All

### Sports Turf Managers

by Steve Guise

You don't need to face the world alone. There are many others within this industry who understand the commitment you make and the challenges you face.

Whether you're a one-person crew or coordinator of an extensive staff, there's someone out there who's actively involved in a program very similar to your own.

#### History

In 1981, industry leaders formed the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) to improve sports turf by sharing knowledge and exchanging

ideas. In our mission statement, we pledge "to be the leader in the sports turf industry, to enhance, promote, and improve professionalism through excellence in communication, training, research, education, and services."

In STMA's infancy, several key leaders helped direct the organization: Harry "Pops" Gill, Dr. William Daniel, Dick Ericson, and George Toma.

In 1997, STMA established Founders Awards to recognize key industry leaders in specific categories. The awards are now individually named to honor these four founders. may have encountered the very situation you are confronting now.

STMA has a strong commercial contingent as well: architects, contractors, manufacturers, researchers, and suppliers who specialize in various aspects of design, construction, renovation, and maintenance of athletic fields. These individuals have been in the trenches developing, testing, and fine-tuning products and services to make fields better.

### Chapters

The Board of Directors began recognizing chapters in 1990. Chapters



Chapter President Tim Moore addresses a MAFMO Chapter meeting at the Ravens' stadium in Baltimore. Courtesy: STMA

#### Networking

STMA provides valuable resources. Human sounding boards hear your problems and add their knowledge and experience to yours to develop sound, workable, and cost-effective solutions.

University professors, researchers, and extension personnel in the association have formulated action plans for solving problems like yours. Many of these dedicated individuals have been major advisors on field construction, renovation, and maintenance over a broad spectrum of conditions. They

form the local link for networking. They offer one-day or half-day meetings that often include on-field demonstrations and hands-on training.

Chapters develop special sports turf specific educational programs for state and regional green industry conferences. They organize and execute community service projects and donate materials, labor, and expertise for field renovations.

STMA has 12 affiliated chapters: Florida #1 (the first official chapter), Colorado, Southern California, Northern California, Great Lakes, Iowa, KAFMO (Keystone/Pennsylvania area), MAFMO (Mid-Atlantic area), Michigan, Mid-South, Midwest, and Minnesota.

Additional chapters are at various stages of organizational development across the U.S. If you're looking for a chapter in your area, please contact STMA Headquarters.

### National

The National STMA assists affiliated chapters with many services: legal review of bylaws and documents, insurance coverage for officers

> and directors and chapter events, chapter membership invoicing and collection as requested, promotion of chapter membership, and coordination of inter-chapter information exchange.

> Funding provided by chapter sponsors continues to assist developing chapters. They will provide a Chapter Officers Training and Exchange Session at the annual conference for the first time in 1999.

To encourage professionalism at all levels, the National STMA has an independent Field of the Year program for football, soccer, and softball fields. The association joins with Beam Clay and

sportsTURF in a Diamond of the Year program for baseball.

#### Education

STMA provides members a variety of educational opportunities. Membership benefits include: a monthly subscription to *sportsTURF*, a bi-monthly newsletter, a membership roster and resource guide, and an annual compendium of articles written by and for sports turf managers.

STMA's annual Conference and Exhibition continues to expand educational offerings each year. January 12-16, 2000 we'll be meeting in St. Louis, MO.

The schedule always offers plenty of choices of industryspecific seminars and interactive round-table discussions. Optional Seminar on Wheels tours provide an opportunity to see key sites and exchange field maintenance ideas and techniques.

STMA also offers financial support to promote higher education in the industry. In 1997, the association expanded its scholarship program, offering a scholarship for students of twocolleges or technical schools, undergraduates in fouryear colleges or universities, and graduate students.

In 1998, the number of scholarship awards doubled. Another scholarship is now given in the undergraduate four-year school category. Two more scholarships funded by Toro have been established in the name of Dr. Jim Watson for students in four-year or graduate programs.

All scholarship recipients receive full registration for the January con-



The STMA Board tours the Texas Rangers' field in Arlington, a possible future conference site. Courtesv: STMA

ference and up to \$500 toward travel and lodging.

### Into the new millennium

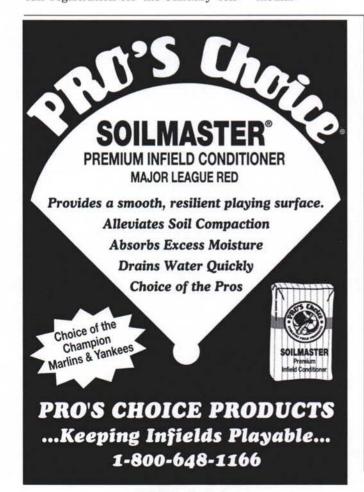
STMA and sports turf management have made great strides since 1981. We're gaining recognition from facility owners, athletic directors, field user groups, athletes, the public, and the media.

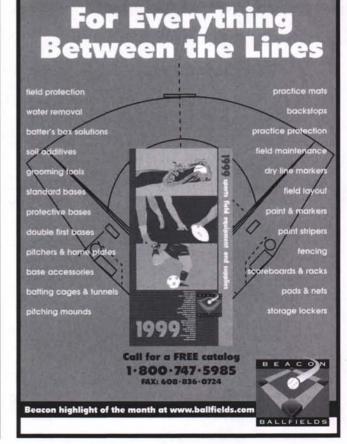
We're gaining respect for the unique combination of education and experience required to keep fields safe and playable. We're earning respect for our dedication commitment. and what George Toma calls the "and then some" factor.

As an association, we've started to fulfill our potential. It's going to be a fantastic journey, but STMA needs you if we're going to reach our full potential. All of us working together are better and stronger than any one of us working alone.

Steve Guise is president of the Sports Turf Managers Association and director of business development for Marina Landscape, Inc., Anaheim, CA.

To contact STMA Headquarters. 323-3875, e-mail: call: (800) SportsTMgr@aol.com, or visit the association's web page: www.aip.com/STMA.

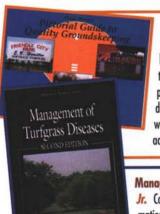




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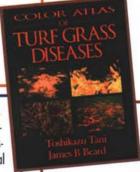
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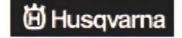
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