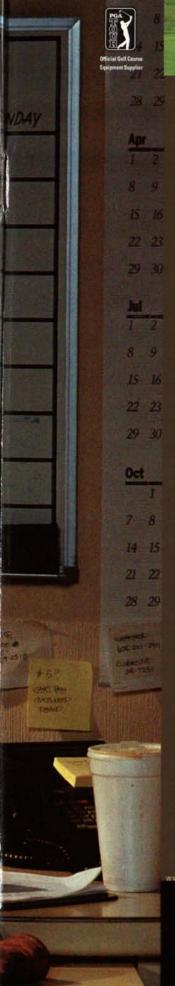
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	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
JAKE		MOVE SLATE TO CLUBHOUSE				
CAROL		SYRINGE GREENS				
JOHN		CUT CUPS	WHY I	ERASABL	е Јов В	OARDS
ROSS		MOW FAIRWAYS	GET	Erased	EVERY !	Day.
MIKE		HAVL SAND TO #12 BUNKERS				
DAVE		FILL COOLERS + WASHERS				
JOSE		TAKE PINE STRAW TO #8 TEE BOX				
DEB		MOW GREENS				
LARRY		REMOVE TREE ON #3 CART PATH				1









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**VOLUME 17, NUMBER 2** 

**FEBRUARY 2001** 

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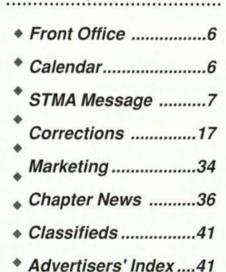
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Fans catch the action while relaxing in a hot tub at Midway Stadium, St. Paul, Minn. Photo courtesy: Connie Rudolph



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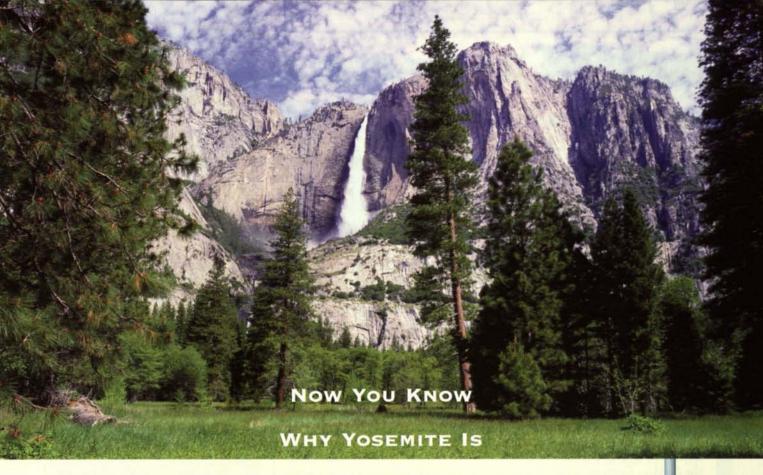
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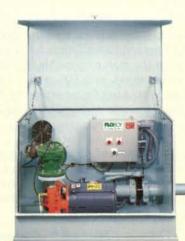
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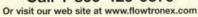
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# SportsTURF The Front Office

## Fun in the Sun

ast month, the Sports Turf Managers Association held its annual trade show and convention in Tampa, Fla., the twelfth such event in the association's history.

One common theme stressed by President Rich Moffitt was how far the association has come since its inception. From the initial session on Thursday, to the Awards Banquet on Friday, to the final luncheon on Saturday, Rich would start his speech by asking all the first time attendees to raise their hands. After surveying the scores of hands raised across the room, he would shake his head in amazement and say, "outstanding."

It was an outstanding event, made all the more wonderful by the weather. Getting on a plane in single digit weather and arriving in temperatures hovering around 70 degrees was a great way to start the trip. But it was the people in attendance that really made the week wonderful.

Including the exhibitors, there were over 1,000 attendees present at the convention. And all those first timers that Rich was amazed by? They numbered nearly 250 strong, a great indication of the growing influence of the STMA. Currently, the STMA boasts 23 chapters and more than 1,800 members.

Rich also mentioned that with each passing year, the convention becomes less and less a business trip and more of a family reunion. This being my second convention, I understand completely what he meant. I got to meet up with all the folks I met last year in St. Louis, and spend some time chatting and catching up. I spoke with last year's winner of the *sportsTURF* Manager of the Year award, Eugene Mayer; he informed me that he's a sheriff now back in Ohio. Imagine what the lawn will look like at the police station!

Speaking of the Manager of the Year award, I had the honor of presenting this year's award at the Awards Banquet. This year's recipient, Ross Kurcab, received a standing ovation and endless praise from his peers, proving how truly deserving he was of the award. A quick gem from Ross' acceptance speech: On describing his work ethic, he quoted his father, who told him, "You can either work or starve."

Besides the awards banquet, the highlight for me was meeting Eddie Seaward, the head groundsman at The All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club in Wimbledon. It was an honor to meet the man responsible for some of the most high profile sports surfaces in the world, with 600 million fans watching the tournament on television last year. Look for an article by Mr. Seaward on what it takes to manage the 34 courts of Wimbledon in an upcoming issue of *sportsTURF*.

For those of you who haven't attended a convention yet, I strongly encourage you to sign up for the event in 2002, when it will be held in Las Vegas. There's so much to learn about the profession at the sessions, workshops, and discussions, and even more to learn at the bar, in the restaurant, or, next year, in the casino. I'm already saving my quarters!

Michael Santilippo

Michael SanFilippo (847) 882-1942

# Calendar of Events 2001

February 5-9

The Ohio State University Golf Course Maintenance Short Course, Holiday Inn on the Lane, Columbus, OH. Register at (614) 292-4230. E-mail: bloetscher.1@osu.edu.

February 6

Turfgrass Advocacy 2001, Lobby Day, Legislative Office Building et al, Albany, NY. Contact: New York State Turfgrass Association (NYSTA), PO Box 612, Latham, NY 12110; (518) 783-1229/(800) 873-TURF (8873); fax (518) 783-1258; nysta@nysta.org. Web site: http://www.nysta.org.

February 20-21

Southern Illinois Grounds Maintenance School, Gateway Convention Center, One Gateway Dr., Collinsville, IL. Contact: Ron Cornwell, 200 University Park Dr., Edwardsville, IL 62025; (618) 692-9434.

February 22-23

The Ohio State University Professional Lawn Care Short Course, Holiday Inn on the Lane, Columbus, OH. Register at (614) 292-4230. E-mail: bloetscher.1@osu.edu.

February 26

Southeast Regional Conference, Holiday Inn, Suffern, NY. Contact: New York State Turfgrass Association (NYSTA), PO Box 612, Latham, NY 12110; (518) 783-1229/(800) 873-TURF (8873); fax (518) 783-1258; nysta@nysta.org. Web site: http://www.nysta.org.

February 27-March 1

Western PA Turf Conference & Trade Show, Pittsburgh Expo Mart/Radisson Hotel, 101 Mall Blvd., Monroeville, PA. Contact: R. Eric Oesterling, Westmoreland

# Calendar of Events

County Cooperative Extension, Donohoe Center, Donohoe Road, RR 12, Box 202E, Greensburg, PA 15601, (724) 837-1402, or (502) 562-1962; fax (502) 562-1970. Web site: http://expo.mow.org.

### March 8

Western Regional Conference, Radisson Inn. Buffalo, NY. State New York Contact: Turfgrass Association (NYSTA), PO Box 612, Latham, NY 12110; (518) 783-1229/(800) 873-TURF (8873); fax (518) 783-1258; nysta@nysta.org. Web site: http://www.nysta.org.

### July 20-22

Outdoor Power Equipment Institute's (OPEI) 18th annual International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo (EXPO 2001), Kentucky Exposition Center, Louisville, KY. Contact: Sellers Expositions, 550 S. 4th Ave., Louisville, KY 40202-2504; (800) 558-8767 or (502) 562-1962; fax (502) 562-1970. Web site: http://expo.mow.org.

### November 10-13

12th annual Green Industry Expo (GIE), Tampa, FL. Contact: Professional Lawn Care Association of America, 1000 Johnson Ferry Rd., NE, Suite C-135, Marietta, GA 30068-2112; (770) 973-2019; fax (770) 578-6071; info@gieonline.com. Web site: http://www.gieonline.com.

### November 13-15

Turf and Grounds Exposition, Oncenter, Syracuse, NY. Contact: New York State Turfgrass Association (NYSTA), PO Box 612, Latham, NY 12110; (518) 783-1229/(800) 873-TURF (8873); fax (518) 783-1258; nysta@nysta.org. Web http://www.nysta.org.

## STMA Message





## Our Future Has Never Been Brighter

he STMA Tampa Conference was just a few days away as I was writing this message to you. I'd just checked in with Headquarters

with my input on a few last minute conference details and for an update on the pre-conference attendance figures. After the phone call, I went back to writing and looked at the figures I'd jotted down.

Then it hit me. The number of preregistered attendees was greater than the total STMA membership numbers just five years ago. And this is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of our potential for growth.

Suppliers have recognized the sports turf industry as a strong and vital component of the green industry. They're making a concentrated effort to learn more about our unique needs and to tailor their products and services to meet those needs. It's a synergistic partnership with multiple benefits to those involved and, ultimately, to those who play on our fields.

Educators have recognized the sports turf industry as a unique sector for teaching and research, and as a viable job market for their students. They're digging into the "whys" of field maintenance issues and working together with sports turf managers to develop educational programs that address the "hows" of producing and maintaining superior athletic fields. It's another synergistic partnership with multiple benefits.

Students are entering turf and agronomic studies with an eye on the opportunities within the sports turf market. The excellence of these students pops off the pages of our scholarship applications and is proven in their job performance as they move into industry positions.

You, the sports turf managers, are the solid foundation on which all this growth is built. You're committed to excellence and will put out that extra effort George Toma calls "and then some" to provide the best possible sports surfaces for play. That dedication shines through whether your field users are million dollar professional athletes or five year olds starting their first game.

You readily share ideas to raise industry standards. You're the ones who take the time to test new products and equipment under actual use situations and provide your feedback on performance and possible improvements. You're the ones who continue to seek greater knowledge about the complex interactions between turfgrasses and soils and between field conditions and field use. You're the ones who mentor students in internships and first job situations and fan that spark of interest to a fire of commitment, and then continue to mentor as they move on to new opportunities.

Because of you, our future has never been brighter.

Tich Moffat

Rich Moffitt STMA President (314) 977-2956

# FIELD OF THE YEAR



# Midway Stadium Earns Professional Baseball Field of the Year Award

by Bob Tracinski



Some creative striping, courtesy Connie Rudolph and her staff. Photos courtesy: Connie Rudolph

ays are never dull at St. Paul, Minnesota's Midway Stadium, the STMA 2000 Professional Baseball Field of the Year. With comedian and film star Bill Murray and master promoter Mike Veeck part of the St. Paul Saints' ownership, home games are tops in entertainment, drawing nearly perpetual sellout crowds, setting attendance records for minor league play and often outdrawing Major League Baseball's Minnesota Twins.

When the norm for Head Groundskeeper, Connie Rudolph, CSFM, is sharing the maintenance area with a pig pen for the porker that carries out the game balls, why would an elephant throwing out the first pitch faze her? Sure, it is a bit unusual to have hundreds of ping pong balls pelting the field from a hovering helicopter, followed by a convergence of fans seeking the balls marked for the best prizes. And the local TV news did cover the night fans urged her to "run the stairs" just days before her fourth child was born. They only wanted to cash in on the free Arbys roast beef sandwich promised to all attendees if Rudolph "delivered" during the game (she didn't.)

Flexibility is just one of the attributes Rudolph incorporates in the field's award-winning program. She has achieved the Certified Sports Field Manager status, demonstrating her superior level of competence and her commitment to excellence in field management. She needs all those skills to meet the stadium's multiple challenges.

Rudolph says, "Midway Stadium withstands tremendous use from a variety of sources, including the St. Paul Saints minor league baseball team, senior men's baseball, Legion baseball, and the state high school baseball championship tournament, high school and college level football, a semi-professional football team, a



Concerts and other on-field events cause considerable damage to the turf.

women's football team, soccer and major national concerts. We host over 200 individual athletic contests during the season, in addition to the concerts and other special events. The short season encompassing three sports leads to a maintenance challenge."

Midway Stadium holds 6,300 guests, with 3,500 in the grandstand and 2,800 in bleachers. Saints games will draw 275,000 people over the season. For major concerts, fans also move onto the field, pushing single event attendance to 15,000.

Rudolph says, "Field scheduling is coordinated between the City of St. Paul, which owns and runs the facility, and the team, which is the main lease holder, and books the major national concerts. The season starts in April with college and high school baseball, moves into May with the Saints' spring training and exhibition games, followed in the summer by the Saints' season, and generally, the playoffs. When the baseball season ends, the area around the mound, home plate and the first and third basepath areas are resodded since the configuration of football and soccer places one sideline intersecting first and third bases. Football and soccer kick in during September and run to the first week in November when cold and snow end the season."

The regular staff includes Rudolph, Don Raway (the assistant Groundskeeper) and the equivalent of one-half of another full-time employee. Rudolph can borrow employees as needed from the building maintenance crew. This provides the flexibility to cover field maintenance from 7 a.m. until the end of an event-which could run to 11 p.m.

Rudolph notes, "One scheduling dilemma we faced included a Saints' baseball playoff game on a Thursday night, a high school football game on Friday night and two high school soccer games played on Saturday. On another occasion, we had to turn the field around for a Saints game the day after a Bob Dylan concert that had 15,000 people trampling the grass for four hours. To add to our troubles, it rained two inches overnight. We pull these sessions off through a combination of careful planning and extra help."



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Circle 103 on Inquiry Card

### Maintenance program for Midway Stadium, St. Paul, Minn.

### Maintenance Program—Playing Field

#### Fertilization:

Based on spring soil test results

Six applications per year with natural product (Roots 15-3-8) for plant nutrients, organic material and bio-stimulants

First application mid to late May at rate of 0.5

lbs. N per 1,000 square feet

Total N per year = 5 to 6 lbs.

Once per season apply a polymer-coated potash 0-0-59

Milorganite is final application of season after all field use ends

### Aeration:

Four to six times per year, alternating core, spike, slice and shatter

### Topdressing:

At least twice per year with 80/20 mix closely matching original soil profile Fill low spots as needed

Overseeding:

Spring and fall, mainly where football is played

Heavy use areas as needed

50/50 Kentucky bluegrass and perennial ryegrass blend

### Resodding:

Each fall around mound, home plate and base

Spot resod with thick-cut squares as needed during season

### Edging:

Major edging once or twice each year Light edging every three to four weeks as Edges swept daily

### Mowing:

Three times per week with reel mower at 1-

7/8-inches outfield: 1-3/4-inches infield

Pesticide Applications:

Used only as needed and then as spot treatments when possible

### Irrigation:

As needed to meet needs of turf, approximately 1 inch per week combined rainfall and irrigation during growing season Syringe as needed to reduce heat stress

### Maintenance Program Outside Grounds

Fertilization spring combined with weed control Fall fertilization

Spot spray weed control as needed around entrance

Picnic area:

Aerate and fertilize spring, apply annual ryegrass

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### Specifications

The ballpark was built in 1982. The field is 80 percent sand, 20 percent peat, with an agralime (crushed aggregate) infield. A 50/50 turf blend Kentucky of Bluegrasses and perennial ryegrass helps withstand the multiple sports and long season. The irrigation system is hydraulic with a combination Toro 640 and super 600 heads. Metal halide lights, topping 12 light towers, each 110 feet high. enable the Saints' 44 home games to be televised.

Rudolph says, "The field was built on a landfill. Soil borings taken 10 years ago revealed readable newsprint 100 feet down and a 6-foot void about 10 feet down. Left field is constantly sinking. Consequently, the drain tiles are ineffective in that area. Also, the warning track doesn't drain properly. Twice in the past 10 years we've hired a landscaping company to strip off the sod, level and grade and relay the sod.

"To cut costs and put off major renovation, we've redone small areas ourselves, cutting the sod thick, rolling it back, filling the hole and replacing the sod. With the thick cut of the sod, repairs during the day are ready for play at night. On the warning track, we contracted with another city department to add two sewer drains outside the outfield wall. We then regraded the track so the water runs to the new drains. So far, both solutions have been effective."

With no breaks between the triple-sport scheduling, it's hard for Rudolph and Raway to find windows for repairs, sod patching and such maintenance procedures as edging, aeration, overseeding and topdressing. Any opening in the schedule is