

Sports Field Management: More than Just Turf Management

by Bill Murphy

In the early 1990s, many major league baseball teams were looking for improved training sites both in Florida and Arizona. Local cities and county agencies were busy developing creative ways to keep their professional teams content in their respective areas. In 1992 Scottsdale Stadium was the new prize gem of the Cactus league with a busy year-round schedule featuring professional baseball and some small civic events.

The stadium is used for year-round professional baseball and hosted 140 game this past year. The stadium is the spring training home to the 2000 Western Division San Francisco Giants. High school and youth recreational leagues were used for 40 multiple game day dates last year. The stadium was built in 1991 as result of a bond election, and hosted 36 field special events and 68 meeting dates last year. Scottsdale Stadium has made a conscientious effort to become a multi-use venue that could provide a safe area of play, with year-round baseball, and a relaxing experience for a corporate business dinner.

The expectations in our sports turf profession have also been raised by the expansive coverage of TV sporting events, from the Super Bowl to the Little League World Series. Teams, coaches and players are looking at their home fields to be kept in that same condition, that can provide them the winning edge. We are constantly striving to have safe, reliable and resilient surfaces for our athletes and customers. Our staff has tried over the last few years to reach these goals through planned work schedules, solid communication, proper horticultural methods and a willingness to look for constant improvements.

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Help on the Web

Our division has developed an internal Web page to help plan and meet year round activities. This forward planning has helped provide a safe sport field and a well-run facility. The intranet page has detailed information on the irrigation requirements for our geographic landscape zone. We utilize daily evapo-transpiration rates and reminders to check valves and heads and visually observe the uniformity distribution of the water system. We utilize a weather station and strive to reach our annually established water allotments with the Arizona State Department of Water Resources.

With the Web page, we have developed a reference library with multiple sites from extension agents, university studies and national publications related to grounds maintenance. The information is available to all staff. We have worked with our purchasing department with procurement guidelines to develop pricing agreements for various commodities. These include both liquid and granular fertilizers, topdress materials and sod replacement.

Year-round maintenance

A standard soil test at the end of each year is an important tool to help measure the nutrient levels and deficiencies we have and begin the planning process for year round turf. The soil test can also serve as the blue print in your own maintenance program. Scottsdale Stadium is built on 18-inch USGA sand base media. The field requires an extensive nutrient program year round.

The base field turf is 419 Bermuda, annually overseeded with blend of perennial rye grass for winter and spring color. The perennial rye is grown at 1 to 1 1/2 inches for special

events and playing surface for baseball at 7/8 inches.

The 419 Bermuda grass is actively growing from June to October and cut at 3/4 inches. The turf has the ability to extend itself before dormancy well into the fall, and processes good recoverability with the heavy use we experience each year.

"Developing and following preventive maintenance schedules within your facility are essential in reducing life-cycle cost."

Year round maintenance also involves knowing your irrigation system and the water window you will have to deliver a uniform rate of water. Our stadium field has a central system developed by Motorola to monitor, track and deliver water to our Hunter heads along with flow rate sensors. The water schedule is measured in volume rather than time. We have both I-40's and I-25's throughout our field and perimeter landscape. Our staff completes a yearly water audit to perfect our overall delivery and to provide a consistent year-round water maintenance program.

Safety issues

Safety on the field and within the venue is always a high priority. Providing staff proper equipment, monthly safety meetings and professional development is a small investment in year round training. Developing a network with your local vendors and other turf professionals can help when that certain piece of equipment or protective surface is needed at your site.

Money matters

Budgets can play a vital role in our overall success as maintenance professionals. Developing and following preventive maintenance schedules within your facility are essential in reducing life-cycle cost. Budgets that are planned and prepared each year can help you gradually meet your set goals and objectives for the future. Establishing fees and charges for special events can be a very positive revenue source to your program. Securing and developing creative sponsorship and advertisement support that reaches the community can be very beneficial.

Special events can be a great challenge and very rewarding. There are lots of great events that fail due to either disregard for detail or passion for preserving precedent. Planning of our special events involves both pre- and post evaluations. Clear direction is provided to the client and communicated with staff with specific assigned areas to facilitate throughout the event day.

Field covers and guidelines must be followed; preliminary and post planning meetings are set. Finally, talk with your customer and develop surveys that can be useful tools to help you continue to improve your program. Involve your staff in all aspects so that the ownership of the facility is never lost.

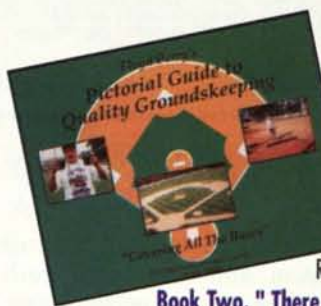
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(108 pgs.) covers Football, Soccer, Softball, Little League, Minor League, College and High School Facilities. Also covers Curbside Appeal; Tricks of the Trade, New Ideas for Easy Maintenance; Professional Research from Higher Learning Centers and much more.

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The ABC's of Grounds Maintenance: Volume II Baseball Fields,

by Ground Maintenance Services,

A videotape training series for Baseball groundskeepers. Computer graphics and detailed explanations provide unique insight and understanding of athletic field care. These videos also make great teaching tools for new, part-time & temporary field assistants. Features setting/rebuilding; homeplate area; rebuilding pitchers mound; sodding dugout walkways; application of crushed; brick; rounding infield crescent; complete infield; repair of turf; fertilizing & over-seeding; patterns; reducing infield lips; removal of dew from grass; water removal in clay areas; edging the running track. VIDEO. 55 Minutes.

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Real live ideas... from real dead people

by Rix Quinn



When I went to high school, the counselor told me if I took Physical Education classes all day, I'd never graduate. That meant I'd need to take three history courses.

Most of those semesters began with Neanderthals, a tribe so hairy they could braid their backs. By spring, we'd advance to "modern times," which meant about 1938.

I didn't pay much attention then, but I wish I had. Because we can still learn from historical figures, no matter where they are today. Like, for instance...

SOCRATES

This Greek philosopher believed that wisdom and knowledge built character. The more a person knew, the less likely he'd make a bad decision.

Socrates continually questioned his countrymen about their beliefs, suggesting they base ideas not on opinion, but on knowledge. The great man's search for truth riled some officials, who sentenced him to death by drinking hemlock.

His last question, "Is this stuff poi-

continued on page 42



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Chapters in Action

Chapter Officers Training Session Draws a Crowd

As the February issue of *sportsTURF* is being prepared for printing, Sports Turf Managers Association Chapters all across the country are springing to action.

At least thirteen of the nationally affiliated chapters and five chapters in various stages of moving toward affiliation had indicated they would have representation at the Chapter Officers Training Session (COTS) scheduled from 1 to 6 p.m. on Jan. 16, in conjunction with the STMA Annual Conference in Tampa, Fla.

COTS brings together both chapter officers and chapter committee chairs for an informal get together filled with networking and idea sharing. This open and friendly sharing of information is a great way to find out what other chapters are doing, pick up some super ideas for future chapter meetings and even bring up a problem or concern for group brainstorming.

On behalf of all the chapters and forming chapters, we issue a big THANK YOU to the year 2000 Chapter Sponsors: Gold Level—John Deere and Novartis (Newly named Syngenta) and Pro's Choice; and Silver Level—Alpine Services and Hunter Industries. Their yearlong financial support includes the funding of the COTS meeting.

In addition to COTS participation, many of the STMA chapters either have played or will be playing a significant role in sports turf management sessions, workshops or multi-day programs at state and regional turfgrass conferences.

If you're a member of an STMA chapter please make it a point to thank your leadership team for all they do. If you're one of those leaders, pass along a thank you to those who prefer to help out behind the scenes.

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Get Serious With STMA

Application for Membership



The Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) is an organization of professionals representing all segments of the sports turf industry. Our members work to combine the science of growing turfgrasses and the art of maintaining both natural and artificial athletic field materials to produce safe and aesthetically pleasing playing surfaces.

STMA provides members with a variety of benefits, including: educational opportunities; support for sports turf research; facilities tours; a national awards program certification program; job hotline; website: www.sportsturfmanager.com; access to the STMA National Conference & Exhibition; complimentary subscriptions to Sports Turf Manager and sportsTURF Magazine; and MUCH more!

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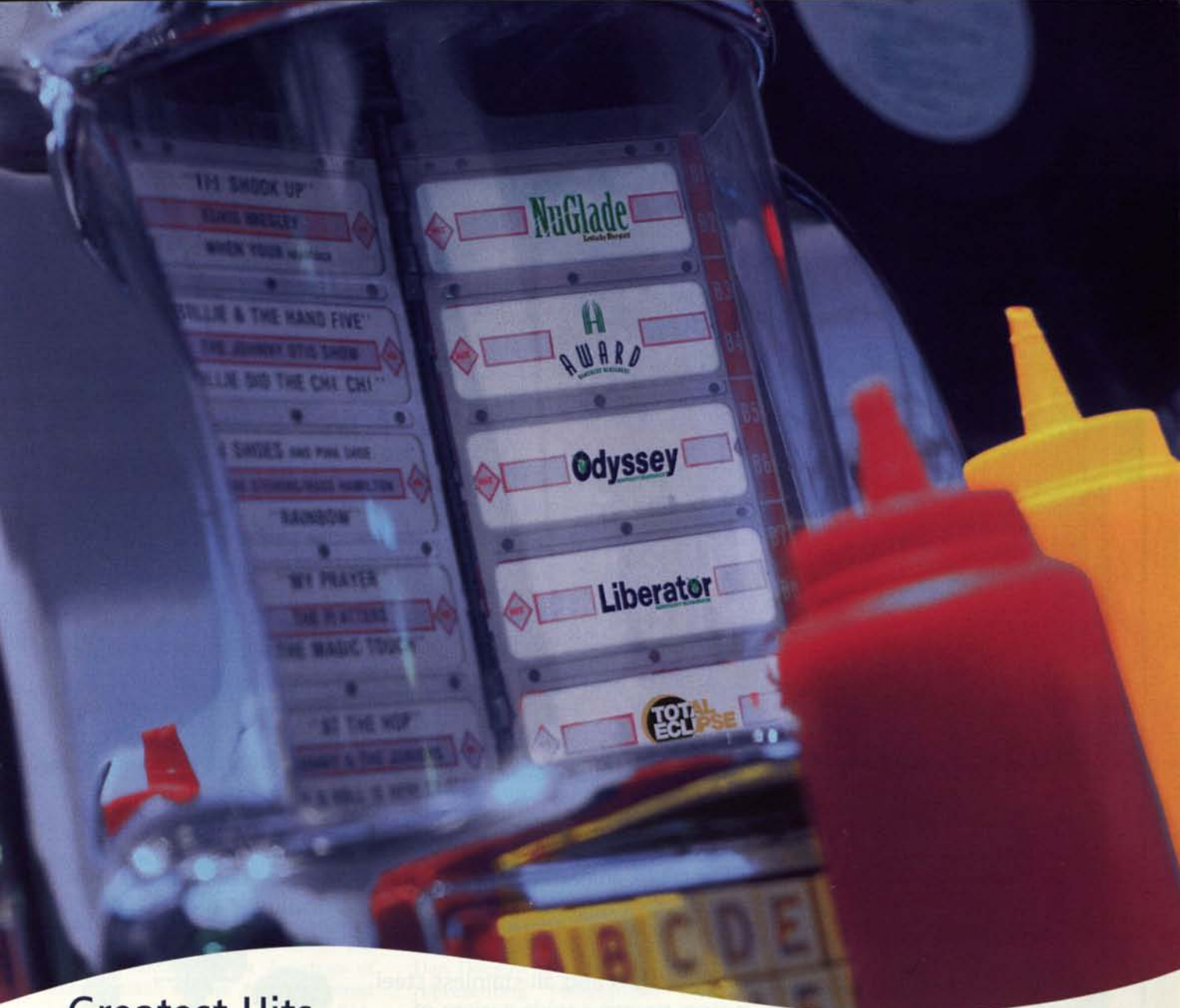
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Chapter News

continued from page 36

If you're not a member of an STMA Chapter, but would like to be, please contact STMA Headquarters by phone toll free at (800) 323-3875 or by email at: sportsTMGr@aol.com.

Chapter News

Arizona: The Arizona Chapter is planning February workshops with Little League and high school coaches. The chapter's Spring Kick Off Meeting will be held on Friday, April 20, in the Phoenix area. More details on these events will be announced soon. For information on the chapter or other upcoming events, contact: Bill Murphy, City of Scottsdale Park, Recreation and Facilities Manager, at e-mail: bmurphy@ci.scottsdale.az.us or phone: (480) 312-7954.

Colorado: For information on the Colorado Chapter or upcoming activities, log on to the Chapter's Web site: www.cstma.org, or call the CSTMA Chapter Hotline: 303-346-8954.

Florida Chapter #1: For information on the Florida Chapter or pending activities, contact: John Mascaro at 954-341-3115.

Gateway Chapter: For information on upcoming events or on the chapter, contact: Mark Jennings at 314-983-5345 or Jim Anthony, Saint Louis University, St. Louis, at: 314-977-2956.

Indiana Chapter: For information on the Indiana Chapter or pending activities, contact: Terry Updike, B & B Fertilizer, at 219-356-8424.

Iowa: The ISTMA President for 2001 is Brad Vermeer of the City of Sioux Center. Lori Westrum will continue to serve as Executive Director. Committee Chairs for 2001 are as follows: Awards Chair—Kevin Vos of the City of Muscatine; Membership Chair—Bill Perry, CGCS, of the City of Ottumwa; Newsletter Chair—Mike Andresen, CSFM, of Iowa State University; and Workshop Chair—Ken Trytek.

For information on the Iowa Chapter or upcoming activities, contact: Lori Westrum at The Turf Office

at 515-232-8222 (phone) or 515-232-8228 (fax) or e-mail: Lori@iowaturfgrass.org.

Keystone Athletic Field Managers Organization (KAFMO):

The chapter will participate in the Western Pennsylvania Turf School and Trade Show, Feb. 27 to March 1, 2001, in Monroeville, and the Northwest Pennsylvania Athletic Field Turf & Ornamentals Conference on March 20 in Meadville.

Results of the Chapter's election of officers are as follows: Dan Douglas, President; Devin Yeiser, Vice President; Jim Welshans, Treasurer; and Nancy Bosold, Secretary. Board Members are: Stan Weaver of Upper Dauphin School District and Tim Spangler of Central Dauphin School District representing Public/Private Schools; Neale Magill of Hampden Township and Chris Lessig of Manheim Township representing Recreation and Parks; Don Fowler, retired County Extension Agent and Jim Welshans of Extension Agent for Dauphin County representing Education/Extension; Kevin Yeiser of Lebanon Valley College and Wayne Schlosser of Allegheny College representing Colleges/Universities; Steve LeGros of Hersheypark Stadium and Dan Douglas of the Reading Phillies representing Professional Sports Facilities; Rich Valentine of Valentine and Sons and Kurt Nilsson of Diamond Pro as Commercial representatives and Nancy Bosold of Penn State Extension and Jeff Fowler of Penn State Extension as Board Members at Large. Jeff Fowler will serve as Newsletter Chair; Chris Lessig as Scholarship Chair; Steve LeGros as Awards Chair; and Rich Valentine as Education Chair.

The Chapter's Field of Distinction Award went to the Pequea Valley High School Soccer Field. The other two finalists were: The South Fayette High School football/soccer field and The Derry Township/Hershey field hockey field.

The Chapter awarded three \$500 scholarships. Recipients are Matt Slingerland, John Fox and Ryan

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Chapter News

Northern California: For information on the Nor-Cal Chapter or pending events, contact Janet Gift at 530-758-4200.

Ohio: For information on the OSTMA Chapter or upcoming events, contact: Joe Zelinko at 800-897-9714 or Boyd Montgomery at 419-885-1982 ext. 50, or click on your computer to www.glstma.org to visit the chapter's Web site.

South Texas: For information on the chapter or upcoming events, contact: Tom McAfee, Nelson Wolff Municipal Stadium, San Antonio, at 210-207-3754.

Southern California: For information on the Southern California Chapter or pending activities, contact: Ron Kirkpatrick at 858-438-1755.

Tennessee Valley: TVSTMA announces the 2001 Officers: Bill Marbet, President; Stan Thomas, President Elect; Bob Elliott, Commercial Vice President; and Bob Hogan, Secretary/Treasurer. Executive Board members are: Tom Samples, University of Tennessee; Bill Randalls, Vanderbilt University; Bobby Campbell, University of Tennessee; Terry Porch, Tennessee Titans; and A J Powell, University of Kentucky. Erin Kinny or Brentwood Parks

and Recreation, will serve as Membership Committee Chair; Marty Kaufman of the Tennessee Titans is Programs Chair; and Bo Henley of Southern Athletic Fields is Publicity Chair.

Plans are underway for a March meeting to be held at MTSU in Murfreesboro, Tenn. More details will be announced soon. For information on the TVSTMA Chapter or upcoming events, contact: Bill Marbet, Southern Athletic Fields, Inc. at 931-380-0023 or 800-837-8062.

Wisconsin: The Wisconsin Chapter's 2001 Board of Directors are: Richard Miller, President; Rich Riggs, Past President; Chris Wendorf, Vice President, Commercial; Mike Meyers, Vice President; Chris Brinkley, Secretary; Tom Schwab, Treasurer; and Board Members: Mike Giruan, Paul Buchholz, John Stier, Roy Zehren and Bob Koca. For more information on the Wisconsin Chapter or pending events, contact: Rich Riggs, R. H. Rettler & Associates, Inc. at 715-341-2633.

Chapters On The Grow

The Virginia Sports Turf Managers Association is an active chapter with paperwork in process for affiliation as this issue is going to print. For information on the chapter or upcoming events, contact: Chapter President, Tim Swaim of Landscape Supply, Inc., Richmond, by phone: 804-675-3050 or via e-mail: cardscowboys@cs.com.

Kansas City, Missouri-Kansas: For information on MO-KAN STMA, the newly forming chapter or on upcoming events, contact: Trevor Vance at 816-504-4271; Gary Custis at 816-460-6215; or Jody Gill at 913-681-4121.

Nebraska: For information on the forming chapter or upcoming events, contact: Gregg Bostelman, City of Grand Island, at 308-385-5426.

New Jersey: For information on The Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey or upcoming events, contact: Jim Gavigan, Lesco, at 732-248-8979 or Eleanora Murfitt, Director, Township of Clinton Parks & Recreation Department, at 908-735-5999.

New York: A chapter is forming in Central New York. The group will meet at 10:30 a.m. on the first Wednesday of each month at the National Soccer Hall of Fame. Interested? Want more information? Contact Kevin Meredith, National Soccer Hall of Fame, via e-mail at Kevin@wpe.com or by phone at 607-432-2953.

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