

# Continued in the Big Bend State

BY GLENN LUCAS

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY MARTY KAUFMAN

**M**embers of the Tennessee Valley Sports Turf Managers Association gathered at Franklin Road Academy (FRA) in Nashville last May for seminars both on and off the field.

Tiff Canady led off with a discussion of what he does at FRA to make his fields some of the nicest around. Tiff talked about his equipment, staff, and responsibilities, and gave an overview of the grounds and all the areas he maintains.

Dr. Frank Hale, Nashville UT Extension Service, then discussed pests. Not the people we sometimes call pests, but grubs and other turf pests. He recommended pesticides for specific turf pests and how to time applications to combat them. Dr. Hale used a PowerPoint presentation to help attendees identify the pests and the damage they do to turfgrass.

Next, Greg Johns with Harrell's Fertilizer gave a presentation on basic understanding of fertilizer. He covered what each element is and its purpose; the mathematics of calculating applications; and the action of nitrogen fertilizers. A discussion of pH along



with soil and tissue testing followed his presentation, which led to other topics, including mathematics, fertilizer balancing, availability, use, etc.

After lunch the seminar moved outside onto the football field to view Marty Kaufman, Clyde Clemons and Brad Benton demonstrating how the Tennessee Titans paint lines, numbers, hashes, and logos. Other techniques were also demonstrated and equipment options were discussed. During the discussion, Johnny Ponce and Ron Templeton offered suggestions and ideas to help identify the multiple options available when it comes to painting techniques.

During the day's final session, four vendors demonstrated their aerification equipment on the football field. This gave attendees the opportunity to see what types of aerification equipment are available and what aerification will do for the fields. These demonstrations resulted in FRA having had almost their entire football aerified. Everyone finished just in time to miss the rain!

ST

*continued from previous page*

For information on the MO-KAN STMA Chapter, or upcoming events, call Jody Gill at 913-239-4121; Gary Custis at 816-460-6215, or Mike Green at 913-208-6158.

**Midwest Chapter STMA:** The Midwest Chapter will hold its Tour on Wheels in late August.

For information on the Midwest Chapter, or pending activities, visit the Chapter's website, <http://mcestna.org/>, or call Libby Baker at 847-263-7603 or email [Bake60ft6in@aol.com](mailto:Bake60ft6in@aol.com).

**The Greater LA Basin Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association:** The Chapter will have a booth at the Turfgrass and Landscape Expo (SCTC) Fairplex in Pomona October 9-10. In the planning stages is an October Field Day at Edison International; date and time to be announced soon.

For information on the Chapter or pending events, call Steve Dugas, California State University-Fullerton, at 714-278-3929 or email [sdugas@fullerton.edu](mailto:sdugas@fullerton.edu).

**Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona:** For information on the chapter, or upcoming events, contact Chris Calcaterra at e-mail: [chrisc@peoriaaz.com](mailto:chrisc@peoriaaz.com) or tel. 623-412-4231 or Bill Murphy, at e-mail: [bmurphy@ci.scottsdale.az.us](mailto:bmurphy@ci.scottsdale.az.us) or tel. 480-312-7956.

**Southern California Chapter:** For information on

the Southern California Chapter, or pending activities, call Ron Kirkpatrick at 858-453-1755.

**Northern California Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association:** For information on the Nor-Cal Chapter, or pending events, call Janet Gift at 530-758-4200.

**Gateway Chapter Sports Turf Managers Association:** For information on the Gateway Chapter, or upcoming events, call Mike Krone, Missouri Baptist College, 314-392-2328 or email [krone@mobap.edu](mailto:krone@mobap.edu).

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

**Keystone Athletic Field Managers Organization (KAFMO/STMA):** For information on the KAFMO/STMA Chapter or upcoming events, contact Dan Douglas, Reading Phillies Baseball Club, at tel. 610-375-8469, ext. 212; or e-mail to: [kafino@aol.com](mailto:kafino@aol.com).

**Mid-Atlantic Athletic Field Managers Organization (MAFMO Chapter STMA):** For information on the MAFMO Chapter, or pending activities, call the Hotline at 410-290-5652.

**Nebraska Sports Turf Managers Association:** For

information on the Nebraska Chapter, or upcoming events, call Gregg Bostelman, City of Grand Island, at 308-385-5426.

**South Texas Sports Turf Managers Association:** For information on the South Texas Chapter, or upcoming events, call Craig Potts, Texas A & M University, at tel. 979-458-8841, or e-mail: [CPotts@athletics.tamu.edu](mailto:CPotts@athletics.tamu.edu).

**Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association:** For more information on the Wisconsin Chapter, or other pending events, call Richard Miller at 608-756-1150.

## Chapters On The Grow

**Kentucky:** For information on the chapter forming in Kentucky, contact Tom Nielsen at [TNielsen@bats-baseball.com](mailto:TNielsen@bats-baseball.com) or Aaron Boggs at [AVBoggs@netscape.net](mailto:AVBoggs@netscape.net).

**Las Vegas:** For information on the chapter developing in Las Vegas, contact Rod Smith, Grounds Manager/Cashman Center at e-mail: [rms@lvca.com](mailto:rms@lvca.com) or at tel. 702-386-7140.

**New York:** For information on the chapter forming in Central New York, contact Kevin Meredith, National Soccer Hall of Fame, at e-mail: [Kevin@wpe.com](mailto:Kevin@wpe.com) or at tel. 607-432-2953.

ST

# Contract and in-house maintenance thrive in the Volunteer State

BY MEL LANFORD

*Editor's note: Each month, "On the Road with the Ace" will profile different people and places that veteran groundskeeping pro Mel Lanford encounters on his travels throughout the United States, visiting ballfields and the many dedicated groundskeepers who make them great.*

**N**ashville, TN—Visit the Tennessee State University main campus any day of the year and you'll not only see immaculately groomed athletic fields but also enjoy lawns, flower borders and buildings throughout the 450-acre setting that reflect quality workmanship. This place shouts, "pride of ownership and professionalism."

TSU is a coeducational urban land-grant university founded in 1912 and that now encompasses more than 65 buildings. What makes the grounds so special at this low-funded state university? No, the school doesn't receive special allowances for horticultural development. Nor does it have students of landscape architecture using the campus as a research site.

What makes the TSU grounds exceptional is the creative use of private contract maintenance, in conjunction with a highly skilled in-house groundskeeping crew. The decision to marry contract with in-house maintenance was made this year by Jerrold McRae, a TSU graduate and former NFL wide receiver with the Kansas City Chiefs and Philadelphia Eagles, and now the assistant director of operations, facilities management, at TSU. Jerrold decided to hire out the mowing and edging, allowing the talented maintenance staff more time to specialize in maintaining the athletic fields and cross training in horticultural specialties. Most importantly, this work change was achieved with no loss of in-house jobs and with an actual overall cost savings. Typically, labor costs are a large percentage of contract work, so Jerrold refrained from filling job vacancies that occurred due to attrition. The dedicated five-man staff now has time to troubleshoot and add extra touches for special events, such as homecoming and graduation.

"As facility director for a predominately black university, funding is the key challenge to ensure that all sports receive funding and somewhat equal representation," said Jerrold. "We have to be continually very creative with our budget. The dollars we saved on labor allows us to be more specialized with our small labor force, making them an even greater asset to the university."

Jerrold has been in his current position for the past 3 years, but it's his background as a TSU student and athlete, and later as a professional athlete that allows him to "set a standard of excellence for the university athletic fields." He shares a passion for sports with his staff, knowing the athletes appreciate the finished product. Before joining TSU, Jerrold was at the Philadelphia Convention Center as facility director and conventions & tradeshow manager. He has also worked for the Nashville Arena as facility director for Special Events, Concerts, Conventions, Arena Football, Hockey and Basketball.

During a recent visit to the campus, I was very impressed with the grounds and the man who oversees the day-to-day operations. Jerrold spends the first 2 hours of every weekday



**Tennessee State's creative pairing of private contract maintenance with in-house groundskeeping crew was the brainchild of Jerrold McRae (below).**

walking the entire campus, noting details that require attention and assigning crew members to each task. His last stop is usually a visit to the dean and the president to say hello and report on the "state of the facilities." Although most of his days are filled with administrative and management duties, every Friday Jerrold "dresses down" to work clothes and works "hands on" with the staff or contractors.

"One day I may have to run a buffer in a dormitory hallway, or spend the afternoon on a mower," said Jerrold. "There isn't any maintenance task I haven't done or won't do."

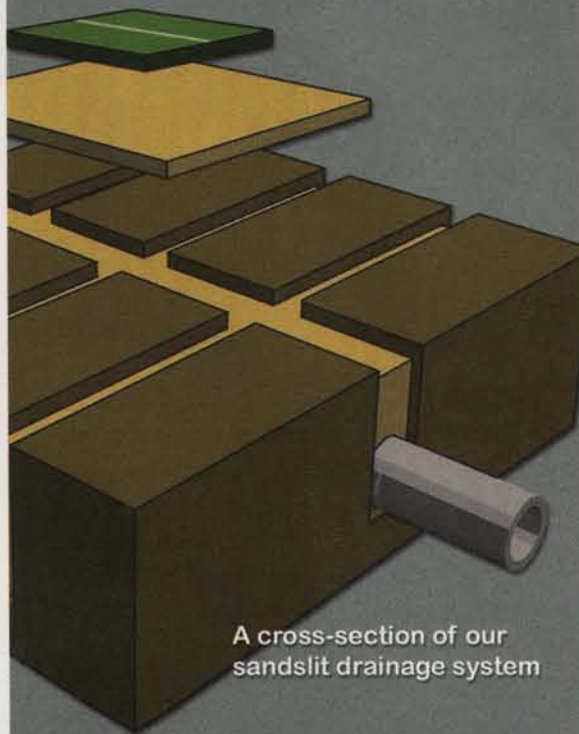
Demonstrating this pride of ownership has created a tremendous level of care among the five-man staff that maintains the athletic fields. Nobody on this staff is an 8 to 5 clock puncher. When working the athletic fields, they are under the direction of former teacher and coach, Willie Scott, who now serves as coordinator of athletic fields and horticulture. Both Willie and Jerrold believe in creating a positive work environment that fosters pride. They continually research and pursue new material, equipment, and techniques to improve their program. With contractors handling the common areas, the staff now has time to "go the extra mile" in maintaining the athletic fields and troubleshoot anywhere on campus as different situations arise.

This aggressive management decision at TSU has had a positive effect on the bottom line, and helped transform a nice campus into an exceptionally beautiful facility. **ST**

*Mel Lanford, a 30-year veteran of the groundskeeping industry, is the creator and host of the Ace of Diamonds Tour, sponsored in part by Diamond Pro Professional Groundskeeping Products, a division of TXI. Mel travels across the United States year-round presenting hands-on seminars, demonstrating the proper infield and sports turf maintenance materials, equipment and techniques to athletic field managers. For more information, visit [www.diamondpro.com](http://www.diamondpro.com) or call 800-228-2987.*

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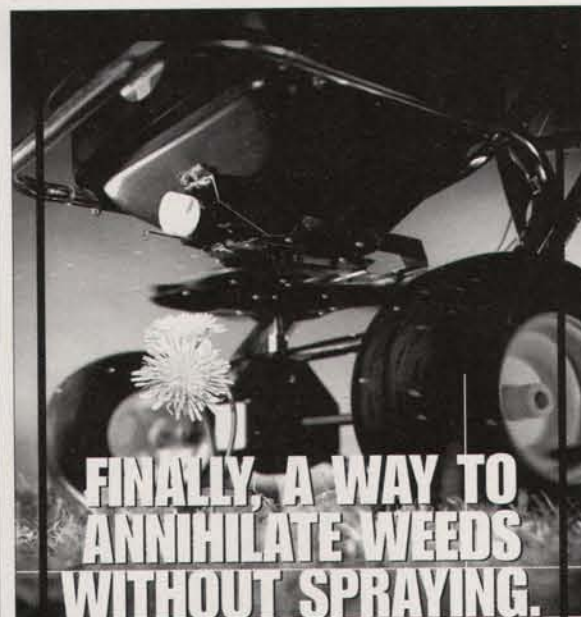
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# Designing a field over a landfill

*We have a soccer/baseball field we are constructing over a closed municipal solid waste landfill (the soccer field is in the baseball outfield). Because of predicted differential settlements, we are considering a design grade of 1.5% from one side of the soccer field across to the other side. Based on my research, this, although not ideal, is an acceptable grade and configuration for the soccer field. Would you agree?*

*Also we anticipate that we will have particular difficulty in one corner of the soccer field (the corner that forms the right field corner of the baseball field). We are considering raising this portion to 2%. Any comments in this regard from a soccer "playability" perspective?*

*Note we have concluded that these grades are likely "acceptable" based on the fact that a crowned field design would have a net change in grade of 2% at the center. The above field will have a uniform grade of 1.5% with a net change in grade of only 0.5% in the area of major concern.*

Leo Overmann  
Hong Kong

**A**fter a Q&A on field slopes a few months back, I have had several questions e-mailed to me concerning alternative designs. I am hearing how much the area surrounding the construction site for a field dictates alternative designs. Side-to-side sloped fields seem to be more popular than I ever imagined. The conditions under which you were given to build your field provides a few twists that make it even more interesting from a drainage design perspective.

Having recently become involved in designing a golf course on a closed municipal waste landfill, I am quickly learning the construction limitations an open, relatively flat surface can cause. In this project settling is a concern, but a significant limitation is the inability to trench for drainage, so as to not disturb the clay cap that was put over the landfill. Everything must be built up from that grade.

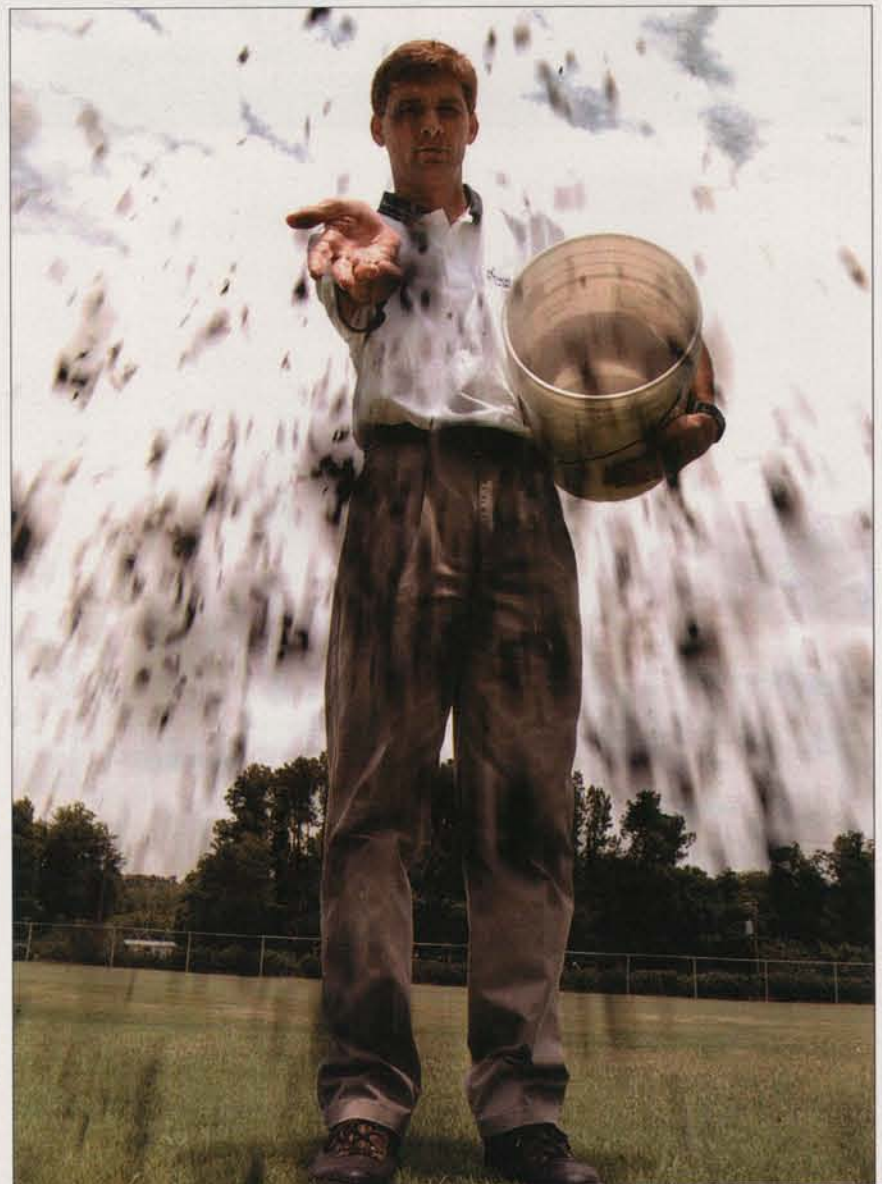
Obviously the need to maximize space and include a dual purpose field (soccer/baseball) will further complicate your drainage design criteria. Normal baseball field contours do not fit very well into the normal contour plan of a soccer field. Also, depending upon their respective size, the fields do not always overlap very well and the skinned base paths may be in play on the soccer field.

A 1.5% grade from side to side, while certainly not ideal, is acceptable for a soccer field. When the entire field is uniformly sloped, the field looks pretty flat to players. I have a hard time envisioning how this will fit into the grade and configuration of the baseball field. You will probably need to carefully consider the grading plan for the area just outside the soccer field, but in play on the baseball field.

The area of major concern is also my area of major concern. If you increase the grade on one corner of the soccer field (even by 0.5%), then you are diverting a lot of surface runoff into that corner. The lower end of the field almost invariably will become muddy as the water flows across the field to the lower end. I think soccer playability will suffer. A wet spot on the field can literally stop a soccer ball dead. There is also potential awkwardness in corner kicks from that corner. Consider that over the width of a soccer field (approximately 180 feet), the 0.5% difference is about 11 inches of (additional) fall. I would prefer no more than a 1.5% grade on a soccer field because I have measured how much a minor difference in a field's slope can influence ball roll on a closely mowed surface. I feel that a uniform slope (side-to-side) is much better from a field management and playability standpoint.

Certainly, there are times when the demands of the terrain or situation will give

you no practical options. If this is the case, I would suggest that you install internal drainage, at least in the lower half of the field to prevent that lower portion of the field from becoming too wet. Depending upon the baseball field's design, you may also want to consider additional drainage around the entire upper side of the field. **ST**



## Have Questions?

Send them to Grady Miller at the University of Florida, PO Box 110670, Gainesville, FL 32611, or email [gmillers@mail.ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:gmillers@mail.ifas.ufl.edu). Or, send them to Dave Minner at Iowa State University, 106 Horticulture Hall, Ames, IA 50011, or email [dminner@iastate.edu](mailto:dminner@iastate.edu).

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