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The AQUAVAR and AQUAVAR II from Goulds Pumps, the world's first micro-processor based system pump controller, is now available in a wall-mounted version. It is ideal for irrigation systems as it automatically cycles lead pump position for even use, adjusts pump speed to meet demand and stops all pumps when system demand is zero. The AQUAVAR can also save you money by reducing energy costs and eliminating large pressure tanks, automatic valves and by-pass lines.

Goulds Pumps/315-255-3378, x414

For information, circle 161

NEWEST TORO TRIPLEX REEL TRIM MOWER

The Toro Reelmaster 2000-D was introduced at the GCSAA Conference and Show in February and will begin shipping this spring.

Toro improved on the Reelmaster 2300-D and made it more powerful and simpler for the operator, which increases its value for golf course or sports field use. The unit is powered by a diesel Briggs & Stratton/Daihatsu 19 net hp engine. This additional power will increase the traction and mowing capabilities on sloped mowing surfaces, trim and surround areas, and sports fields. The new engine and transmission are isolation mounted to reduce vibration for the operator. An integrated PTO switch includes 3WD engagement to simplify its operation, and no need for the operator to hold a lever to drop the cutting units, because a detented lift valve provides a hit-to-drop function for the cutting units.

The Toro Company/952-888-8801

For information, circle 155



EQUIPMENT TRAILER

bil-jax inc.'s Workforce 5,000-lb. Escalate equipment trailer's entire bed lowers to the ground to make loading easier and cut safety risks for crew. One person can load equipment with trailer attached to the towing vehicle because the bed uses a hydraulic cylinder.

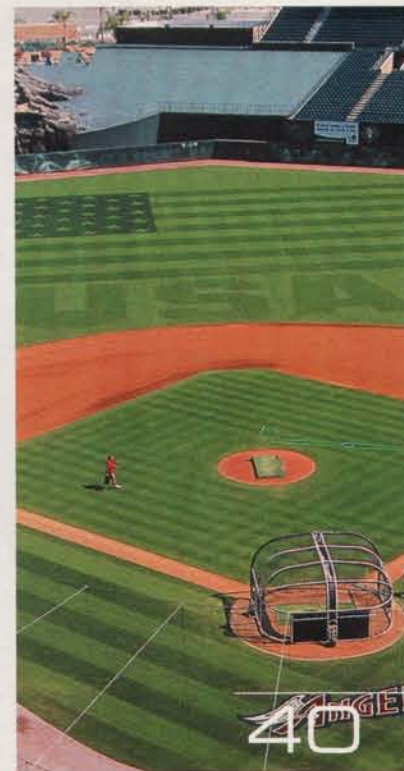
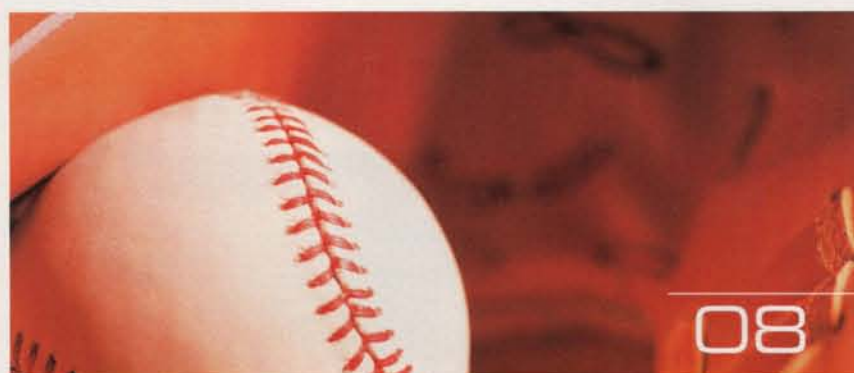
Ramp grade is only 6 degrees so lower profile units can be loaded. The trailer features tie-downs, heavy-duty powder coat finish, and a low center of gravity. Hydraulic-surge or electric brakes are available.

bil-jax/419-445-8915

For information, circle 156



March 2002 / Volume 18 / Number 03



COVER STORY

14 In & On the Ground

Mix masters: Professional groundskeepers share their secrets to establishing and maintaining a quality infield.

Features

08 STMA 2001 Baseball Field of the Year

"My science background enables me to work with the concepts of field management . . . and working with students allows us to use caring for the field as an educational tool," says winner Rick Newville.

28 Around the Grounds

Floyd Perry uses a series of photos to show and tell how to set up bases properly, and Jim Myrland of Beacon Ballfields details what's needed for safe backstops.

40 Maintaining the Grounds

Marty Curtis has played ball for 50 years so you may appreciate his perspective on how best to groom your infields this season.

62 STMA Conference Postscript

Award winners, scholarship recipients, and more from the association's annual meeting held in Las Vegas last January.

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COVER PHOTO: Shortstop D'Angelo Jimenez tags out a runner at 2B.
Photo courtesy of the San Diego Padres.

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Bannerman

THE HOME OF SPORTSTURF MAGIC

the front office

The 10,000-lb. elephant

There's an old line about everyone "ignoring the elephant in the middle of the room," a euphemism for avoiding discussing an unpleasant topic. So here I go: "Hey, *Sportsturf* readers, there's a 10,000-lb bull elephant in the room!"

The big (pun intended) *elephas maximus* in our room is the redesigned format of this magazine. At the STMA show last January, I received feedback from some members that they didn't like the tabloid size—too large for their shelves or filing systems. And though STMA members make up only about 13% of our total readership, we take what they say seriously, both because this is their official publication and because they represent the epitome of sportsturf professionals.

So why did we choose a larger format? First and foremost, we wanted to make the magazine more friendly for today's reading habits, which means making it easier for you to leaf through and find something of interest—a photograph, a headline, an advertisement. Turf managers, like fertilizer salesmen, magazine editors, and heck, even bosses, are busy people who most likely don't have time to read 3,000-word stories. What's the last work-related magazine you read cover to cover? (The *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue doesn't count, fellas!)

We're fighting for our readers' time. We chose our new format to be different, to stand out, to make us be the first magazine on your desk to get picked up. Storage problems notwithstanding, this magazine is easier to read and gives us more room to provide information and run great photographs. Besides, with everything in the world becoming more miniature every day, isn't it nice to see at least one thing (besides your waist) get larger?

Yes, there are business practicalities that make this size magazine more efficient, but hey, what business do you know of that never changes? You've probably changed how you handle more than one task to get more productive; that's what we've done. And I trust you'll think of some way to store us; you've conquered tougher problems than that!

How about those covers?

Because the magazine's covers are so different than they have been traditionally, I'm sure there's some unrest about them among the faithful. To me the ideal cover shot for our readership would be of some action on a field that would allow you to see all or most of the field, as well as relate directly to a story inside. Needless to say, finding quality photographs that correspond to this ideal is not easy.

So far we've opted for "action" over "field" to get away from static shots that don't entice readers to pick us up. While overview shots of fields can be stunning and beautiful, they are not "unique" in the way a single golf hole can be; no matter how good it looks, a football field is always 120 yards long with sidelines, hash marks, etc.

Every proud turf manager should want quality pictures of her or his work. Even if it were more trouble to get, wouldn't a shot of the athletes, for whom you make that field safe and enjoyable, performing on your work be worth it? Your showpiece might even make a great magazine cover!



Comments always welcome.
Call Eric at 630-678-0054, fax 630-678-0334,
email eschroder@aip.com, or send to PO
Box 67, Lombard, IL 60148.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR STEVE TRUSTY

STMA OFFICE

1375 ROLLING HILLS LOOP, COUNCIL BLUFFS, IA 51503
PHONE: (800) 323-3875
E-MAIL: SportsTMgr@aol.com
WEB SITE: www.sportsturfmanager.com

INTEGRATED CONTENT TEAM

VICE PRESIDENT/
GROUP PUBLISHER STEVE BRACKETT
VICE PRESIDENT/
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR JO TREADWELL
EDITOR ERIC SCHRODER
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V.P., DIRECTOR OF CIRCULATION JACQUELINE M. SERRA

DIRECT MAIL LIST SALES

LIZ DASCH
(800) 548-5918

REPRINT SERVICE

JORGIE STROSSNER
(847) 885-3429

READER SERVICE SERVICES

JOANNE JUDA-PRAINITO -
READERSERVICE@AIP.COM
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF CIRCULATION AND
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SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES

PHONE: (856) 786-6805 FAX: (856) 786-0861

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SEE PAGE 65

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Sports
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president's message

Moving toward an even brighter future

After wrapping up the successful 2002 STMA Conference in Las Vegas, I'd like to again express my thanks to all of the vendors and members for their terrific support. Now we look to San Antonio, TX, for our next conference which is shaping up to be a tremendous show. The dates are January 15-19, 2003. Our headquarters hotel is the Hyatt Regency on the Riverwalk. Our exhibition site is the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center. I spoke with many of you in Vegas about the conference and how to make next year's program even better. I appreciate the feedback.

Speaking of feedback, I heard from many of you about this magazine. Both good and bad comments were taken to the Board for review and advisement. Obviously, we hope the new style and layout will be a positive concept for our sponsors and readers. Adams Business Media is working closely with the staff and the Board to determine how we can continue to improve the publication for everyone based on the comments received about the previous issues. We thank you for your input and your patience!

The 2002 STMA Board is in place. (See election results on page 62.)

For those who were unable to attend the Las Vegas Conference, please welcome our new Board members: Boyd Montgomery, CSFM, director of facilities and maintenance for the Sylvania (Ohio) Recreation Corp., who represents the members serving in Parks and Recreation positions, and Vickie Wallace, technical agronomist for Turf-Seed, Inc., who represents our Commercial members.

Thanks go to Rich Moffitt for leading our organization as President during the past 2 years. Also, please join me in thanking outgoing Board members, Steve Guise, director of business development for Marina Landscape, Inc., and Lynda Wightman, national specifications manager for Hunter Industries, for their years of service on the Board.

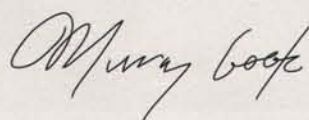
The STMA website is growing with tremendous content and interactive discussions for anyone who

needs information. What I find exciting is the ability to post information or questions you may have for general discussion. Take a minute and link up to www.sportsturfmanager.com.

At the annual Board meeting we appointed chairs for the following committees:

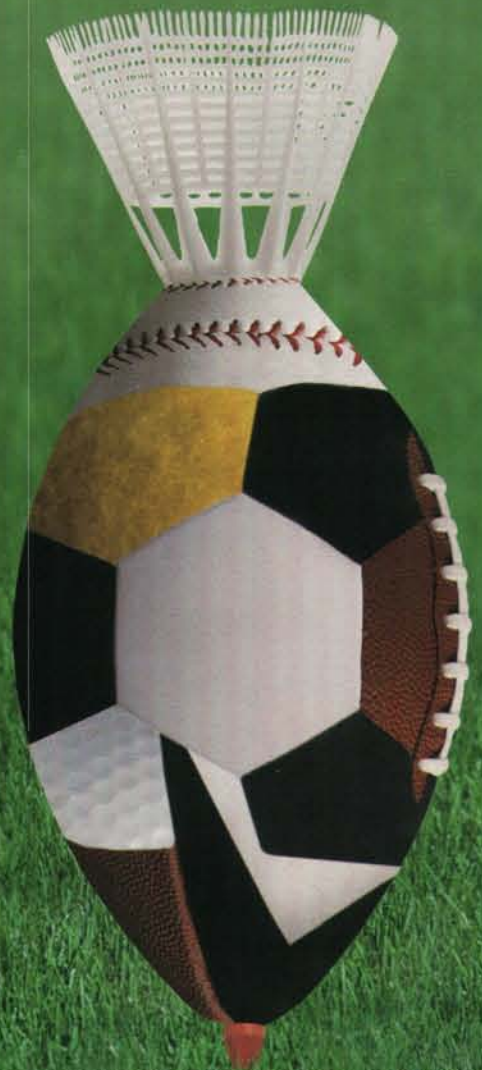
- Mike Andresen, CSFM, Membership Chair
- Dr. Tony Koski, Education Chair
- Vickie Wallace, Marketing Chair
- Abby McNeal, CSFM, Chapter Relations Committee Chair, and Dave Rulli, Board Liaison
- Dale Getz, CSFM, Certification Committee Chair
- Mike Trigg, CSFM, Networking Committee Chair
- Mike DePew and Mark Razum, Technical Committee Co-Chairs
- Boyd Montgomery, CSFM, Web Site Committee Chair
- Tim Moore, CSFM, Finance and Audit Committee Chair
- Bob Campbell, CSFM, Strategic Planning Committee Chair
- Tim Moore, CSFM, Awards Committee Chair
- Bob Campbell, CSFM, Conference Committee Chair, with Dr. Tony Koski, Conference Education Subcommittee Chair, and Monty Montague, Conference Exhibition Subcommittee Chair
- Rich Moffitt, Nominations Committee Chair, Bylaws Committee Chair, and Past Presidents Committee Chair

We would love to hear from you about issues or ideas on how we can grow our organization and our industry and move forward with the initiatives of the STMA Strategic Plan. Working together, our future will be even brighter!



Murray Cook,
STMA President

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Patriot Field

STMA 2001 Baseball Field of the Year Award

Patriot Field of Putnam City West High School, Oklahoma City, OK, earned the STMA 2001 Baseball Field of the Year Award in the High School/Parks and Recreation Division.

Rick Neville joined the school's four-coach baseball staff in August 2000, transferring from Putnam City North. He teaches biology to sophomore and junior students as well as coaching.

The field care aspect of his role has been building for quite some time. The interest was sparked when Neville, and his friend Monte McCoy (now sports turf manager for the Oklahoma RedHawks Baseball Club) played college baseball at El Reno Junior College (now Redlands Community College). Neville moved on to complete his bachelors degree in science education at the University of Oklahoma and began teaching and coaching within his current school district in August 1994. He and McCoy coached American League baseball together in Norman, OK, then McCoy headed the program that earned the Beam Clay Diamond of the Year award for Oklahoma University.

Neville says, "My science background enables me to work with the concepts of field management and the hands-on labor turns those concepts into action. Seeing the impact of field maintenance on safety and playability got me hooked. And, working with students gives me the ability to use the field care aspect as another educational tool."

Patriot Field was constructed in 1969, following the opening of the high school. The soil profile is the native loamy clay. There's no crown on the field, but there is a slight run off from right to left

field. Infiltration and percolation rates are generally adequate to handle the spring rainfall. There was only one rainout in the 2001 spring season. Initially the baseball outfield doubled as the auxiliary practice field for the football team. It's now dedicated to baseball—and a lot of it.

Used 10 months a year

Neville says, "Patriot Field is utilized 10 months out of the year. Tryouts for the school baseball teams are held in October, and the teams practice thereafter, weather permitting. Practices continue until the first games are played around the first of March. In 2001, from March 1 to mid-May, the field hosted the varsity, junior varsity, and freshman teams who combined for a total of 60 games, including one tournament. All the practices for the three teams were also held on the field. The field then saw a 2-week break from game, but played host as a batting practice site for smaller schools playing in their state tournaments.

"Summer League began on June 1, and Patriot Field served as the home site for three teams, and hosted a week of youth camps. From April 1 to the end of July, 70 games were played. This included two tournaments that put 30 games on the field within a 12-day period. The field got a much-needed rest from August 1 until October, when the preseason tryouts were held to start the cycle once again. So, over the 2000-2001 baseball season, Patriot Field hosted 130 games and three tournaments, and served as practice site for the multiple teams."



2000-2001 maintenance program

October 2000:

- Overseed common bermudagrass with perennial ryegrass blend.
- Outfield rate of 8 lbs./1000 square feet. Infield rate of 10 lbs./1000 square feet.
- Topdress with sand at rate of 1/8-inch.
- Begin mowing perennial ryegrass at 7/8-inch height .

November 2000:

- Fertilize with 21-7-14 at rate of 1/2-lb. N/1000 square feet.
- Mow as needed.

December 2000:

- Fertilize with 15-0-30 with 1 % iron.
- Apply potassium at rate of 1 lb./1000 square feet.
- Mow as needed.

January-February 2001:

- Reconstruct mound and home plate area.
- Remove 5 feet of sod along back lip.
- Roll other lip areas with 1-1/2-ton roller.
- Add 50 tons of clay to skinned areas.
- Add 3 tons of calcined clay to skinned area, drag to 1-1/2-inch depth.
- Mow as needed.

March 2001:

- Fertilize with 32-3-8 with 3 % iron, 25 % SCU (sulphur coated urea) at rate of 1/2 lb. of N/1000 square feet.
- Core aerate in two directions.
- Pre-germinate perennial ryegrass seed for spot application.
- Sand topdress newly seeded areas.
- Lower mowing height to 13/16-inch.
- Apply post-emergence herbicide spot treatments as needed following standard IPM practices.



April-May 2001:

- Core aerate in two directions.
- Fertilize with SCU at rate of 2 lb./1000 square feet.
- Lower mowing height to 1/2 inch.
- Apply post-emergence herbicide spot treatments as needed following standard IPM practices.

June 2001:

- Fertilize with 17-5-9 with 10 % sulphur at rate of 1/2-lb. N/1000 square feet.
- Slice aerate in two directions.
- Apply post-emergence herbicide spot treatments as needed following standard IPM practices.

July-August 2001:

- In July, apply pesticide as needed for grub control following standard IPM practices.
- Fertilize with 21-7-14 at rate of 1 lb. N/1000 square feet.
- Core aerate in one direction.

September 2001:

- Fertilize with 21-28-7 at rate of 1 lb. Phosphorus/1000 square feet.
- Core aerate in one direction.

Field of the Year

Key field improvements, coupled with the aggressive maintenance program enabled Patriot Field to stand up to all this use. This program is put into action by the four coaches, one student assistant and help from the players for major projects and during tournaments.

Newville says, "Our student groundskeeper, Brian Rudy, is a great asset. He started with no field maintenance background, but has become proficient in all areas, including rebuilding the mound and home plate, dragging the skinned areas and lip control. Maintenance begins at 11:30 each morning and the field must be playable no later than 2:30 PM. That includes the entire mound, plate and skinned area preparation and the mowing. Each of the five of us tackles an area, generally performing the same tasks each day. Coaches Brian Aylor and Jim Taylor, along with myself, focused a majority of our attention on the skinned areas as most of the game is played on the skinned surface.

"Aesthetically, the ryegrass patterns always catch peoples attention, but we really pride ourselves on the playability of the skinned area. All of us join in the post-game clean up and in tarping. We all work the tournaments to insure top conditions and keep things on schedule."

An in-ground irrigation system was installed in the outfield in 1998. The infield had only a quick coupler to which an impact head could be attached. The hot, dry summer, limited irrigation resources, and a minimal mowing program left the common bermudagrass field struggling. Shortly after Newville came on board, he extended that in-ground system to the infield. He trenched in piping and tapped into two existing valves located directly behind the infield skinned area. He added eight heads in the infield, four attached to the left outfield irrigation section and four attached to the right outfield irrigation section. While irrigating the outfield and infield sections together is not the ideal situation, it does provide a more workable irrigation source to combat the regions hot, dry summer conditions.

The next project was reconstruction in front of the pitcher's mound to remove a hump that had developed over time and to bring the slope back to the precise regulation dimensions.

Then it was on to lip removal. Newville says, "The back edge of our infield was sitting at 95 feet. We took 5 feet off the sod to extend the skinned area, cut out more skinned area around first and third, put in the cutouts for the umpire boxes, and created walkways from the dugout to home plate area."

By late September, Newville was ready to upgrade the common bermudagrass by overseeding with a blend of perennial ryegrasses. He says, "This is when the adversity really kicked in. It's the single word that best describes the conditions our staff had to overcome to provide a safe, playable, and aesthetically pleasing field. And those were our three goals, in that order of importance."

The field was core aerated. Then the outfield was overseeded at the rate of 8 lbs. per thousand square feet, and the infield and wings at the 10-lb. rate. This was followed by a topdressing with sand at the rate of 1/8-in. October brought almost 12 in. of rain, beginning right after the perennial ryegrass had germinated.

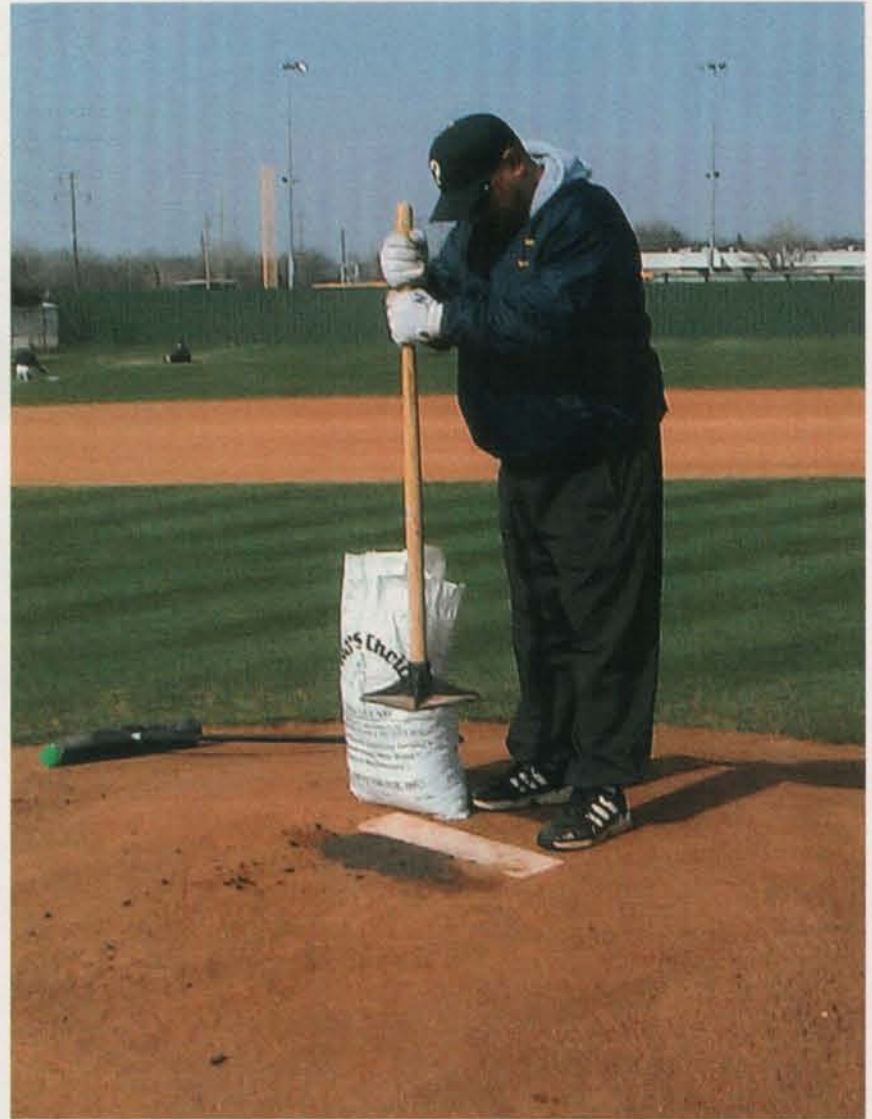
Ice storm cometh

The first ice storm hit right at the end of Christmas break. Additional ice storms followed in January. Most areas of the field were covered with about 1 in. of ice, but in other sections the ice build up reached 3 in. Newville says, "We had to chisel ice away from the irrigation heads so we could use the irrigation system to speed up melt down whenever temperatures rose above freezing. In the shaded areas, such as in front of the dugouts, the ice lasted so long we had to put our student groundskeeper to work chiseling it away."

This one-two punch knocked out some of the perennial ryegrass necessitating spot applications of pre-germinated seed in March.

By February 2001 weather conditions had improved enough to upgrade the skinned area clay. At least 50 tons were added and tilled in to bond with the existing material. This was topped by 3 tons of calcined clay, the area reworked and then rolled with an asphalt roller.

In the meantime, spot treatment was used to battle compaction. Rudy tackled this assignment whenever he could fit in a few minutes.



"My science background enables me to work with the concepts of field management and the hands-on labor turns those concepts into action." Rick Newville



Over the 2000-2001 baseball season, Patriot Field hosted 130 games and three tournaments, and served as practice site for the multiple teams.