

"WE HAD FANS THAT WOULD STILL COME TO THE GAMES ASKING IF THEY COULD USE THE DUGOUTS FOR BLINDS WHEN HUNTING SEASON OPENED."

was shining. We had fans that would still come to the games asking if they could use the dugouts for blinds when hunting season opened. This did not suit our owners too well and after an extended court battle, the jury agreed with us and not only requested the property owners to pay restitution but also ordered them to rebuild the field with an outside engineering firm and contractor.

The main reasons for this field's subsurface drainage system failure, as determined by engineers and consultants that were brought to the witness stand, was the sock on the pipe and the soils used for the root zone. The fabric had done its job by filtering the water to such an extent that the pores of the fabric had bridged over. How can this happen? The soil that was supposed to be the sand for this "sand based" field had over 30% silt and clay and over 20% organics that means over 50% of the soil was not sand. In addition there was no way to change this filtering system without digging up the field.

Water management is one of the most essential requirements of any sports field. Without it we lose turf areas, games, maintenance time, and cultural practice time. To help insure the integrity of your sports field get involved with the pro-



ject in the design phase, make sure the products specified have the field's performance in mind and have been thoroughly and adequately tested or analyzed for compatibility.

If we as field managers would get with those who are engineering and designing our fields before the plans are released and try to figure out the best scenario for our specific sites then we will be able to do the best possible job for the money we can. This is something any sports field

professional should be aware of as our field of dreams is being built. Always ask questions, know your products and contractors, and let's keep the filters of our world where we can economically change them. **ST**

Tony L. Strickland, CSFM, is president of Athletic Construction, Inc., which builds athletic fields. He is the Vice-President and Board member of Northeast Georgia Landscape and Turf Association. He can be reached at tstrickland@charter.net.

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K-RAIN PRODUCT GUIDE

K-Rain Manufacturing has released its 2005 Product Guide. The 44-page, color catalog includes descriptions, specifications, features and benefits for K-Rain's entire line of gear driven rotors, sprays, controllers and valves.

The catalog features several new products, including Narrow Profile Sprays/KVF Adjustable Nozzles and PRO COM Rotor with Flow Shut-Off.

K-Rain Manufacturing/561-844-1002

For information, circle 055 or

see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/4572-055>

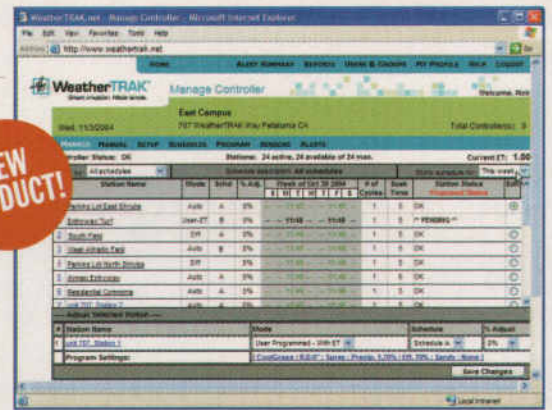
IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT

HydroPoint Data Systems has introduced WeatherTRAK ET pro irrigation controller and WeatherTRAK.net Internet management service. The latter enables central online management of WeatherTRAK ET pro controllers. From any location with Internet access, you log in to the secure site to gain a central view of all ET pro controllers under your management. Via two-way wireless communication, WeatherTRAK customers receive real-time controller status readings and adjust the irrigation programs of single controllers or groups of controllers.

HydroPoint Data Systems/800-362-8774

For information, circle 057 or

see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/4572-057>



NEW PRODUCT!

ON-LINE IRRIGATION TRAINING

The Toro Co.'s National Support Network technical support service has expanded its irrigation-training curriculum to include live, interactive sessions via the Web. The short, instructor-led sessions allow learners to master skills using a local internet-connected PC without incurring the expense associated with time and travel away from work.

The company says Web-based training offers a way to affordably accelerate the learning of new hires; expand the skills of existing workers; cross-train work groups; and retain good employees.

The Toro Company/888-676-8676

For information, circle 054 or

see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/4572-054>

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Orbit Irrigation/800-488-6156
For information, circle 058 or
see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/4572-058>



RAIN BIRD MID-RANGE ROTOR

Rain Bird's new 5004-UPG rotor allows you to retrofit competitors' mid-range rotors without the time-consuming cost of dig-

ging up the entire rotor. This rotor features exclusive Rain Curtain technology for better water distribution and overall performance. When put through the Grit Cycle Test to measure its robustness when operating with gritty water, Rain Bird's 5000 Series lasted 1.7 times longer than the competition, the company says.

Rain Bird/800-984-2255
For information, circle 056 or
see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/4572-056>

NEW
PRODUCT!

"WEATHERSENTRY"

Meteorlogix has released the latest version of MxVision WeatherSentry Turf Edition that introduces new technology designed to assist with chemical applications, crew scheduling, course maintenance, and employee safety. The exclusive Future Radar capability enhances existing real-time radar information by offering a look into the future, detailing where dangerous storms will go and what the anticipated arrival time is and when they are likely to impact spraying or mowing.

DTN/Meteorlogix/952-882-4337
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see <http://www.oners.ims.ca/4572-059>

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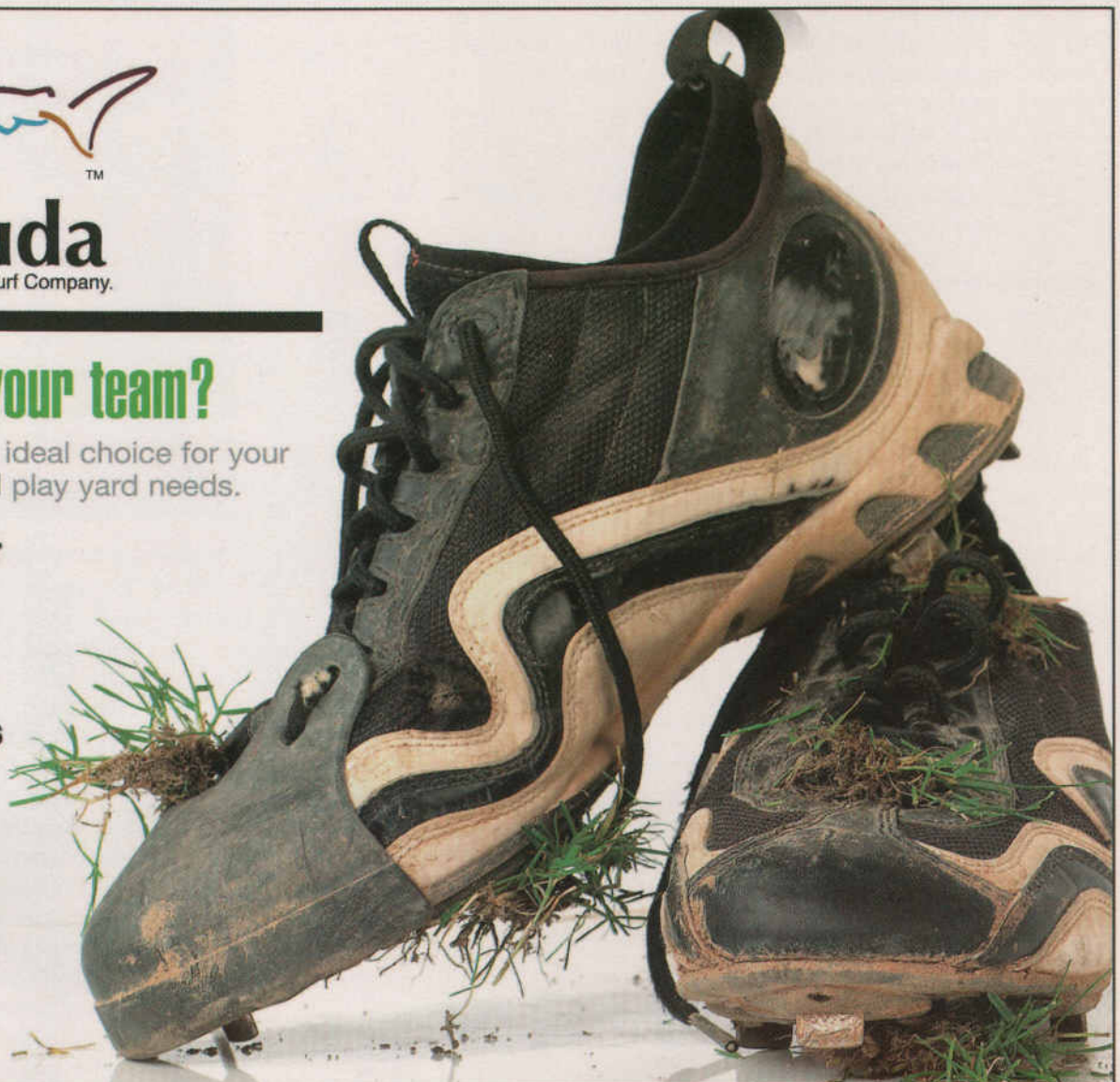
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Circle 163 on card or www.oners.ims.ca/4572-163

STMA Announces Committee Framework

At the STMA Spring Board of Directors meeting the committee structure was refined and discussion focused on effectiveness and desired outcomes for each committee. In addition to the 11 standing committees, 10 sub-committees were established to help facilitate and manage specific committee projects. An addition to the committee framework, the board created a Synthetic / Natural Turf Task Force, which will gather and distribute information on how to evaluate the potential use of synthetic turf versus natural turf. President Mike Trigg, CSFM also appointed a Past President's Council to utilize the expertise of prior association presidents.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Awards Committee

Purpose: To evaluate and select iField of the Year award winners and Minor League Baseball Sports Turf Managers of the Year

Chair: Steve LeGros

Board Liaison: George Trivett, CSFM

Scholarship Subcommittee

Purpose: To judge and select the winners of the SAFE scholarships

Chair: George Trivett, CSFM

Certification Committee

Purpose: To continue to improve the certification process, to promote the benefits of certification to potential CSFMis and their employers and to promote the CSFM as the ultimate in sports turf knowledge.

Co-Chairs: Lance Tibbetts, CSFM and Dale Getz, CSFM

Chapter Relations Committee

Purpose: To facilitate communications and networking opportunities among chapters and the exchange of information between chapters and STMA.

Chair: Dan Douglas, Chair and (Board Liaison to be appointed)

Communications Committee

Purpose: To guide the messaging and the communication channels for the association.

Chair: Boyd Montgomery, CSFM

Website Subcommittee

Purpose: To oversee the STMA website, coordinate the website content, and to investigate new technologies.

Chair: John Mascaro

Editorial Subcommittee

Purpose: To assist with the editorial focus of SPORTSTURF Magazine

Chair: Jeff Fowler

Publications Subcommittee

Purpose: To improve STMA's publications

Chair: Pam Sherratt



Conference Committee

Purpose: To insure a successful annual conference and exhibition

Chair: Mike Andresen, CSFM, and Vice Chairman Craig Potts

Conference Education Subcommittee

Purpose: Develop the Educational Program for the 2006 Conference

Chair: David Minner, Ph.D.

Conference Exhibition Subcommittee

Purpose: Grow the show, maximize revenue and enhance the image of the trade show.

Co-Chairs: Vickie Wallace and Tra DuBois

Conference Tours Subcommittee

Purpose: Set up the Tour on Wheels 2006 Conference Program.

Chair: Darian Daily

Conference MLB/NFL Seminar Subcommittee

Purpose: Organize the off-site seminar securing the location, speakers and products/service partners

Co-Chairs: Darian Daily and Bob Christofferson

Conference Student Challenge Subcommittee

Purpose: Develop, enhance, and manage the STMA Student Challenge
Chair: Steve Cockerham

Education Committee

Purpose: To evaluate education needs, and develop methods and programs to fill those needs.
Chair: Dr. Dave Minner

Technical Standards Subcommittee

Purpose: To work with the American Society for Testing & Materials on sports facility standards and recommendations.
Chair: Mike Depew
Board Liaison: Abby McNeal, CSFM

Ethics Committee

Purpose: To provide a review forum for the membership on any infractions of the STMA Code of Ethics brought to the attention of the committee and to render judgment on those infractions.
Chair: Ken Mrock

Finance & Audit Committee

Purpose: To provide oversight of the STMA's financial resources and report information to the Board of Directors.
Chair: Boyd Montgomery, CSFM

Historical Committee

Purpose: To document and preserve the history of

the association
Chair: Dr. Kent Kurtz

Membership Committee

Purpose: To assess membership needs and to develop programs and services to meet those needs; to develop strategies to attract and retain members.
Chair: Lynda Wightman, Chair
Board Liaison: Vicki Wallace

Nominations Committee

Purpose: To recommend candidates for the annual STMA elections; to recommend persons for board vacancies.
Chair: Bob Campbell, CSFM

COUNCILS & TASK FORCES

Past Presidents Advisory Council

Purpose: To utilize the expertise of previous presidents and keep them engaged in STMA.
Chair: Bob Campbell, CSFM

Synthetic / Natural Turf Task Force

Purpose: To provide factual information about synthetic and natural turf issues to members, and others in the industry and to track issues involving synthetic and natural turf
Chair: Abby McNeal, CSFM

STMA Board Member Rodgers Resigns; President Trigg Appoints Warnick

On March 1, STMA Board Member Jimmy Rodgers, CSFM, officially resigned his Board position representing Category II - four-year Colleges and Universities. Rodgers' selection as the Sports Turf Manager for the Washington Nationals in D.C., shifts his representation from the colleges and university category to the professional category. According to the STMA Bylaws the Board of Directors must have representation from each segment of its membership, and the professional category is currently filled.

On March 8, President Mike Trigg, CSFM, appointed Jay Warnick, CSFM, Grounds Supervisor from BYU Idaho to complete Rodgers remaining term, which is through 2005. The STMA Nominating Committee presented a slate of candidates for consideration to Trigg, and in compliance with the STMA Bylaws Trigg made the appointment.

Warnick is responsible for 35 acres of athletic fields and 85 acres of grounds and hardscape for the University and manages a full-time crew of 10

and up to 75 student employees. The university also has off-campus learning sites along the Snake River that Warnick and his team maintain. Before BYU Idaho, Warnick was the Director of Fields for the Seattle Seahawks for four years, the Athletic Field Manager for the University of Utah, and the Assistant Field Manager for the Baltimore Ravens. Warnick holds a B.S. in Horticulture from Utah State University. He was instrumental in starting the STMA Pacific Northwest Chapter and is exploring establishing a Utah/Idaho/Montana chapter. Warnick is excited to serve on the STMA Board of Directors. "I am honored to be asked to serve our membership, and I look forward to volunteering my time and energy for the association," says Warnick. His appointment is effective immediately. He has also been selected to serve as Board Liaison to the Chapter Relations Committee.

Rodgers is the first Certified Sports Field Manager in major league baseball. He will continue to be involved with STMA and currently serves on the Certification Committee.



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chapter news

Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona:

For information on the Chapter, or upcoming events, contact Chris Calcaterra at e-mail: chrisc@peoriaaz.com or call 623/412-4231 or Bill Murphy, at e-mail: bmurphy@ci.scottsdale.az.us or 480/312-7956.

Chesapeake Chapter STMA (formerly called Mid-Atlantic Athletic Field Managers Organization - MAFMO Chapter STMA):

For more information contact Graham Davis at gdavis@american.edu or call 301/495-5522.

Colorado Sports Turf Managers

Association: Please join us on Thursday, April 21, for a baseball seminar in the city of Loveland. Michael Robinson will be our host as we discuss baseball field maintenance techniques and build a regulation pitcher's mound. To register call 303/346-8954 or go online to www.cstma.org. For information on the Chapter or upcoming activities, visit the Chapter's website at www.CSTMA.org or call the CSTMA Chapter Hotline at 303/346-8954, or contact Chapter President Richard Buelter at 303/233-2922 or dbuelter@jeffco.k12.co.us.

Florida #1 Chapter: The next Chapter meeting is May 12 at the University of Miami in Miami. For information on the Florida #1 Chapter, contact John Mascaro at 954/341-3115 or STMA@turf-tec.com.

Gateway Chapter Sports Turf Managers

Association: For information on the Gateway Chapter or upcoming events, call Mike Krone, Missouri Baptist College at 314/392-2328 or e-mail krone@mobap.edu.

Georgia Sports Turf Managers Association:

For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, contact Skip Kirby at 770/928-1580 or e-mail skip@sportsturfmanagement.com.

The Greater L.A. Basin Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association:

For information on upcoming Chapter events call Emilio Avalos at 949/824-8243 or email ecavalos@uci.edu.

Illinois Chapter (formerly Midwest Chapter)

STMA: The ILSTMA is hosting a spring workshop on April 5 at Northwestern University. The seminar will address both natural and synthetic field management. Speakers include: Ken Mrock - Head Groundskeeper - Chicago Bears, Charles Meeks - Owner and President of Turbo Link International, Amy Fouty, CSFM - Michigan State University and Jeff Salmond, CSFM - Agronomist Northwestern University. Also, Northwestern's Head Football Coach, Randy Walker will address attendees at the lunch. For information on the Illinois Chapter visit the Chapter's website at <http://mcstma.org/> or call chapter secretary Libby Baker at 847/263-7603 or e-mail Bake60ft6in@aol.com.

Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Chapter or upcoming activities,

contact Jeff Wendel of The Turf Office at ph. 515/232-8222 or fax 515/232-8228 or e-mail Jeff@iowaturfgrass.org.

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



Kentucky Sports Turf Managers Association:

For more information, check out the website at www.kystma.org or contact Tom Nielsen at TNielsen@batsbaseball.com or Donnie Mefford at dbmeff00@email.uky.edu or call him at 859/257-1451.

Michigan Sports Turf Managers Association (MiSTMA): For information on the Chapter or pending events, contact MiSTMA Headquarters at 517/712-3407 or go to www.mistma.org to visit the Chapter's website.

Minnesota Chapter STMA: For information on the Minnesota Chapter, or upcoming events, visit the Chapter website at www.mstma.com or contact chapter President Greg Hoag at 651/486-8295 or by email at greg.hoag@metro-inet.us.

MO-KAN Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, contact Paul Hecker at 913/971-9717 or email phecker@olatheks.org.

New England STMA: For information on the New England chapter or upcoming events, contact David Pinsonneault at 781/861-2757 or dpinson@ci.lexington.ma.us.

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 or email Emory Hunter at emhunter@usa.net.

Nebraska Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, call Loren Humphrey at: 402/461-2356 or e-mail to lhumphrey@cityofhastings.org.

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey: For information on the New Jersey Chapter or upcoming events call SFMANJ at 908/730-7770, e-mail HQ@sfmanj.org or visit the Chapter website at www.sfmanj.org.

Ohio Sports Turf Managers Association (OSTMA): For information on the Ohio Chapter, call OSTMA Headquarters at 888/824-9805 or 419/824-9805 or Boyd Montgomery, CSFM, at 419/885-1982 or visit the Chapter's website at www.ostma.org.

Pacific Northwest Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, contact Bob Christofferson at 206/346-4218 or bchristo@mariners.org.

Southern California Chapter: For information on the Southern California Chapter or pending activities, call the Chapter Hotline at 888/578-STMA (578-7862) toll free in Southern California or 760/226-8873 or Michael Tarantino at 858/679-2526 or by e-mail: MTarantino@powayusd.com.

South Carolina Chapter of STMA: For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, contact Dr. Trent Hale at 843/662-3526 ext. 206, or by e-mail at tchale@clermson.edu or visit our website at www.scstma.org.

Texas Sports Turf Managers Association: For more information contact the TXSTMA office at 866-897-8621 or e-mail T.J. Thompson, Treasurer, at: TXturfmanager@prodigy.net.

Tennessee Valley Sports Turf Managers Association (TVSTMA): For information on the Chapter or upcoming events, call Chapter President, Chris Pearl at 615/429-9673 or visit the Chapter's website at www.tvstma.org.

Virginia Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Chapter or other upcoming events, contact Bob Studholme, Fairfax County Park Authority, via e-mail at Robert.Studholme@FairfaxCounty.gov or at 703/324-8590.

Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association: For information on the Wisconsin Chapter or other pending events, contact Chris Brindley at 715/346-3622 or cbrindle@uwsp.edu.

Forming Chapters:

North Florida STMA Chapter: For information on the newly forming North Florida Chapter, contact Mark Clay at 904/633-6116 or Jay McCord at 904/448-2583.

New York Sports Turf Managers Association: Contact - Mike Albino, ph. 315-468-6225; (c) 315-427-1214; mikealbino@earthlink.net

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Forget being PC, we've got a big game!

I am a high school student that has questions about grass selection for new athletic fields. I would like our school to have environmentally friendly fields and use native grasses. I figure the native grasses would not use as much water or pesticides. Can you suggest the best native grass to use on our field?

Florida Native

This question was received via a recent phone call from a Florida Gulf Coast resident. This is a difficult question for me to address without some bias since my thinking is contrary to that of most ecologists. In fact, I have been guilty of making comments that ruffled the feathers of a couple of ecologists. I was at first hesitant to use this question in "Q&A," but since it was not the first time I was asked about native grasses, I figured I might as well bring it out in the open.

Let's start with the definition of "native plant." This is a term used to categorize a plant by its origin. It is like saying, "My ancestors are from England." Then the question becomes how far back we go when we say "ancestors"? The Florida Native Plant Society has adopted the following phrase: "Florida native plant refers to those species occurring within the state boundaries prior to European contact, according to the best scientific and historical documentation. More specifically, it includes those species understood as indigenous, occurring in natural associations in habitats that existed prior to significant human impacts and alterations of the landscape." So even with this exact definition it is often difficult to know what is and isn't a native. From my understanding, how could a named cultivar be considered a native plant?

Why the big issue with native plants? Well, many people say that these plants do the best job of providing food and shelter for native wild animals. Maximum diversity in animal populations requires maximum diversity of plants. Secondly, there is this notion that if the plant is native then it must be more efficient at the use of natural resources, since it adapted to the environmental conditions without human intervention. Non-native plants are sometimes invasive and out-compete native plants. They can do this because the natural pests, diseases or weather conditions that kept the plants in check in their homeland are missing. Of course this categorizes Bermudagrass, our most common athletic field grass in Florida, as an invasive non-native.

Now let's think about the general purpose of athletic fields. Athletic fields are designed as a surface for sports. Many of these sports require running, jumping, and falling; therefore the field should have a relatively smooth and cushioned surface that allows these activities without the expectation of injury. This surface is most often achieved with a dense turfgrass. I am sure there was a time and a place when low-density turf on athletic fields was more

acceptable. But today's expectations for surface quality are typically high for our athletic fields. Not only do we demand our fields to have a uniform covering of dense turf, but we also desire the fields to maintain a high level of quality through a season of play or longer. The high expectation has encouraged the many years of research that have developed new grasses cultivars and refined the way we manage these cultivars.

Our fields are generally not designed to provide food and shelter for wild animals. We do not seek a great deal of diversity in our fields growing warm-season grasses, since plant diversity reduces the uniform appearance generally expected on athletic fields. I think it is safe to say that athletic fields are generally designed and built for the enjoyment of people. In today's modern culture, we build lots of facilities for this sole purpose. So, I see nothing wrong with selecting a grass species and cultivar that optimizes the playing and management characteristics of the field.

Many of the native warm-season grasses do not have the density or hold up to the rigors of athletic events. There are a few that have been identified that can provide a turf in the Deep South. These include seashore dropseed (*Sporobolus virginicus*), saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), and knotgrass (*Paspalum distichum*). The problem with these grasses is their poor density compared to our commonly used turfgrasses and/or their ability to sustain density with foot traffic. Some ecologists also list seashore paspalum (*Paspalum vaginatum*) on list of native grasses, but I think that has proven to be incorrect. It can provide a nice turfgrass and its use for athletic field surfaces is growing. Some people suggest buffalograss, which is native to the North American plains. This grass has not performed very well in Florida's humid environment and high pest pressure. There may be other native grasses that perform better in other regions of the country.

The assumption that native grasses require lower inputs of water, fertilizer, and pesticides is really not true, especially when the quality expectations are high. While it might be true in a natural setting, an athletic

field is not designed to be a natural environment. So my advice is to pick a grass that can withstand the rigors of an athletic field in the local environment and manage it with as few inputs as reasonable possible. As a potential reference, you may want to look at Paul Sachs' new book "Managing Healthy Sports Fields: A guide to using organic materials for low-maintenance and chemical-free playing fields" (John Wiley & Sons, 2005). I have not had an opportunity to review the book, but if the title is any indication, it may be useful in designing maintenance schedules that fit your objectives. **ST**



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