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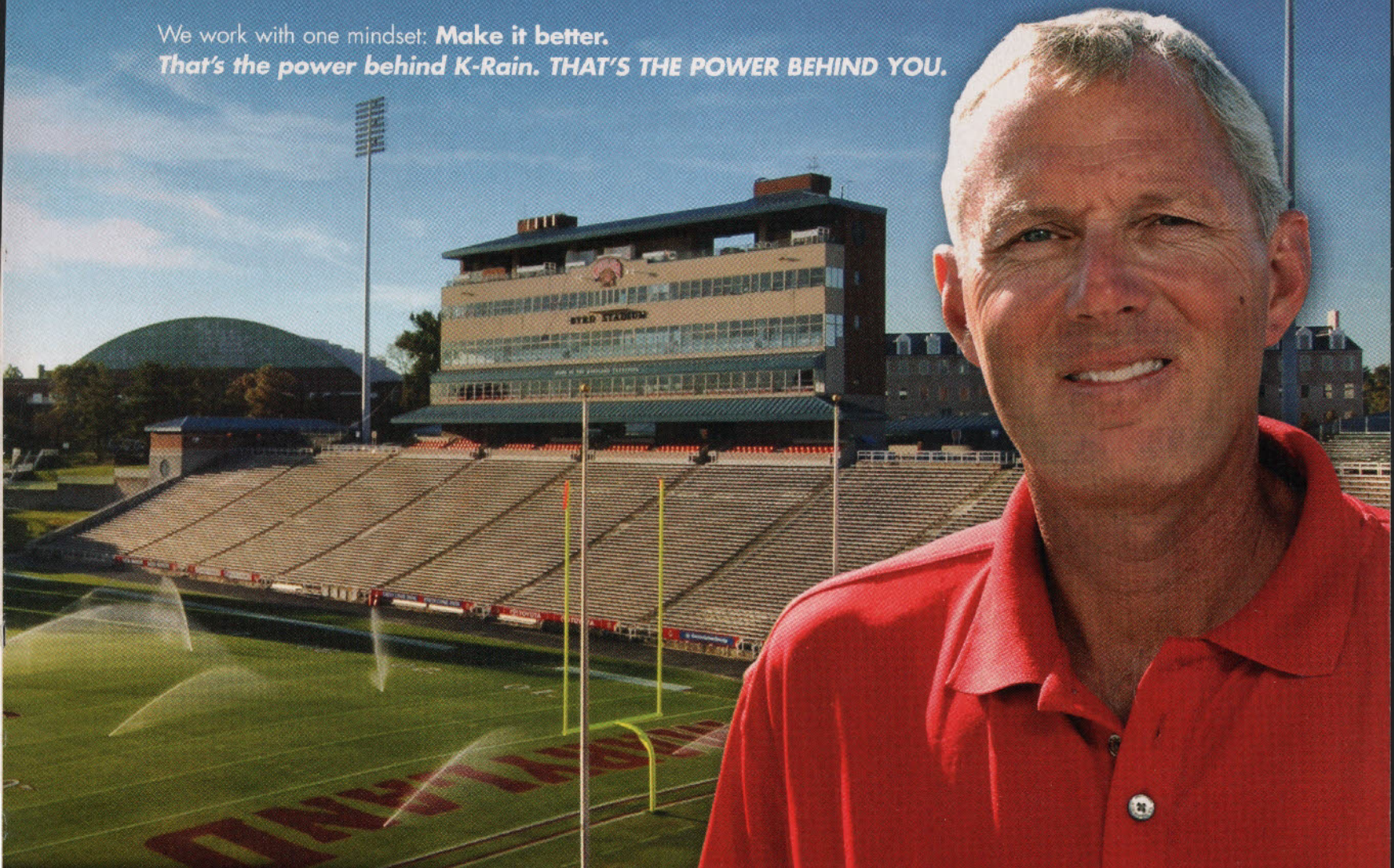
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On the cover: The Amateur Softball Association's Don E. Porter Hall of Fame Stadium hosts the women's NCAA softball championship. Rick Newville, sports turf superintendent, won STMA's Field of the Year Award in 2005. Photo by NCAA Photos.

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# Grandad Didn't Have a Cell Phone



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**M**y grandfather passed away in 2004 at age 92 so he could have hooked a cell phone onto his overalls while he farmed if he'd wanted. But he didn't have much use for modern technology (save the latest combine); heck, he didn't even bother with cable television and never once flew in an airplane.

Grandad couldn't have imagined in 1955 or 1965 or 1975 that one day he could call Uncle Bill from the seat of that combine. Yet today he could not only make a call but also use the phone to check when his crops might get some rain.

My point? Not too long ago turf managers probably dreamed about growing natural grass in an enclosed stadium, or employing a robot to mow their acreage. "Maybe in the future," they might have mused.

Well, as Dr. Dave Minner and Dr. Andy McNitt pointed out at the Sports Turf Managers Association's Conference last month, "The future is here." In their tandem presentation at the Conference's Opening Session, both educators painted an exciting picture of how turf managers' jobs are changing and will continue to change. Dr. Minner showed slides of the construction in Phoenix of the NFL Cardinals' new stadium, which features a field that literally moves in and out of the enclosed stadium on rollers and Teflon skids. He also had slides from Van Cline at Toro showing Global Positioning Systems (GPS) technology that now can measure your fields' water content, soil compaction, and turf stress.

Dr. McNitt said the turf manager profession is "in the middle of a revolution," and that in the future success in turfgrass management will require 5% hard skills and 95% communication skills. As an example, he suggested that sports turf managers regularly (even just once every spring) produce a simple newsletter that shares with his or her field users some of the why and how of turf maintenance and how the users benefit.

General agreement exists among the attendees and commercial exhibitors at the STMA Conference on one thing: the sports turf industry is growing. Sports turf managers' professionalism and ability to effectively communicate, to "management" and end users, needs to keep pace.

For more news from the STMA Conference, see [www.greenmediaonline.com](http://www.greenmediaonline.com) for our special report from the show.

*Oversight Dept.: In our Field Construction Company Directory in the December 2005 issue, we unfortunately neglected to list ABC Sports Turf in Houston. You can reach them at 281-493-3327 or [www.abcsporsturf.com](http://www.abcsporsturf.com). We regret the omission.*

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## Wow, What a Year



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**C**STMA'S Annual Conference & Exhibition in Orlando was a huge success. It provided wonderful learning and networking experiences coupled with enjoyable leisure time that resulted in an event to be remembered by all. The conference was also the kick-off of our yearlong 25th anniversary celebration. The energy and enthusiasm of the conference was contagious, and I have returned with a feeling of renewal.

Our conference in Orlando was the culmination of a yearlong collaboration of work done by many members of our association, as well as the efforts of our Board of Directors, CEO, and staff. Just as the conference was successful, there are many other initiatives in 2005 that have resulted in solid progress and have set the stage for continued advancement of STMA.

In 2005, your Board of Directors set in place a 2-year strategic plan. Our strategic plan objectives continue to move forward with some goals already completed. We implemented a strong committee system with nearly 100 members participating. STMA relies on committees to help guide and execute work. Committees also bring great perspective and insight to the board and staff. Our Bylaws Committee has been working weekly via conference call to review all of the association bylaws to ensure that they provide appropriate governance. In particular, they are working on several revisions to our category representation, which you will hear about throughout this year. We also continue to have more members attaining the designation of Certified Sports Field Manager, and we are financially sound. This is evident in the publishing of the 2004/2005 Annual Report, which specifically highlights programs and services funded by membership dues.

STMA continues to grow and prosper because of the dedicated services we provide to our membership and to the sports turf industry. All of which could not have happened without the tireless efforts of our CEO Kim Heck and her staff, Pat Allen, Leah Craig, and Erica Spurling. I know I speak for the Board of Directors when I say you will see their commitment and passion for membership services when you interact with them.

STMA is such a great association, and 2005 was a very productive year. It is an honor to be a part of STMA as President and as a member. Thanks again to all of you who have given of your time, talents and energy this past year to make STMA what it is today.

It has truly been an honor to serve you along with the Board of Directors and staff in 2005, and we are looking forward to the remainder of 2006.

*Mike Trigg*

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# Overseeding bermudagrass:

## chemical vs. natural transition

By Scott McElroy, Ph.D.

**O**verseeding bermudagrass with perennial ryegrass is a good idea for many reasons. It provides a year-round green turf surface, increases winter playability, and potentially provides greater attraction of fall, winter, and early spring play.

One of the major problems with bermudagrass overseeded perennial ryegrass is the spring transition. During spring transition from a perennial ryegrass dominated stand to a bermudagrass turf stand, it is very difficult to have a seamless transition where one maintains uniform green turf. This is difficult because, in most situations perennial ryegrass can prevent 100% green-up by the bermudagrass. So, in non-overseeded areas when bermudagrass achieves complete green-up, the bermudagrass underlying an overseeded stand, is still partially dormant. An application of the a herbicide to kill the perennial ryegrass can leave empty brown patches until the turf greens up completely. This mottled green/brown turf would make one think that simply letting the ryegrass die-out on its own would be a better option.

If one chooses to simply let the perennial ryegrass "burn-out," or transition naturally, several new problems arise, one that is potentially worse than the mottled turf-clumpy volunteer ryegrass. You see,

some of the perennial ryegrass never burns out, even in the hottest of summers. This is problematic because the perennial ryegrass that does not burn out often turns into volunteer "clumpy" ryegrass. Clumps of perennial ryegrass are extremely difficult to control. Many herbicides and herbicide rates that are used to control ryegrass in a dense overseeded stand are not as effective controlling volunteer ryegrass. While low and mid rates of foramsulfuron (Revolver) and trifloxysulfuron (Monument) can control ryegrass in an overseeded stand, high rates of either herbicide is needed for 100% control of clumpy volunteer ryegrass. As a side not, in every area I have been in Tennessee where someone says that they completely transition their perennial ryegrass with no herbicide, we have found clumpy ryegrass.

### When's it goin' go?

A second problem with letting the perennial ryegrass to burn out naturally is that you never know when it is going to go. If we have a dry spring the perennial ryegrass could die by mid-May, however with a wet, mild summer, most of the perennial ryegrass could stick around all summer, thus making the volunteer ryegrass situation worse. With a natural transition you have no control.

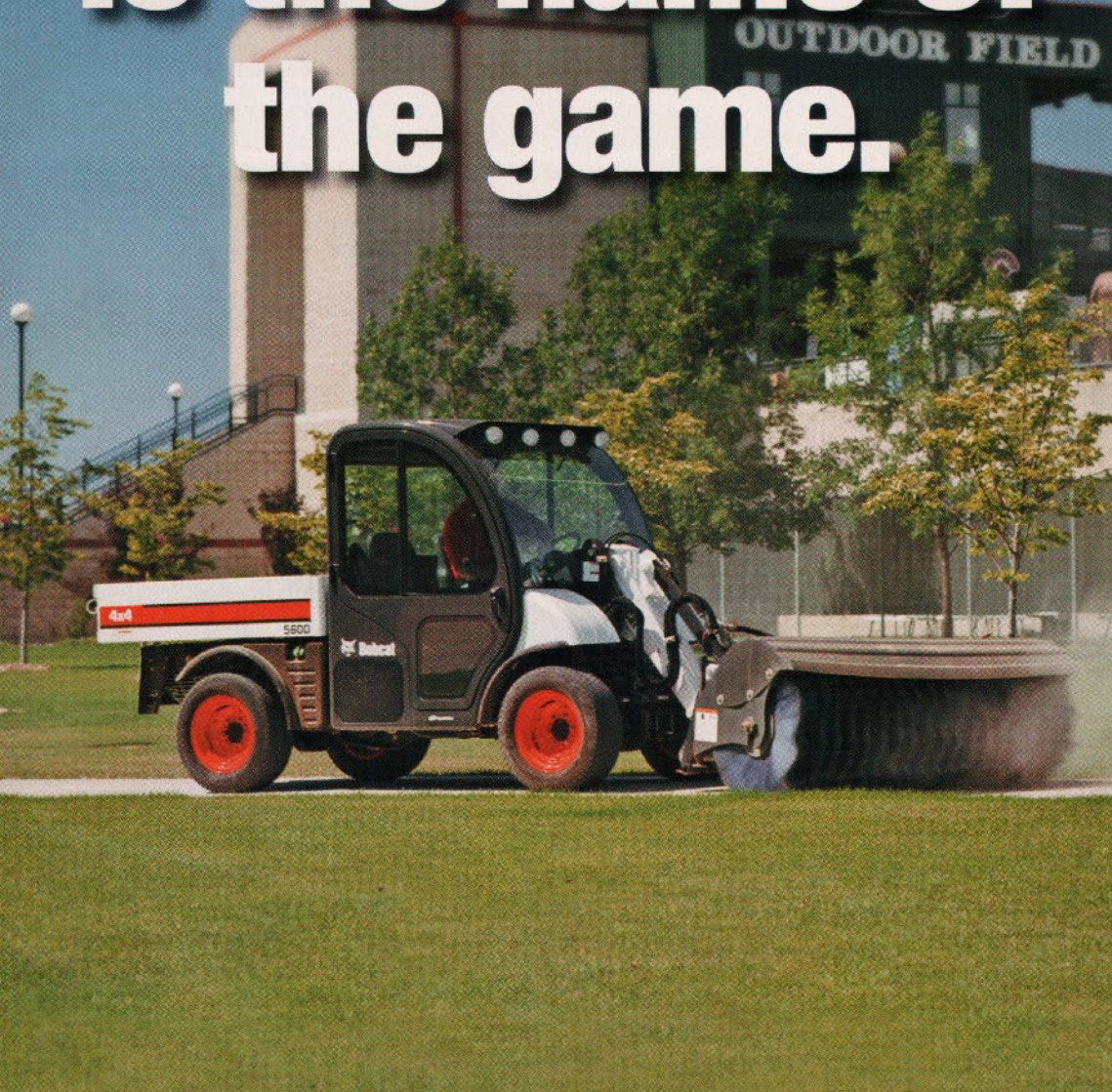


Clumpy volunteer perennial ryegrass that has survived the previous summer and now creates an uneven turf surface.



Rapid death of the ryegrass left open bare ground areas due to suppression of the bermudagrass.

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**Table 1: Pros and cons of natural versus chemical transition of overseeded ryegrass to bermudagrass turf.**

Natural Transition	
Pros	Cons
Cost- Free	Removal is sometimes too fast
	Removal is sometimes too slow, if not at all
	Greater propensity for clumpy ryegrass invasion due to partial stand survival, aka, Clumpy Ryegrass
	Greater survival of perennial ryegrass in the summer can decrease bermuda grass health
Chemical Transition	
Pros	Cons
Potential for slow seamless transition	Cost- Definitely not free.
You control when you want the perennial ryegrass removed.	Seamless transition does not always occur.
Proper timing of ryegrass removal insures an adequate bermudagrass growing season	Repeat applications for a seamless transition is going to be more laborious.
Lower use rates and repeat applications of sulfonylurea herbicides can improve the potential for a seamless transition.	

A third and final problem of letting the perennial ryegrass transition naturally is that allowing perennial ryegrass continue to survive early into the summer is detrimental to the overall bermudagrass stand. Due to the potential for winter-kill or cool springs that delay bermudagrass green up in some areas, bermudagrass needs all the growing time it can get during the late-spring and summer. Experts agree, allowing 90 to 120 days of good growing conditions for bermudagrass during the summer is a good rule to follow when trying to optimize bermudagrass health. This means that bermudagrass needs June, July, August, and part September of growing for optimized stand health. Allowing perennial ryegrass to contaminate the bermudagrass stand will decrease stand health by decreasing the number of uninhibited days of prime growing conditions.

### Chemical pros and cons

Let's start with the cons (see Table 1). The main negative is that it is difficult, even when herbicides are used, to remove the perennial ryegrass while maintaining 100% green turf cover throughout the transition. Maintaining 100% green-turf cover would insure a complete seamless transition, as the perennial ryegrass slowly dies, the bermudagrass just takes over.

The herbicide that provides the slowest kill, pronamide (Kerb) often does not achieve 100% control and a seamless transition is not always achieved. A cool period with high cloud cover during the time when the perennial ryegrass is dying can leave the bermudagrass stagnating, struggling to enter a period of vigorous growth. A weather pattern such as this can prevent that seamless period from occurring, leaving mottled green and brown turf.

What about the pros? The biggest pro to me is control. You have control over when you want the ryegrass removed. Newer herbicides in the sulfonylurea family, such as trifloxysulfuron (Monument) and

foramsulfuron (Revolver) for example, can provide a relatively quick, 100% elimination of the perennial ryegrass (Table 2). But then again, if the weather conditions are not optimal, the bermudagrass can still stagnate under cool conditions.

### What should I do?

The first thing you should do is remember what your primary concern should be for that turf: bermudagrass health. In an athletic field or golf course situation, if you lose your bermudagrass base you are going to get a decrease in wear tolerance during the overseeded time during the fall, winter, and spring. If you allow the perennial ryegrass to linger longer than it should, you are creating a situation that is potentially decreasing bermudagrass health. A decrease in overall health of the bermudagrass can increase the propensity for secondary problems such as winterkill, or potentially reduced wear tolerance.

Second, remember that perennial ryegrass is primarily for appearance. You are creating a more resilient surface for the fall and early spring football and baseball season or simply trying to improve the

*continued on page 22*

**Table 2. Primary products utilized for overseeded perennial ryegrass in bermudagrass turf.**

Product Name	Generic Name	Rate	Speed of Transition
Kerb	pronamide	1.5 - 3.0 lb/a	3-6 weeks
Monument	trifloxysulfuron	0.3 - 0.56 oz/a	2-3 weeks
Revolver	foramsulfuron	17.4 fl oz/a	2-3 weeks
TranXit	rimsulfuron	0.5 - 1.0 oz/a	2-3 weeks