



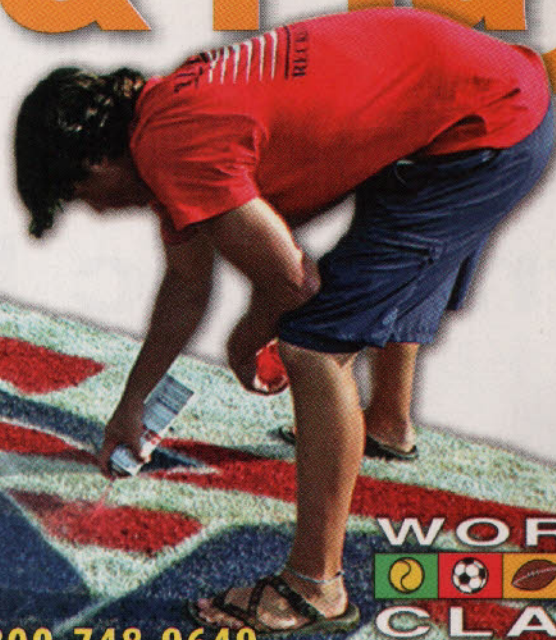
Answer: from page 19

The brown turf is a result of a plywood end-zone paint stencil. The turf was not turned brown because of the stencil being left on the field during the heat of the day; the stencil burned it itself. After some investigative work it was determined that the plywood stencils had been stored under the stands against several pallets of Ammonium Sulfate fertilizer. The fast-release fertilizer had permeated the plywood and when the plywood was laid on the turf, the residual fertilizer in the plywood burned the turf. The problem was masked by some green dye and a new location was found to store the stencils. ■

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Ohio firm builds synthetic R&D fields

Pioneer Athletics in Cleveland has constructed three different turf fields solely for product testing on property adjacent to their business complex, which the company calls the "University of Pioneer." Their goal is to separate myth from fact regarding the care and maintenance of synthetic turf fields.

Thirty years ago, when synthetic turf started its climb to popularity, many universities, high schools and park & rec departments

bought into the promise of being able to host more events and lower operating costs. Many began to make the switch from natural turf fields to synthetic turf fields.

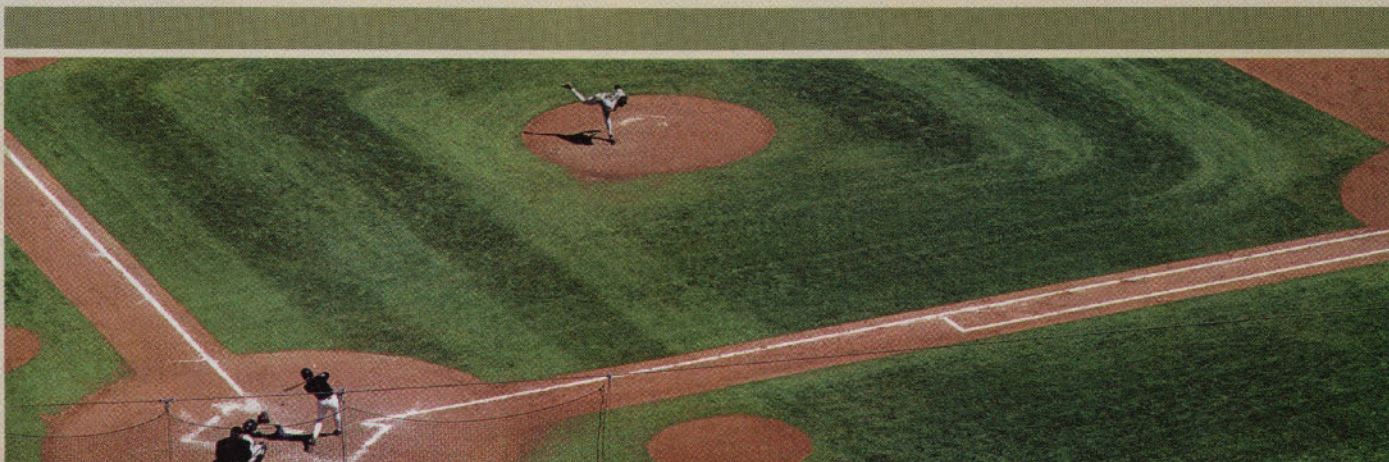
Pioneer recognized this growing trend in synthetic turf and realized that there were no paints or products designed with the synthetic turf manager in mind. "We were beginning to get a lot of questions and comments from our customers, who used to have natural turf and switched to synthetic turf, wondering what products we had available

for their new synthetic surfaces," says Pioneer's Chris Fiore. "They wanted to be able to put a different color of paint over their goal lines or paint the endzone for Homecoming, but there was nothing on the market that would enable them to do that without potential damage and costly repair to their turf."

To bridge the gap between the unknown and the possible in sports turf, Pioneer set out to develop products geared toward synthetic turf. Their research, development and education within the industry became a 25-year process.

In the early 80's, Pioneer began creating and developing Titan, a field paint exclusive to synthetic turf made with the same components found in the company's natural turf paints. Today, with infill fields gaining popularity, Pioneer introduced Titan Removable paint, which gives sports turf managers the option to apply and remove paint, logos, and stencils in three steps, without the risk of damage to the turf.

The desire to expand their body of knowledge has now led to the "University of Pioneer." With the synthetic turf industry growing, Pioneer began prospecting several different turf companies with their concept for an unaffiliated research and development training ground for products geared toward synthetic turf. Stripers, paints,



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disinfectants, and various other products would be used on the training ground to test function, usability, and longevity.

"We approached many companies who saw the same demands in the industry and who had the same vision about the future of athletic turf as we did," says Fiore. Sprinturf and Sportexe joined the venture and offered up many styles of turf.

"[We] all agreed to release the data as widely as possible to help further the industry," says Fiore. "Our goal is to provide the information turf managers need to provide the best playing surfaces possible."

"We are working hard to test different technologies and techniques so that we can separate fact from myth. The University of Pioneer is about educating the industry and their consumers," adds Pioneer's president, Doug Schattinger.

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Sprinturf and Sportex agreed to donate several sections of synthetic turf and each section contained a different variety of turf. Several different varieties of natural turf were also included in the mix. "With both companies granting us use of their turf, an agreement was reached that all research and development from the University of Pioneer would be shared. Once this happened we were able to move forward and begin the planning of construction and installation of the fields," says Schattinger.

After a lengthy process, the Sports Construction Group of Cleveland was picked to install the several different sections and varieties of natural and synthetic turf. "The Sports Construction Group did an amazing job with construction and installation," says Schattinger. "There were some very specific requirements that we felt we needed for the field and they executed it perfectly."

When installation was completed in early November, the University of Pioneer consisted of three fully functioning mixed turf fields, with nearly a dozen varieties of natural and synthetic turf spread over three separate areas each in excess of 60 x 60 feet.

The fields, which replaced a grass knoll adjacent to Pioneer's shipping and receiving area, are a colorful assortment of turf and seems a little out of place with the other industrial companies surrounding it, but Pioneer wouldn't have it any other way. "This venture is a major step for the turf and turf paint industry; no other company has a testing ground like this and we are going to use that to our advantage," Fiore says. "We believe in the sharing of knowledge and exchanging of ideas and this next year should prove very valuable to sports turf managers across the U.S. We plan on sharing new developments each year at the STMA Convention," adds Schattinger.

For more information about the University of Pioneer, visit www.pioneerathletics.com or call 1-800-877-1500.

This article was written by Pioneer's marketing department and edited by ST editor Eric Schroder. ■

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NO "SURPRISE"

Joe Kennedy III wins Complex of the Year again

The Surprise Recreation Campus, a 170-acre, \$73 million facility 40 miles northwest of Phoenix, has won the Sports Turf Manager Association's Professional Complex of the Year for the second consecutive year. The facility is the spring training home and player development center for the Kansas City Royals and Texas Rangers, as well as home to MLB's Arizona Fall League and the independent minor league franchise, the Surprise Fightin' Falcons.

Joe Kennedy III, CSFM, is baseball maintenance manager for the complex, which also hosts events as diverse as July 4 celebrations, high school football games, cross country meets, Special Olympics, Chamber of Commerce family events and on and on. In fact, Kennedy reports the city is spending \$1.5 million to add a three-field youth baseball complex and \$1.1 million for a facility to meet the needs of mentally and physically challenged community members.

Kennedy's duties are massive: "I oversee the maintenance operations [for the entire campus]. I coordinate the on field activities and maintenance schedule for both the Texas Rangers and Kansas City Royals throughout the year as well as other outside agencies and public usage. I am directly involved with everything from developing and overseeing operational budgets to developing our fertilization program and overseeing capital projects to making sure the bathrooms are stocked.

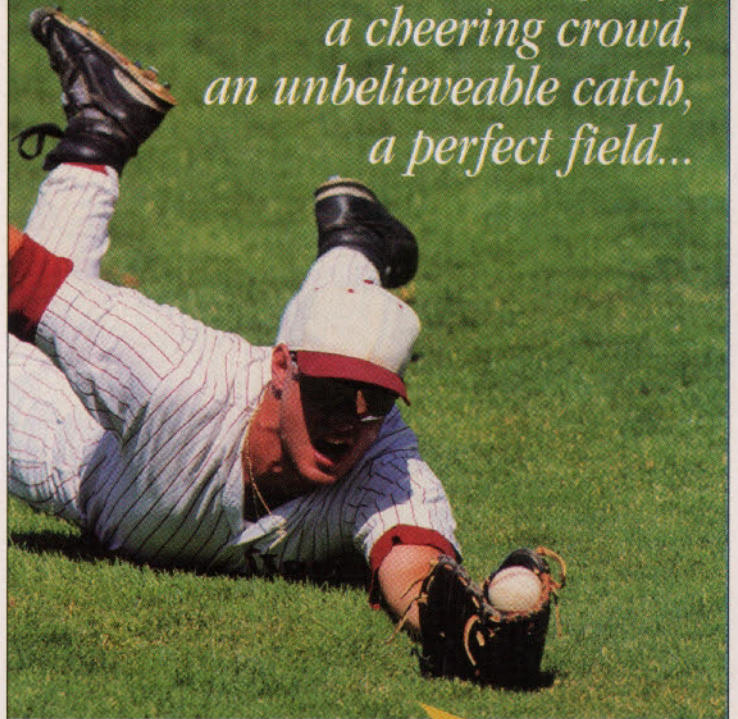
"But most of all I have the privilege and honor of coaching, instructing and working with some of the top professionals in all of the sports turf industry, my grounds crew team," he says.

Kennedy studied business at a small college in Missouri and then eventually earned his professional certification in turfgrass from the University of Georgia. "Some people who know me think I may suffer from Attention Deficit Disorder but somehow I found the perfect job for me in sports turf management.



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FIELD OF THE YEAR



"My first sports turf-related job was helping with field maintenance while attending college. My first full-time position was maintenance worker with the City of Peoria (AZ), taking care of softball and Little League fields, the swimming pool, and removing graffiti."

All the fields and common areas at the complex feature Bull's-eye Bermuda from West Coast Turf. "We overseed with perennial rye during the winter," Kennedy says. "All of our fields are sand-based with drainage tile systems collected in dry wells. Our Major League fields have a profile of 6 inches of pea gravel topped with 10-12 inches of a USGA spec blend of sand and peat moss. Our Minor League fields

used 6-8 inches of a higher gradation of sand with no organics over the same pea gravel bed."

Irrigation and drainage

The irrigation system was designed to accommodate the ever-increasing demand on potable water in the Southwest. Kennedy currently uses non-potable water from a 5-acre lake on site. The system was designed to give the ability to use non-potable, potable, effluent or a blend.

The water is drawn from a 24-inch inlet with two 30-hp pumps, which have the capacity to provide 1500 gallons per minute. A 10-inch



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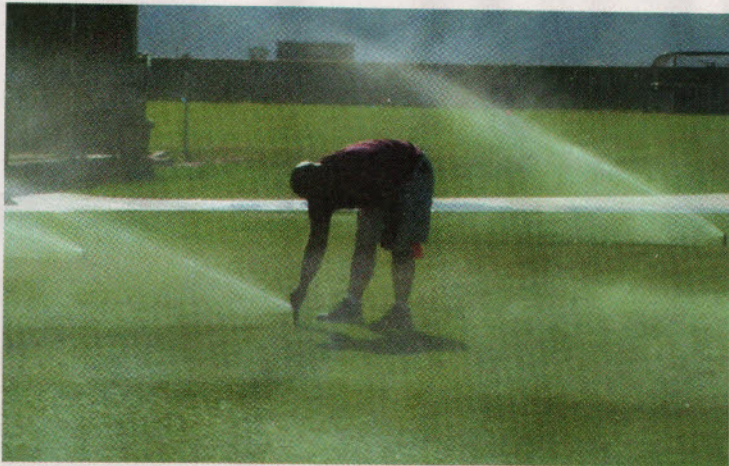
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mainline hoop supplies the water from the pump house. Each field then has a 3-inch mainline loop that provides water to two 12-inch valves. Each field has a 3-inch master valve and the ability to isolate any of the 12 valves and still supply water to the rest of the field. Each playing field is equipped with an average of 90 sprinkler heads and 10 1 1/2-inch quick couplers. The Campus is a Hunter irrigation facility, Kennedy says.

The drainage system for the Stadium field includes the standard extensive subsurface drainage system with a pump located approximately 30 feet beyond the left field foul pole. The field is gravity-drained into a pit, and then excess water within the stadium can be pumped into a retention area about 440 yards away.

The Major League practice fields, with percolation rates of 12-18 inches per hour, are designed similarly with a geotextile layer separating the old subgrade from the new one. Four- and 6-inch drain tiles 20 feet on center run through the 4-inch gravel layer and connect into a dry well outside the centerfield fence. The central tile is equipped with a flapper-style backflow valve to prevent backup during a flood situation. The gravel layer is topped with 10 inches of USGA sand/peat blended sand.

Work/family balance

"I am sure balancing family life with work demands is the most difficult situation we as sports turf managers have to deal with," says Kennedy. "I am blessed with a beautiful and patient wife and three outstanding children. My wife has been with me since my early years in the business and has always been understanding. I try to focus on the time I do spend with my family and live each moment to its fullest as if it were my last.

"I am also fortunate to have an exceptional support staff that shares in our scheduling demands. My upper management and city council here at Surprise has always supported a "family first" motto that has had a huge influence on my accepting this position," he says.

How does Kennedy see his job changing in the next 10 years? "I see the role of a sports field manager experiencing great strides in technological advances in both equipment and management aides. We will have to be knowledgeable in both natural and artificial surfaces and continue to be on the cutting edge of environmental issues such as water conservation, alternative fuel equipment with low pollutant emissions, and the use of natural & organic fertilizers," he says. ■



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SYNTHETIC TURF...

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Lawn sweepers find a new home on sports turf

By Robin Pendergrast

The advent of the original lawn sweeper took place more than 100 years ago. Throughout the country and worldwide, sports turf managers are continuing to use this steadfast piece of lawn equipment.

While the original sweepers were introduced in the early 1900s by Parker Sweeper (currently Minuteman Parker), the evolution and the re-design of the multi-

tasking equipment has almost been static. And that's up to today's standard, knowing that the original design was ideal and progressive from the start.

The application of the simple, yet productive, lawn sweeper can be summarized in its simplicity by providing an effortless ability to swiftly brush turf into a standing position even after the most competitive athletic contests.

Even the large divots that are often a by-product of soccer, football and other competitive events do not require much heavier cumbersome vacuums. The only requirement is the use of a quick swathe of a two- or three-gang lawn sweeper system.

Turf managers can use, in most cases, the multiple-height capabilities of lawn sweepers. The mowed grass or impacted grass can be cut off better once it is serviced with the lawn