George Toma does Super (Bowl) job on turf

BY VERN PUTNEY

Sports Illustrated dubs George P. Toma, the NFL's National Turf Manager, "The Man," but he heads the field operations at the classy Arrowhead Stadium and Royals Stadium at the Harry S. Truman Sports Complex in Kansas City, Mo., does a Super job. Super as in Super Bowl. He's supervised the setting for all 23 Super Bowls. Plus four Pro Bowls.

His handwork is the first view for anticipating millions as the stage is set for perhaps TV's greatest sports attraction.

Toma takes a workmanlike approach to what he believes is his sole responsibility — providing the athlete with the best possible playing conditions — something golf course superintendents can identify with.

To cope with the variety of elements encountered, Toma and associates have developed what is known as Prescription Athletic Turf (PAT). Grass is a combination of Derby, Regal and Gator Rye. The three species complement each other. Once the turf is set, it will endure through 70- to 90-degree weather, while Gator can contend with the cold of Canadian climes.

George Toma stands in front of one of his fields.