

Doc's Dugout

Our profession of grounds maintenance is very old and its roots can be traced back to the 1830's when two significant inventions were introduced to make the job of grounds-keeping easier and simpler. The first occurred in 1830 when the first lawnmower was patented and finally in 1832 when it was manufactured by Edwin Budding of Stroud, Gloucestershire, England. The second was the putting green cup cutter which was introduced around 1839 in Scotland. These two contributions assisted in bringing the profession out of the "cow pasture" stage and created a job in this line of work for many individuals. No longer were sheep and cattle depended upon to do the mowing or rabbits and rodents needed to provide holes in putting greens.

To our friends and colleagues from the United Kingdom we are indebted for the numerous contributions they have made to the field of sports turf management, both past and present. They have elevated the status and substance of our profession through their diligence, hard work, study and quality of performance. The work and education of the Institute of Groundsmanship is unsurpassed anywhere in the world. The fellowship and warm friendship the IOG and STMA experienced recently in Houston on the sports turf tour, at the educational sessions and in a social setting were extremely worthwhile and very genuine. STMA will be represented next September at Windsor to participate in the 50th anniversary of the IOG's educational exhibition and show.

Here in the United States the groundsperson has had to endure many years of second-class status. We live in an age where the headlines are occupied by politicians, financial experts and science-technology specialists. It took nearly 50 years for the greenskeeper to become a superintendent but even longer for the janitor or custodian to attain the title of sports turf manager. A movement is underway to elevate the status, integrity and professionalism of the sports turf

manager but it will not come without considerable hard work and sacrifice. The pride and status which accompanies a title must be earned. No longer can we tolerate the criticisms, belittlement or degradation of us personally or the maintenance practices we perform by fellow "professionals" and especially through the media. No longer can we afford to tear down our peers in front of others so we look good or because we are jealous of someone else. The entire industry suffers from these types of endeavors. We may not agree with someone or the way a person approaches a particular job or task, or like a product or piece of equipment that individual is using but we need to remember and understand that there is more than one way to tackle a project or to accomplish a task.

Remember every situation is different, every climatic zone is different, every individual is different and products may perform differently in different environments and under different use situations or conditions. Before we point an accusing finger at someone, it would be wise to look in the mirror and evaluate our own situation and make sure our own house is in order. Advice should be based upon research and fact and not just on personal opinion. The only way our young industry can survive, prosper and gain the respect and recognition we all desire is through cooperation and education and by sharing, understanding, praising and showing a little compassion and fellowship to our colleagues. Helping others is far more satisfying than tearing them down. Our industry can ill-afford to continually dwell solely upon the negative. It is the positive that we must emphasize and continually re-enforce. We must practice what we preach and not only look professional but be professional. Then the professionalism we all desire and deserve will be apparent because it will be earned and we can begin to call ourselves Sports Turf Managers.

Kent Kurtz

Future Sports Turf Managers Receive Awards

The Sports Turf Manager's Association's main goal and purpose is to educate its members and to develop the future of the industry by supporting the educational endeavors of its future leaders. In 1987 STMA established a scholarship program to assist students who are seriously pursuing a career in the field of sports turf management. The two awards that were established are named in the honor of two outstanding individuals who represent STMA and the industry. The Harry Gill Award honors the founder of STMA and its first president who currently is the Superintendent of Grounds at Milwaukee County Stadium. No other person has done as much as Harry to educate and train young people in the sports turf profession. The second award is named in honor of Jeff Wishard who sustained a serious injury several years ago in a football accident. Although Jeff is confined to a wheelchair, he is active in his community with responsibilities on the Village board, park commission and as a Boy Scout leader.



Eric Carl Hansen



J. Eric Chapman

The STMA presented two \$500 scholarship awards to two students at their conference in Houston, Texas.

THE HARRY GILL AWARD

The recipient of the Harry Gill scholarship is **Eric Carl Hansen** who is working towards his degree in Turf Management at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. Eric received his first degree at the University of Alaska while serving in the Air Force. He currently serves as Head Baseball Coach at Leander High School where he also teaches science. He plans to resign this year to complete his education on a full time basis.

THE JEFF WISHARD AWARD

J. Eric Chapman is the recipient of the Jeff Wishard Award and is a junior studying Turfgrass Management at Washington State University in Pullman, Washington. Eric has worked with sports turf for quite some time as his father, James Chapman, has been involved in the industry for many years and his mother has been on the grounds crew of the Broadmoor Country Club in Seattle. Eric has worked for STMA member Gene Howe who owns and operates Sports-turf Northwest in Redmond, Washington. According to Howe, "my dues are well spent if any student of Eric's caliber receives our assistance." Eric most recently worked on the practice facility where the Seattle Seahawks train.

The Northwest Turfgrass Association provided funds to send Eric to Houston to receive the award. He was accompanied by the Seattle Seahawk's field supervisor, John Monson.