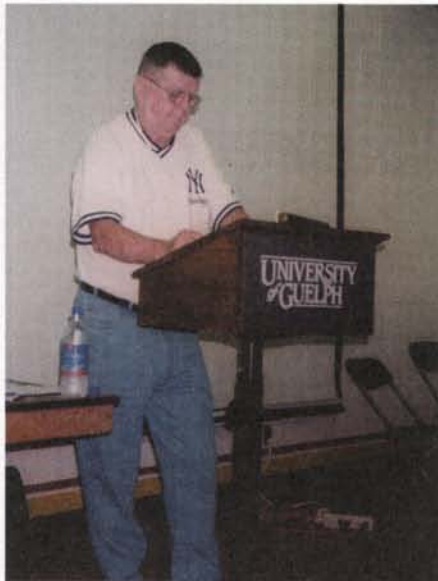


# STA 13th Annual Field Day Coverage

HELD AUGUST 16 AT ALUMNI STADIUM, UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH. ARTICLE BY MIKE BLADON

**T**he STA 13th Annual Field Day was very well attended with 90 delegates and another 25-30 turf industry suppliers. Although windy, the day was perfect for showing and testing the various turf equipment and all suppliers were given a chance to talk about their various wares.



## Groundskeeper Ed Miller

On the speaker program, Ed Miller, formerly of the New York Yankees, entertained with baseball stories and suggested many ideas on how to best maintain a baseball field like the pros.

Some of his tips related to diagramming different mowing patterns (the outfield can be mowed in five different ways) and for the infield, changes in dragging patterns. Many do not remove the bases when dragging. This is poor procedure. Ed suggests to always rake the base paths lengthways. When re-establishing the infield grass, use a line from the back of third base over to the middle of second base and then to the back of first base. Then use a sod cutter to get good straight lines. Ed also talked about the use of Turface to help dry the infield and using a piece of fire hose filled with water to drag water off the diamond and onto the outfield grass.

In the majors, the infield grass edge is swept with a corn broom so no mound will build up. Likewise, the warning track is

painted for a guide to run the sod cutter then dragged to remove any weeds, particularly when no spraying is allowed. Ed installs a pipe behind third and first base to mark foul lines rather than measuring each time. He finished his talk with videos on pitching mound construction and the installation of home plates and advised turf managers to wear hats and to use sun block – skin cancer is a growing concern in the turf care profession.

## Barrie Community Sports Complex

Due to an emergency, the scheduled speakers were unable to attend, however, Ken Bannerman, a long-time Field Manager with the City of Barrie, and Gordon Dol, STA Director and private contractor who is doing the construction of the fields in this complex, were on hand and gave a very interesting talk.

The 118 acre site is an old forestry station which the city purchased from the government. Blocks of trees that originally protected young seedlings grown at the forestry station have been retained.

While a city-owned facility, the Barrie complex has been designed with input from various user groups who will eventually take over the complex. It is situated on a sandy well drained loam and comprises two quad or pinwheel diamonds, a championship diamond, and several soc-

cer and football fields. It is fully irrigated with work done by Vanden Bussche Irrigation. Although originally scheduled to be completed in four phases, it will now be done in two. Total cost is estimated at \$11 million – the city has put in \$6-8 million and user groups will contribute the rest. Gerry Ray, Executive Director of the complex, has a passion for the job and has contacted school boards and worked with other user groups and the general contractor. Included in the plan will be a banquet hall and a 5,000 seat stadium with change rooms, administrative offices, washrooms, etc.

Gord Dol mentioned that all fields have been graded to a fall of 1/8" in 2,500 feet with no under drainage due to almost all of the complex being sand with some clay at the top end of the property. There is an irrigation pond of 2-1/2 acres with two 50 HP pumps pushing water through 10-12" mains. There is 4-6" of topsoil on the fields and all were seeded rather than sodded. Pickseed Sports Turf Mix was used containing a 25% rye and 75% bluegrass blend. Fescue was used around the parking areas. Ron Martin of Mar-Co Clay Products amended the soils on the championship infield. There has been minimal clearing of trees and fence height has been kept at 1-1/2 metres to allow the passage of deer.

