SFMANJ Spring Field Day in Hammonton Hits a Homerun

by Don Savardo, CSFM*

It was perfect! The weather was warm, the program was terrific and the tours were outstanding. The 2005 Spring Field Day was held in Hammonton, N.J. this year on April 6, 2005. We met under the water tower at the Grounds Maintenance shed at Hammonton High School. Frank LaSasso and his team of Groundskeepers had everything ready for us. While enjoying coffee and donuts (courtesy of GSI Consultants-Turfcon), we visited and got registered. After a welcome and a brief introduction from our President Eleanor Hermann, we started the tour.

Frank LaSasso brought us to his Varsity baseball field and gave us an overview and history of the complex, from peach orchard to school campus, explaining how he and his crew have overcome some of the problems and challenges of a new site. Frank also gave us some tips on how he prepares his baseball field for games. Jim Hermann CSFM-Total Control gave us a very timely presentation on the Ten Points to a Safe and Playable Infield. A good Q&A session followed.

Next it was off to the Football Field (one of the best high school fields I've seen) where Frank explained how they keep the field in top shape. Dr Jim Murphy-Rutgers gave us a very timely presentation on the Ten Points to a Safe and Playable Infield. A good Q&A session followed.

Field Day tour included cutting of big roll sod.

Betts Family from Tuckahoe Sod Farm

SFMANJ Business

Next Board of Directors Meeting – June 1st, at Rutgers University, Geiger Bldg. at 5PM

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Morgan, Larry
Mulholland, Steven
Orgera, Robert
Panek, Zig
Patterson, Craig
Paul, Albert
Perdomo, Pedro
Pierce, Harold S.
Radcliffe, Ryan
Ryan, Edward
Santalone, Jr., Ed
Siegel, Bill
Stetser, Scott
Vestal, Charlie
Wilson, Howard

Tuckahoe Turf Farms
New Jersey City University
Mendham Borough
Monmouth County Parks
North Brunswick Township
Richard Stockton College
Ridgewood Village
Rutgers Cooperative Extension
Winslow Twp. Board of Ed.
Lakewood Blue Claws
Long Branch, City of
The LandTek Group
Atlantic Irrigation Specialties
U.S. Athletic Fields, Inc.
Atlantic Irrigation Specialties
Profile Products
Somerset County Park Comm.

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University, Cook College spoke about Soil Characteristics and Turfgrasses. We got a pretty good discussion going about soils, fertilizers and amendments. Jeff Cramer gave the talk about Understanding Specifications that Dr. Henry Indyk was supposed to give. Dr. Indyk was home recovering from an illness and was unable to join us (please get well soon Henry, we miss you!!) We saw a demonstration and discussed the uses of turf blankets (the Cover Sports USA turf blanket was generously donated by John Doyle, JDL Equipment Co.). Brad Park-Rutgers University, Cook College wrapped up the session with a discussion about Pre & Post emergence Selective Weed Control.

Next, we drove about 2 miles to the Tuckahoe Turf Farm where the Betts Family provided a luncheon feast under a big tent. Following lunch, we split into District groups and held brief District meetings. We are hoping to strengthen our District organization in the coming year.

Following lunch and the District meetings, we boarded 2 deluxe motor coaches compliments of Tuckahoe Turf Farm and began a tour of the farm. Tuckahoe Turf Farms is one of the largest growers in the Northeast, and is a leader in new and innovative varieties of sod and growth technology. Their operations include 1500 acres- 800 located in Hammonton and 100 located in Tuckahoe. The balance of the land is used for maintenance and watershed.

George Betts explained that his father Walter Betts and grandfather moved from Stratford, Connecticut in 1931 to Estell Manor, New Jersey and operated a truck farm, producing mainly lima beans and cranberries. In 1967 the family began producing sod and by 1969 devoted their entire

Did You Know?
The only mandatory dimensions on a regulation baseball or softball infield, regardless of level of play are:
1. Distance between the bases
2. Pitching distance
All other dimensions are "recommended." Painting your fairlines on the infield skin will minimize poor playing conditions caused by sticky powdered materials.

Only Rain Bird rotors feature Rain Curtain™ Nozzle Technology that delivers uniform water distribution across the entire radius range for green grass results. Gentle, effective close-in watering around the rotor eliminates dry spots without seed washout, and larger water droplets assure consistent coverage, even in the windiest conditions.

Install Confidence. Install Rain Bird.
Biology of the white grub complex

In the northeastern USA, a complex of primarily introduced white grub species are the most widespread and destructive turfgrass insect pests. Until recently, the Japanese beetle (Popillia japonica) was regarded as the key species, but surveys have indicated that the oriental beetle, [Exomala (=Anomala) orientalis] has become the most important white grub species in New Jersey and some neighboring areas. Thus, the average white grub species composition in New Jersey and some neighboring areas is very similar, the egg-laying period can vary considerably among sites.

Different white grub species can vary significantly in susceptibility to different control agents. Therefore proper species identification can be critical. The safest way to identify white grub species in the larval stage is to examine the rasper pattern just in front of the anal slit on the grub's underside (Figure 1, see insert). Identification is easiest when the grubs are 3rd instar larvae but at this point, the damage is often already done or impending. Therefore, identification should be done when grub populations are being monitored to determine whether curative treatments are necessary, i.e., in mid-August.

Although the general life cycle of the important white grub species is very similar, the egg-laying period varies significantly among species. The egg-laying period is often already done or impending. Therefore, identification should be done when grub populations are being monitored to determine whether curative treatments are necessary, i.e., in mid-August. Thus, the average white grub species composition in New Jersey and some neighboring areas is very similar, the egg-laying period can vary considerably among sites.

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Although the general life cycle of the important white grub species is very similar, the egg-laying period (major target for preventive treatments) and accordingly the occurrence of the voracious 3rd larval stage can vary by a few weeks among species; another reason for obtaining knowledge about the prevalent species in a turf site. Adult beetles emerge between June and August, mate, and the females return into the soil to lay eggs (total of about 20-60) in several batches over a period of 2-4 weeks. The egg stage, 1st larval stage, and 2nd larval stage each last about 3 weeks so that through September most of the grubs will molt to the 3rd and last larval stage. As the soil temperatures cool down in October, the grubs move to deeper soil layers to stay below the frost line to overwinter. During this time most species are more or less inactive. As the soil temperatures warm up in spring, the grubs come up to the root zone to feed for another 4-6 weeks in April and May before they pupate in the soil.

Signs of infestation
- White grubs damage turf by chewing

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