Rain Could Not Washout SFMANJ’s Summer Demonstration Field Day

Brad Park*

Overnight rain and soaking morning showers could not washout Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey’s Summer Demonstration Field Day held at the County College of Morris (CCM), Randolph, NJ on June 28, 2006 – although it did force the SFMANJ Board to make some slight adjustments to the program in what President Ken Mathis appropriately called, “Plan B.”

The morning program, scheduled to be completed outdoors and to include trade show time, was moved inside and featured Super Bowl consultant George Toma. Toma displayed his versatility as a public speaker by giving back-to-back 1.0-hour presentations and field questions from attendees following both talks.

Craig Tolley, Professor, CCM and SFMANJ Board Member as well as the CCM staff are graciously acknowledged for hosting the Summer Demonstration Field Day as well as arranging the fine lunch that followed George Toma’s presentations.

The timing of the day’s weather could not have worked out better as the skies cleared and sun broke through for the afternoon outdoor activities. Attendees flowed from booth to booth to visit with the vendors individual- ly as part of the tradeshow. Additionally, attendees were gathered in a group and each vendor was allotted time to describe his or her products and services. As an incentive for attendees to spend time with the vendors, vendor door prizes were eligible only to those attendees who visited a vendor booth and filled-out ticket available at the booth.

Following the tradeshow, it was time for vendors to demonstrate the latest and greatest sports field equipment. A meeting between representatives of New Jersey equipment giants Storr Tractor and Wilfred MacDonald, as well as CCM personnel, determined that the skinned infield surface was too wet to demonstrate infield grooming equipment. Those vendors demonstrating equipment included: Aer-Core, Inc., Bobcat of North Jersey, and Wilfred MacDonald.

The day ended with a talk delivered by Dr. John Grande, Director, Rutgers Snyder Research and Extension Farm. Dr. Grande’s presentation entitled, “Calibration of Granular Pesticide Application Equipment” allowed those certified pesticide applicators in attendance to receive one NJ DEP Core credit.

A significant portion of this issue of SFMANJ Update includes photo highlights of the trade show and equipment demonstrations. When making purchasing decisions, please give extra consideration to those vendors who support SFMANJ, as this organization could not exist without their continued participation in SFMANJ events.

* Brad Park is Sports Turf Res. and Ed. Coor., Rutgers Univ.; SFMANJ Board member; and Editor, SFMANJ Update

TIPS FOR ATHLETIC FIELD CARE

Dr. David D. Minner*

Use higher than normal seeding rates. In most cases, facilities are needed for play before seeded grass has completed a full year’s growth. Higher seeding rates allow for faster ground cover- age and provide better competition with weeds, especially crabgrass. Higher than normal seeding rates that provide faster coverage are Kentucky bluegrass 3 to 4 lbs/1000 sq. ft., tall fescue 8 to 12 lbs/1000 sq. ft., and perennial ryegrass 10 to 15 lbs/1000 sq. ft.

Deeper seeded grass that is still able to germinate survives traffic better. Drill seeding and seeding after hollow coring is preferred. Plants that develop crowns deeper in the soil are more protected than those that are on top of the soil and are easily damaged.

When renovating, keep existing turf if there is at least 30 to 50% grass cover. Mature grass plants, even in a thin stand of grass, have better traffic-tolerance than a thick stand of seeding turf. Unless there is good reason, avoid non-selective killing of all grass in high-traffic areas. Keep the grass you have and overseed with coring and slicing to fill in bare spots.

Use a combination of nitrogen sources. Quick release in the fall, slow release in early summer, and organic nitrogen in the spring or summer.

Use equal N and K for traffic and drought tolerance.

Always have at least one showcase field. Reallocate resources so that you have at least one field that lets your boss and the public know that you are capable of producing quality turf when given the proper resources and control of the field. Even if resources are limited, don’t spread them out so that all of your fields are average-to-poor or your reputation as a groundsman may be perceived as average-to-poor. Document what it takes to have at least one good field, and use the information to justify an increase in resources to improve the rest of the fields that are in poor condition.

Build a repertoire of instant solutions that you can count on in time of need. For example, thick-cut sod, pre-germinated seed, water removal products, smoothing and rolling. Like any good ball team, you should practice these procedures before you try them in game situations.

SOME COMMON MISTAKES

Non-irrigated areas

Using 100% ryegrass for fall repair of summer “burn out”. Each year you will be doing the same thing over and over. Continue to use the ryegrass but add 30% Kentucky bluegrass, especially those from the low-maintenance and drought-tolerant categories.

It is a mistake to anticipate that tall fescue can be used as a sub- stitute for an adequate irrigation system, especially on soccer fields where a smooth ball rolling surface is desired. Even with its excellent drought and traffic tolerance, tall fescue’s bunch habit can cause a clumsy and uneven playing surface when water is lacking and traffic is intense. Should clumping become a problem, interseeding with more tall fescue and temporary watering with a portable rain gun will be needed to regain ade- quate turf density. If Kentucky bluegrass and perennial ryegrass have failed because of limited water then give tall fescue a try. The key point here is not to discourage you from using tall fescue, but instead to encourage you to provide at least temporary irrigation. Watering as little as five times during the summer may be sufficient to maintain an adequate stand of tall fescue.

Close mowing and heavy nitrogen applications of any non-irrigated turf, especially Kentucky bluegrass. This combination of mowing, watering, and fertility is the best way to predispose Kentucky bluegrass to summer patch and loss of turf during summer drought dormancy.

IRRIGATED AREAS

Over watering – too much, too often, too shallow. As a general rule, turf should be allowed to slightly wilt before irrigation. At this stage of wilting, soils are well-aerated because air has replaced the water that was removed from the soil pore space by the roots. Roots need water to grow; but they also need air-filled pore space. Excessively wet soils become anaerobic and have a distinct sulfurous odor of rotten eggs. Root growth is poor in anaerobic conditions. Allow the turf to slightly wilt and then apply about an inch of water. Wait until the turf just begins to wilt before watering again. About 1.0 to 1.5 inches of water per week is sufficient for soil-based fields. Sand-based fields may require more frequent watering.

Mid-day watering of grass. This increases humidity and free moisture near the plant that results in increased disease.

No plan for watering the skin on baseball/softball fields. Don’t forget to install separate heads and valves for watering just the infield dirt. Don’t place the heads so that they water both the dirt and the grass. Watering the skin portion of an infield is just as important as watering the grass. A separate station is needed for watering the skin infield because it is managed differently than grass.

*Dr. David D. Minner is Extension Turfgrass Specialist, Iowa State University
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DID YOU KNOW?

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New Jersey Turfgrass Expo 2006
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The Toro Groundsmaster 4100 was brought to the County College of Morris by Storr Tractor Co. and the details of this mower were communicated by Kevin Hoban.

Bobcat of North Jersey was on-hand at the 2006 Summer Demonstration Field Day. The A300 Bobcat skid steer loader was demonstrated for the attendees.

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DID YOU KNOW?

One inch of rain on one acre of land weighs 113 tons. One inch of rain on one acre of land equals 27,514 gallons of water.

Essential plant mineral primary macronutrients include: nitrogen (N), phosphorous (P), potassium (K); mineral secondary macronutrients include: calcium (Ca), magnesium (Mg), and sulfur (S). Essential plant mineral micronutrients include: Iron (Fe), manganese (Mn), Zin (Zn), Boron (B), Copper (Cu), molybdenum (Mo), and chlorine (Cl).
Tony Castille represented the Terre Company during the trade show portion of the Summer Demonstration Field Day.

Marie Pompei, Past Present, New Jersey Turfgrass Association, describes turfgrass seed products offered by F.A. Brown's Sons, Inc.

SFMANJ STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE.

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Name, address, email
Your declared major and grade point average
Classes, seminars or field days you have attended concerning sports field management
Accomplishments concerning the turf industry
Internships
Plan for the future

Email: hq@sfmanj.org

US Mail:
2006 SFMANJ Student Scholarship
PO Box 370
Annandale, NJ 08801

Dr. Henry W. Indyk
Graduate Fellowship in Turfgrass Science

As many of you know, the turfgrass industry lost a dear friend and colleague in September 2006. We will all miss Henry very much and would like to ensure that his legacy lives on. The Indyk family would like to establish a memorial fellowship to support graduate students interested in applied turfgrass science. This fellowship is being created to help ensure that tomorrow’s graduate students have the financial resources to get an advanced degree in turfgrass science at Rutgers University. To fund a full graduate assistantship each year in Henry’s name, we will need to raise a total of $400,000. Your generous support at this time will bring us closer to reaching this goal.

To make a tax-deductible contribution today, please send a check payable to the Rutgers University Foundation, 7 College Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. Be sure to indicate “Indyk Fellowship” in the memo portion of your check. If you desire, you may provide a donation in the form of a pledge payable over several years.

For information on other ways to support this fellowship, please contact Dr. Bruce B. Clarke, Director – Rutgers Center for Turfgrass Science; 732-932-9403, ext. 331; or bc@lifesciences.rutgers.edu; or John Pearson, Director of Leadership Gifts at the Foundation, by calling (732) 932-7899 or email: jpearson@barnard.rutgers.edu

Pete Corso, Levitt’s LLC, provides Field Day attendees with the details on the PrizeLawn Turf Tracker

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On February 1, 2006 Joe Warner became our newest Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM). Joe sat for the exam at the recent Sports Turf Managers Association conference in Orlando at Walt Disney World (January 17-22, 2006). I caught up with Joe for coffee soon after and we talked about the CSFM program.

D. Savard: So, Joe, why did you become a CSFM?
J. Warner: Because it was there! I always believed that it epitomized an ideal, and shows the industry that someone is on top of the newest things in our industry. Passing the testing procedure is an achievement.

D. Savard: How long did you prepare?
J. Warner: About thirty-five years (laughs). I spent 6 months reading all my books to help prepare, but really, the test was really the compilation of all my years of experience in the field. The hardest thing about the exam was sitting down and thinking about how I was going to answer the questions. The test asks practical questions about practical situations or problems. Somebody could be book smart and not pass; it truly was a test of my experience.

D. Savard: How did you get into Sports Field Management?
J. Warner: I was in my own landscape business for 25 years and got out. Somehow I was drawn back in and began working with the DVH Group. DVH was involved with commercial and residential turf and we eventually got into sports fields. We knew turf care, but we found that sports fields were a horse of a different color. I found that there were lots of people in the landscape business bidding themselves out of business and on the sports field side there were few qualified people out there and lots of shoddy work. What I wanted to do was to distinguish our company from the rest; besides, I wanted to make a difference.

D. Savard: How is that?
J. Warner: By educating the public and becoming more professional, we can do a better job of creating safe, playable fields. It starts by having a professional attitude, acquiring knowledge and by delivering professional results. The CSFM program is an avenue for the professional to improve him or herself.

* Don Savard is a Certified Sports Field Manager; Director, Athletic Facilities and Grounds, Salesianum School; and SFMANJ Vice-President
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The United Way of New Jersey encourages our state to move beyond the status quo on education.

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**WELCOME NEW & RENEWED SFMANJ MEMBERS**

Currently we have 319 new & renewed members. In the beginning of November 2005, SFMANJ mailed invoices for 2006 membership dues to all current members. If you did not receive an invoice, please contact us at 908-730-7770 or download the 2006 membership form available at www.sfmanj.org. Remember to mail your renewal/payment direct to SFMANJ, PO Box 370, Annandale, NJ 08801.

Ballone, Mike  
Barone, Victor E.  
Bisacott, Jr. Walker  
Bono, Vincent  
Burluj, Shane  
Campbell, James  
Cummings, Tim  
DeFalco, Mike  
DeFreese, Darren  
Dienes, Bob  
Elder, Thomas  
Gnei, Dr. John  
Hendrickson, Richard  
Imboden, Barry  
Lazarine, Brian  
Lindall, Dave  
McKerrell, Mike  
Oleksowicki, Mike  
Outenbrige, Geoff  
Quaranta, George  
Salvatore III, Louis  
Santalone III, Louis  
Srupes, Luke  
Srupes, Kenneth  
Vesely, Arthur  
Vand, Dave  
Wilson, Howard  
Vogel, John  

Tina Marie Brown details the latest advancement in irrigation offered by Rain Bird Corp.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The Major League Baseball record for a consecutive games hitting streak is 80,000 ft²; therefore, to tear-out and dispose of an 80,000 ft² surface, it is conceivable to budget between $140,000 and $180,000.

*Cost range provided by Tony Strickland, Yankees’ legendary Joe DiMaggio

**SFMANJ Annual Membership Registration Form**

- [ ] member update information or email

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Tips for Athletic Field Care

This newsletter is the official bi-monthly publication of the Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey.

For information regarding this newsletter contact: SFMANJ at (908) 730-7770 or Brad Park at (732) 932-9711, x127

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Phone: 800-323-3875

Sports Turf Managers Association

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**MISSION STATEMENT**

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