

UPDATE Sports Field

Spring 2011
Vol. 11, No. 1

Managers Association of New Jersey

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Torpey Athletic Complex Baseball Field Wins SFMANJ Field of the Year for 2010

By Scott Bills, CSFM

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ) received two applications for 2010 Field of the Year.

The entrants included the Somerset County Park Commission, Torpey Athletic Complex, Baseball Field, Bridgewater, NJ from David Kuscynski; and Cinnaminson School District, Cinnaminson High School, Varsity Soccer Field from Jeff Schofield.

After personal interviews and visits to each field, the SFMANJ Board of Directors chose Torpey Baseball Field as the 2010 Field of the Year and the Cinnaminson High School Varsity Soccer Field as runner-up.

Jeff Schofield of Cinnaminson High School submitted his soccer field, even though he was not being 100% happy with its appearance. Despite a faulty irrigation system and challenges created by the summer heat, Jeff felt the field and his efforts over the past several years warranted the submittal. Jeff admitted the field would never have survived summer environmental stresses if he had not aggressively improved the soil and turf. Those improvements allowed the field to rebound once the weather cooled down and his irrigation system was fixed.

Jeff projected a keen interest in pleasing the players, the administration and all who use the field. As the field is located at the entrance to the high school, Jeff varies the mowing patterns to make the field very attractive. When Jeff took the job as groundskeeper for Cinnaminson High



Baseball Field at Torpey Athletic Complex, Bridgewater, NJ: The SFMANJ 2010 Field of the Year

Continued on page 7

SFMANJ Spring Field Day 2011

**Torpey Athletic Complex
& TD Bank Ballpark,
Bridgewater, NJ
Wednesday, April 20, 2011**

TORPEY ATHLETIC COMPLEX BRIDGEWATER, NJ

- 7:00 • Vendor Registration & Set-up
- 7:30 • Attendee Registration, Trade Show Open, Coffee & Donuts
- 8:45 • Opening Remarks
- Baseball Field Post Game Repair Demonstration
Dave Kuczynski, Somerset County Parks
- Soil Sampling Procedures and Report Interpretation
Dr. James Murphy, Rutgers University
- Infield Equipment Demonstrations
- Natural Turfgrass Equipment Demonstrations
- Synthetic Field Maintenance Procedures
Dave Kuczynski, Somerset County Parks
- Synthetic Equipment Demonstrations
- 12:00 • Lunch & Vendor pass-the-mic

TD BANK BALLPARK, BRIDGEWATER, NJ

- 1:15 • Sports Field Maintenance Program & Challenges
Dan Purner, Head Groundskeeper, Somerset Patriots
- Solving Weed Problems in a School Environment
Brad Park, Rutgers University
- 3:00 • Closing Remarks, Pesticide Credits, and Member Meeting

TORPEY Athletic Complex Baseball Field

Wins SFMANJ Field of the Year for 2010

Continued from page 1

School, he admittedly didn't have much experience. However, as most successful sports field managers do, Jeff enlisted the help of local turf experts. Jeff took advantage of many educational opportunities to continue learning about sports field and turf management.

Director of Facilities, Peter Galosi, praised Jeff for his efforts and accompanied him to the annual meeting to accept his award as 2010 Field of the Year runner up.

Head Groundskeeper, David Kuscynski, through tireless dedication, has transformed the Torpey Athletic Complex Baseball Field into one the best in the state. Despite many constraints maintaining a public park, David has found a way to improve both the safety and playability of the fields. In addition to one lighted baseball field and one lighted softball field, the Torpey Complex now has a lighted all-purpose synthetic field. From April until late October, the ballfields are in use 7 days a week, sometimes hosting 3-4 games or practices.

Dave began his sports field career as an employee of the Somerset Patriots and credits both Ray Cipperly and Dan Purner with helping him hone his skills. While at TD Bank Ballpark, Dave learned both pre-game and post-game maintenance techniques. Dave has brought those skills to the Torpey baseball field.

Unlike many groundskeepers, Dave performs much of the infield grooming by hand. After every game or practice, he makes sure all displaced infield mix is swept out of the grass. He also varies his grooming patterns on a weekly basis to prevent lip build up.

In the past two years, Dave has re-built the pitcher's mound with clay, amended the existing infield mix and re-sodded areas along the infield. Perhaps the most impressive improvement is in the outfield. When Dave took over the complex, the outfield turf was thin and choppy. Through improved cultural practices, consistent overseeding and a comprehensive fertility program the turf is now thick and attractive. Dave varies the cutting height based on the time of year and scheduled usage.

SFMANJ would like to congratulate Dave and the Somerset County Park Commission for being the 2010 Field of the Year winner.

In recognition of this honor, SFMANJ is holding a Spring Field Day at Torpey Athletic Complex on **April 20, 2011**. During the morning we will tour the facility and have Dave provide some insight as to his secrets, including a hands-on clinic covering pre and post-game field maintenance. The day will continue with a tour of the TD Bank Ballpark, Bridgewater, NJ, home of the Somerset Patriots Atlantic League baseball team. We will tour the field with head groundskeeper, Dan Purner, plus have an educational session for pesticide credits.

Look for more information in this issue of SFMANJ *Update* on the front cover and at www.sfmanj.org.

*Scott Bills, CSFM is Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM);
and Secretary, SFMANJ Board of Directors*

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