

UPDATE

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey



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Somerset County Park Commission

By Scott Bills, CSFM

The Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ) received two applications for 2012 Field of the Year.

The entrants included the Somerset County Park Commission, Torpey Athletic Complex, Softball Field, Somerville, NJ from David Kascinsky and the Northern Burlington County Regional School District, Varsity Softball Field from Bernard Luongo.

After personal interviews and visits to each field, the SFMANJ Board of Directors chose the Somerset County Park Commission, Torpey Softball Field entry by Dave Kascinsky as the 2012 Field of the Year. The Northern Burlington County School District, Varsity Softball Field was selected as runner-up.

In Columbus, NJ, not only have Don Czehut, Facilities Director and Bernard Luongo, Grounds Supervisor of the Northern Burlington County School District improved the main varsity fields, they have made great strides improving the safety and playability of all 27 fields under their care.

Wins 2012 SFMANJ FIELD OF THE YEAR

Several years ago, Don and Bernard asked Brad Park from Rutgers University to inspect their fields. After reviewing the results of soil samples, Brad recommended a turf management program that included cultural practices such as aeration and overseeding, plus scheduled application of nutrients required by the soil testing. In addition, maintaining a regular mowing schedule which includes returning clippings to the soil and keeping mower blades sharp, have improved the health of the turf. This season Bernard has begun using turf blankets on the stadium football field and wear areas on other fields to encourage faster turf establishment.

As a result of their efforts, Don and Bernard were confident enough to submit an application last year for 2011 Field of the Year for the varsity soccer field. During several conversations with Don and Bernard, I don't think either of them could have imagined having one of their fields meet the qualifications to be considered Field of the Year, much less two fields.

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2012 SFMANJ Field of the Year: Somerset County Park Commission, Torpey Athletic Complex Softball Field managed by Dave Kascinsky

SFMANJ Spring Field Day

FREE ADMISSION!!

(Pre-Registration Required)

**Tuesday, April 2, 2013
RAIN OR SHINE**

**Northern Burlington County
Regional High School
Columbus, NJ 08022**

AGENDA

- 6:30 - 8:00 Vendor Registration and Set-Up
- 7:30 - 8:30 Attendee Registration
Trade Show Open (Breakfast)
- 8:30 - 9:00 Opening Remarks and Host Introduction
- 9:00 - 12:00 Equipment Demos / Education
- 12:00 - 1:00 Vendor Introductions (Lunch)
- 1:00 - 3:00 Equipment Demos / Education
- 3:00 Closing Remarks / Distribution of Pesticide Credits

Call 856-514-3179 for more info

Somerset County Park Commission Wins 2012 SFMANJ FIELD OF THE YEAR



SFMANJ member Glenn Liebehenz is Grounds Manager at Northern Burlington County Regional High School, site of the 2013 SFMANJ Spring Field Day.

The North Burlington County Regional School District should be proud of Don and Bernard, their efforts and more importantly, their results. In a time when all we hear about are budget issues and we don't have enough manpower, Don and Bernard have been able to improve 27 fields.

Due to their efforts, Northern Burlington County Regional School District has been chosen as the site for the SFMANJ Spring Field Day. The all day program will include a trade show, equipment demonstrations, baseball field laser grading, infield skin surface amending, pitcher's mound and home plate re-construction, demonstration of cultural practices such as aeration, topdressing and overseeding, educational talks from Brad Park and Craig Tolley, plus DEP credits.

The SFMANJ congratulates Don and Bernard for being runner-up for 2012 SFMANJ Field of the Year.

Dave Kascinsky from the Somerset County Park Commission was the Field of the Year winner in 2010 for the Torpey Athletic Complex Baseball Field and co-runner up for the Softball Field in 2011. It was not a surprise to anyone who knows Dave that he re-submitted the Softball Field for 2012 Field of the Year. Dave has transformed both the softball field and baseball field into very playable surfaces that are perhaps two of the best public ball fields in New Jersey. Both fields have natural turf, with the baseball field having a grass and skin

infield and the softball field being all skin. Dave credits his years working with Ray Cipperly and Dan Purner at TD Bank Ballpark, home of the Somerset Patriots with giving him the skills and confidence to become a superior sports turf manager. When asked, Dave still helps at TD Bank Ballpark.

In addition to both ball fields, which have lights, Dave is also responsible for a lighted all-purpose synthetic field. From late April until late October, Dave estimates 25-30 ball games are played 7 days a week, on his two fields.

Like many experienced groundskeepers, Dave performs much of the infield grooming by hand. His pre and post-game routine, learned at TD Bank Ballpark, includes making sure all displaced infield mix is swept from the grass to prevent lip build up. Dave will then make sure the pitcher's mound and home plate area are leveled with moistened clay and compacted. If no games are scheduled during the day, Dave keeps tarps these areas to retain the moisture in the clay.

This past season, Dave amended the existing infield skin surface and had irrigation installed on the softball field.

The existing infield skin surface material was high in sand and silt content. Dave wanted to create a surface similar to that of TD Bank Ballpark. The goal was to drop the overall sand content by 8-10% and raise the clay content so the silt to clay ration was less than 1. The result was a material that resisted migrating into the grass lips and had the ability to absorb more water without eroding.

The new irrigation system allowed Dave to manage moisture within the new skin surface and surrounding turf.

The SFMANJ congratulates Dave Kascinsky and The Somerset County Park Commission for winning the 2012 Field of the Year award.



SFMANJ member Bernard Luongo is Lead Grounds Manager at Northern Burlington Regional High School, site of the 2013 SFMANJ Spring Field Day.

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The well-maintained Girls Softball Field at Northern Burlington County Regional High School, site of the 2013 SFMANJ Spring Field Day

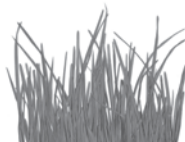
The SFMANJ Field of the Year program recognizes the efforts of member sports turf managers throughout New Jersey. Applications for the 2013 Field of the Year are due by the end of October 2013 and are awarded at the NJ Green Expo in Atlantic City, NJ in early December. In addition to a plaque, the winner will receive a complimentary registration to all education sessions, the two day trade show, dinner and one nights lodging at Trump Taj Mahal.

If you have any further questions regarding the program please feel free to contact the SFMANJ office.

Scott Bills is Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM); Sports Field Consultant; and SFMANJ Secretary and Public Relations Committee Chairman

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- ✓ Check our Resources page for past issues of our Newsletter Update, Minutes from past Board Meetings, links to useful information and job postings.
- ✓ Check our Contact Us page for direct links to all of the Board of Directors. Call us with any questions or comments.
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