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10 SportsFieldManagers Association of New Jersey

SFMANJ Spring Field Day 2007
South River, NJ and Rutgers Hort. Farm II
April 12, 2007

PROGRAM

EDWARD A. GREKOSKI PARK, South River, NJ

RUTGERS HORT FARM II, North Brunswick, NJ

7:00-7:30 am Vendor registration and set-up

7:30-8:00 am Trade Show and attendees registration

8:00-8:15 am Trade Show & Vendor Introductions

8:15-9:00 am So. River and SFMANJ Introductions

9:00-9:30 am Management of Edward Grekoski Park Basketball Field

Bob Walker, South River DPW Interpreting a stall ball

Dr. James Murphy, Rutgers Center for Turfgrass Science Introducing turfgrass science

10:00-10:30 am Equipment Demonstrations

10:30-10:50 am Infield grooming techniques

Jim Heimann, Total Control Inc Setting-up artificial turf conditions

Scott Biltz, Northern Nurseries Setting-up a baseball diamond

Jim Heimann, Scott Biltz, and Bob Walker

11:10-11:30 am Move to Rutgers Hort. Farm II, North Brunswick, NJ

NJ DEP Pesticide Credits: 1 Core; 1 3B

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Keep your Ballfields safe and looking great!!!
With spring soon to arrive, it is an important time to begin thinking about options for controlling crabgrass. If a significant soil seed bank exists and there are voids in the turfgrass stand which minimize competitive benefits of the turf, as a summer annual, crabgrass will germinate profusely in the spring, mature throughout the summer months, and die in early fall at the first killing frost leaving dead “skeletons” throughout the landscape. Crabgrass seed will typically begin germinating after April 10 in South Jersey and by April 20 in Central and North Jersey. Crabgrass will continue to germinate through mid-July.

### Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Recall that IPM attempts to reduce the risk that pest control strategies may have on the environment and people by incorporating all suitable techniques to maintain pests within acceptable limits. Although it is a common misconception, IPM does not entail the elimination of pesticide use. Simply treating a cutting height suitable for the specific turfgrass species or mowing at a frequency such that scalping is avoided can constitute IPM. Improper mowing techniques leading to scalped turf will thin out turfgrass areas, lead to voids in the stand, and diminish previously available opportunities for crabgrass to encroach. IPM also entails proper fertilization. Under-fertilizing turfgrasses will often result in a weak stand, poor turf density, and an environment in which crabgrass can readily invade. Yearly nitrogen requirements per 1000 ft² for cool season turfgrasses used on New Jersey sports fields are: Kentucky bluegrass, 2.5 lbs; perennial ryegrass, 3.5 lbs; tall fescue, 2-4 lbs. High-use sports fields often necessitate the high-end of these nitrogen fertilization guidelines in order to encourage turfgrass recovery from traffic.

### Preemergence herbicides: Are they an option?

For sports field managers whose cultural program includes spring overseeding of his or her fields, applying most preemergence treatments will not allow virtually all broadleaf weeds to germinate for at least 8 to 10 weeks following application. In Florida, Canada, and the Pacific Northwest, using preemergence herbicides can provide an effective tool to control many weeds. Crabgrass control on Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, and tall fescue can be achieved with the use of preemergence herbicides. In central New Jersey, the best approach is to use only one herbicide that can control crabgrass until May 15. The main objective of preemergence herbicide use is to kill the crabgrass seedlings at the root and stem meristem, as well as the seedlings. Crabgrass control is best when crabgrass seedlings are treated early in the season. Crabgrass control can be achieved with the use of quinclorac applications to newly seeded turf prior to 28 days after seedling emergence.

### Crabgrass control strategies for sports fields

**Step 4.** Measure the total depth of the soil in the mason jar. Then measure the thickness of each of the layers using your measuring tape. Record these data in your chart.

**Step 5.** Calculate the percent of sand, silt, and clay in your soil sample with the following procedure:

1. Divide the thickness of the sand layer by the total depth of the soil in the jar.
2. Follow the same instructions for both the silt and clay layers.
3. Multiply each of the three figures by 100, and you will have the percentages of sand, silt, and clay in your sample.

**Step 6.** You can now check the soil texture triangle to see where the intersection of the three values places you on the triangle (see Figure 1). Remember that this is an estimate. If you need a more precise test, it is worth your while to have a professional test done by a private lab or a county extension office.

**Soil testing labs use a couple of different quantitative methods to determine relative amounts of soil particle sizes. Once you have determined the relative amount of sand, silt, and clay, you can determine the soil’s textural class using the soil texture triangle. Each side of the triangle represents the relative content or percent of one of the three soil particle size classes.

**General guidelines:**

Remember that soils differ greatly around the country and they react differently to many things. This following gives generalizations as a guide for base mixes. Soils in your area might not always fall into these guidelines.

- You want to keep the sand fraction of your base soil from 20% and 75% (normal base mix). Soils with higher sand content normally become too loose and mobile. The soil becomes too wet with play and is transported to other areas of the skin by the dragging process or by play. You want all mix to be drainage if your base mix has high sand content. In fact, it creates more maintenance headaches.
- The soil rapidly develops high and low spots in the skin (called as the “surf” interface). Those low spots and high lips interfere with the surface flow of rainwater draining off the skin, and large puddles develop.
- In base mixes with higher sand content (>75%), there is not enough binder (clay and silt) to hold the soil firmly together. As a game progresses, the skin becomes more loose in the traffic areas. This reduces friction and increases risk of injury to feets, ankles, and hamstrings.
- Soil texture affects many properties of soil. Compactability, porosity, bulk density, water-holding capacity, and drainage are all affected by the makeup of the soil.
- Soils high in sand normally hold very little water and drain rapidly. Soils high in clay normally hold large amounts of water and carry on relatively well in stressful weather.
- Soil texture refers to the percentage of sand and silt, and clay particles in a soil. These particles are defined by their size.
- To tighten up a high-sand base mix, till in a nice clay loam soil. Add several tons at a time, till it, let it settle, and pack and see how it reacts before you add more. The alternative is to replace the base mix with a new mix.

### Bibliography

- Paul Zusaka, Beacon Athletics, Middleton, WI. Paul provides technical support and troubleshooting for Beacon Athletics customers.

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**Image:** "Serving the Turf Professional Since 1979"
INFIELD SOILS AND TOPDRESSINGS - PART I

By Paul Zwaska

Editor's Note: The following article is the first in a two-part series and was written in 1999 when the author was Head Groundskeeper, Baltimore Orioles.

Baseball is a unique sport in grounds management. It’s the only major sport that is played on a field that has both turf and exposed soil for a playing surface. Ballplayers scrutinize the playability of your skinned areas more closely than you’re turf areas. Your reputation as a groundskeeper will depend on the skin you keep.

This is not to say that the turf areas on a baseball field are unimportant. But if you think about it, 75% or more of the game occurs on the skinned areas of the field. Unfortunately, this crucial subject is avoided by the academic institutions that teach many of today’s up and coming athletic field managers.

Without written guidance, new groundskeepers must resort to trial and error if they haven’t been lucky enough to learn from another groundskeeper in the business.

GOALS FOR A QUALITY INFIELD SKIN

Traction: Most players desire the same quality in an infield skin; traction. That’s the reason for the spikes in their shoes.

Nothing makes a player happier than a firm infield skin that is moist and cork-like, not hard and baked dry. The cleat should penetrate the skin and leave a perfect imprint. Very little soil should be disturbed or displaced. When players plant their feet to throw, field the ball, or run, the soil should not give way under them. The traction in your infield skin comes from its base soil. Choose your mix carefully. Many companies that sell infield skin mixes know nothing about their proper function.

Many mixes are too sandy. Soils that don’t firm up (high sand content of 75% or higher) are more mobile. This creates low spots and unstable footing for ballplayers, increasing the risk of foot, ankle, and hamstring problems. The loose soil also causes unstable footing under infielders’ gloves instead of taking the proper hop. It can also drastically influence a ballplayer’s traction.

INFIELD BASE SOILS

Testing: If you don’t know the percent breakdown of sand, silt, and clay in your skin base mix, have it tested to give you a reference point for comparisons. Send a sample of your soil to a private testing lab or county extension office that performs particle size analysis or soil texture analysis work. These labs will give you the composition percentages, and they’ll show you where your soil fits into the soil texture triangle. A simplified home version of the test is also available. It can give you a ballpark figure of your percentages.

There is a simple way to get an estimate of the percentages of sand, silt, and clay that are in your base mix. This experiment provides a nice, cheap way of checking soils if you are looking around and can’t afford to do a lot of testing.

DETERMINING SOIL TEXTURE

Step 1. Obtain a quart mason jar with a lid, like the ones used for canning. Fill it a little more than half way with the soil you wish to test. Fill the rest of the jar with water, and attach the lid tightly.

Step 2. Shake the jar vigorously for a couple of minutes to fully separate and wet the soil. There should be absolutely no lumps of soil left when you’re finished agitating it.

Step 3. When you feel that the soil is fully dispersed in the solution, set the jar down and begin timing. After 45 seconds, mark a line on the side of the jar with a grease pencil or White-Out where the top of the layer of sand has settled out. Next, put a mark at the top of the next layer after three hours have passed; this is your silt layer. After 24 hours, your clay will have settled out as well.

(continued on page 9)

March/April 2007
Calendar of Events

SFMANJ Spring Field Day 2007
April 12, 2007
Edward A. Grekoski Park & Rutgers Hort. Farm II
South River, NJ & North Brunswick, NJ
908-730-7770
www.sfmanj.org

12th Annual Rutgers Turfgrass Research Golf Classic
May 7, 2007
Fiddler’s Elbow CC, Bedminster, NJ
Online registration will be available at:
www.nj turfgrass.org

Rutgers Golf and Fine Turf Field Day
July 31, 2007
Rutgers Hort. Farm II, North Brunswick, NJ
www.nj turfgrass.org

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The Mets play their first game at Shea in 2007 on Monday May 9 against Philadelphia.

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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 of 2005. We will all miss Henry very much and would like to let you know 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 assure that tomorrow’s graduate students have the technical resources to gain an advanced degree in turfgrass science at Rutgers University. To fund this graduate scholarship 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. To receive more information about the Dr. Henry W. Indyk Turfgrass Science Fellowship, contact info@johndeerelandscapes.com, or call (908)-295-3900.

For information on how to support this fellowship, please contact Dr. Bruce B. Clark, Director – Rutgers Center for Turfgrass Sciences (732-583-3460, x. 331; or info@johndeerelandscapes.com). We look forward to hearing from you soon.

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Fenoxaprop may be applied at rates ranging from 0.016-0.17 lbs/A (3.5-39.0 fl. oz Acclaim/Acre) depending on the stage of crabgrass growth and established turfgrass species. For example, 4-5 tiller crabgrass may be treated with fenoxaprop at 0.17 lbs/A (39.0 fl oz Acclaim Extra/Acre) in perennial ryegrass and tall fescue whereas no more than 0.12 lbs of fenoxaprop (28.0 fl oz Acclaim Extra/Acre) may be applied to 3-4 tiller crabgrass in Kentucky bluegrass turf.

Following applications of fenoxaprop, tall fescue and perennial ryegrass may be seeded immediately. Following germination of tall fescue and perennial ryegrass, fenoxaprop should not be applied until seedlings have matured for 1 month. Of the cool season turfgrasses used on sports fields in New Jersey, Kentucky bluegrass is the most susceptible to phytotoxic effects associated with fenoxaprop. For example, when utilizing fenoxaprop rates greater than 0.04 lbs/A (9.0 fl oz Acclaim Extra/Acre), Kentucky bluegrass seedlings must be at least 3 growing months old before fenoxaprop can be applied. Additionally, 21 waiting days should be allowed following the application of fenoxaprop prior to seeding Kentucky bluegrass.

The complexity of Drive and Acclaim Extra labeling with respect to crabgrass growth stage susceptibility, individual turfgrass species herbicide tolerances, and turfgrass seeding timings, pesticide labels must be thoroughly read and understood prior to the application of these materials.

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

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**SFMANJ Field of the Year Contest 2007**

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey is announcing its annual Field of the Year (FOY) contest.

**ELIGIBILITY:**
- Must be a current member of SFMANJ
- Only school and park/recreation fields are eligible
- Must be a natural grass field/fields

**CRITERIA:**
- Award will be presented based on:
  - Playability and appearance of the playing surfaces
  - Five 5"x5" photos A, one before photo if possible
  - Describe your maintenance program and what you did to improve your field
  - Describe your budget used for this field
  - Feel free to have sports groups in your photos

**SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRY:**
Entries are to be submitted by mail and must be received by September 30, 2007. Entries are limited to 10 color photos. Please include the name, location and owner of the facility, along with your name, position, and contact number.

Mail to:
SFMANJ, 2007 FOY Contest
PO Box 170
Atlantic City, NJ 08405

**AWARDS:**
Winners will be honored with a plaque at New Jersey Turfgrass and Landscape Conference & Expo in December 2007 and will be featured in an article in SFMANJ. (Annual newsletter). The winner will also receive a two-night stay at the Trump Taj Mahal, Atlantic City and three day, two night education and trade show admission at Expo 2007

**NOTE:**
Entries will not be returned and may be used on SFMANJ website and promotional settings.

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**SETTING YOUR LINES RIGHT WITH THE EMPHASIS ON STENCILING**

Preparations for painting: For best results, move the turf (at least where the lines are) before painting. In dry weather, avoid painting right after mowing unless you give the turf some water. This will help prevent a burning effect. Avoid painting wet grass. Paint does not adhere well to wet grass. To remove dew, connect two 100 foot water hoses and with a person on each end, start in the end zone and drag the hose the length of the field.

Paint Can Tips:
- Before shaking, tap the can with your hand to gently break the marble loose, then shake vigorously to thoroughly mix the paint. If you store aerosol cans upside down, it will make it easier to break the marble loose. Avoid temperature extremes. In cold weather, fill a 5 gallon pail with hot water, and put the aerosol cans in to keep them warm. Some brands of spray paint have adjustable tips on the can that can rotate to make a wide or narrow line.

Paint ApplicationTips:
- Always string your lines for the best results. If you are painting lines on dry infield dirt, first moisten the dirt with water. This will prevent the paint beading up in the dust. Remember that when painting lines, your gait will influence not only the quality of the line (straightness, brightness and width) but also how much paint you will use.

Stencils and Logos:
- Whether painting numbers, letters or your team’s logo designs, stencils help you get that crisp, sharp, professional look. Stencils can be hard or soft. Flat number cut out stencils and logo stencil tarp with cutouts for “dotting” are both common. Other tools include hash mark sleds and batter’s box frames. Some sports field managers use planks as straight edges for painting along wide out of bounds lines or along end zone letters. If number stencils become warped, place on concrete and allow the sun’s heat to warm and flatten them in a couple of hours. When dotting stencils, use an aerosol can to do it. This way the paint will dry faster. When painting logos, paint a white base coat first and allow it to dry. Then paint colors on top. Don’t go by the rule “If a little paint looks good, a whole lot of paint will look great!” Too much paint can be harmful to turf. On most logos and letters, a border around each will make your work stand out on the field.

Paint Removal:
- If you make a mistake, be sure to keep an aerosol can of green paint or some turf colorant handy as an “eraser”. I use a long handle, soft bristle truck washing brush and some mild soapy water as well as water hose for paint removal when necessary.

Sports field graphics make the game easier to play on and watch. Sharp looking field graphics draw the eyes away from field imperfections such as wear. It helps to create team pride, draws out the beauty of your field and showcases the talents of you and your crew.

Don Savard is a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM); Certified Grounds Manager (CGM); Director, Athletic Facilities and Grounds, Salesianum School; and SFMANJ Board Member

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_Grow with us as part of our expanding family of customers._
Whether it is for function or decoration, lines and logos personalize your fields and give your team the home field advantage. Almost all sports and games played on turf or packed clay require some form of lines or markings to help define boundaries, and assist the officials in making correct calls. Lines help the participants perform best by bringing order and strategy to the game. These markings are usually painted or marked with a non-caustic pulverized limestone. Here are some things that I have learned from others sports field managers that help me set lines.

**Measurements:** Sports require accurate measurements. Tape measures are more precise than measuring wheels. Surveying instruments are the most exact and may be required at the higher levels of the sport. “Square” or 90° corners can be made without surveying instruments by using the 3-4-5 method. Where you want to make a corner, make one line perpendicular to another. On one line, measure out from the corner 30 feet. On the adjacent line, starting from the same point, measure out 40 feet. Draw a line from your 30 foot mark to the 40 foot mark. The result should be 50 feet. If not, adjust either line so that there is a 50 foot measurement from the 30 and 40 foot marks.

**Dry Line Marking:** For human safety, always use a non-burning, non-caustic marking material such as pulverized limestone. Avoid marking turfgrass with a dry marking material as it might injure turf, modify the soil or over time, create a ridge on the playing surface that could become hazardous to players. Dry marking materials work best on bare soil or “infielddirt”. Dry line markers are similar to a drop fertilizer spreader. The marking apparatus features a narrow opening that is the width of the line and can be operated by one person. Other types of markers include a trough type that can be several feet long for marking base paths or shorter for marking batters boxes. These are usually used in the higher levels of baseball or softball and can require 2 people to handle.

**Field Marking Paint:** Paints consist of liquid (or solvent), color (or pigment), sticker (or binder) and other additives such as a fast drying agent. Sports field marking paints are usually water based latex acrylics. Petroleum distillate based paints or volatile organic compounds (VOC paints) can be injurious to plant tissues. Field marking paint is available in the forms of aerosol spray paint in inverted cans and bulk paint in 1-5 gallon pail containers. Bulk paint may be premixed ready to use or it may need to be diluted with water in some ratio.

**Painting Equipment:** The most basic field paint equipment is the paint brush and roller, simple and effective but time consuming. Many sports field managers with only a few sports fields use the inverted aerosol spray paint can holder machine. This is a tool that no sports field manager should be without. It is helpful for touchups, for painting contrasting colors quickly and as a backup for when the primary paint machine breaks down. Most sports field managers use some form of a powered paint machine. These include sprayers ranging from a CO₂ tank unit to gasoline powered compressor or pumps to electric pump models. Push, self propelled and riding paint machines are available. Be sure that your machine is kept clean; in good repair and have spare parts are on hand.

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