

PROFESSIONALISM IN STMA? -- YOU BET!

by Dr. Gil Landry, University of Georgia

Did you see part of the ESPN program on Sportsmanship? Well regardless, the topic is a good lead into a recent experience. However, rather than view this as Sportsmanship, let's think of this as "PROFESSIONALISM." Now just as any professional athlete on any given day has "other" factors of their life that may have an impact on their performance, so does everybody. We all have good days and bad days. The following are examples of professionals getting beyond whether they're having a good one or a bad one.

A few weeks ago I received a request from a South Korean turf scientist that had spent one year studying with us at The University of Georgia (you may have recently heard we finally beat the University of Florida). He was accompanying four employees of the Samsung Corporation to the Southeast US in ten days to visit some stadiums because their company was going to build a stadium. I later learned that Samsung, the second largest corporation in South Korea, was building a large soccer

stadium and three practice fields for the professional team that the company owns.

Having nothing better to do, I got on the phone to a few sports turf managers to see what I could do. Not knowing the Korean's exact schedule, I made "tentative arrangements." Not one person contacted turned me down. In fact, regardless of their schedules, they all were willing to give all the time the Koreans wanted. *Now that to me is professionalism.*

After finalizing dates about five days before arrival and through numerous phone calls, on October 22nd, I picked up the five South Koreans in Atlanta and went straight to Turner Field, home of the Atlanta Braves. There Ed Mangan, field director, gave us the complete tour of the seven-month-old Prescription Athletic Turf (PAT) system. Here we saw a profile about 12 inches deep that was 100% USGA Spec sand mix with no organic matter or other soil amendments. The turf was GN 1 bermudagrass
continued on page 10

PRO'S Choice®
INFIELD PRODUCTS
Improve Playing Conditions

- SOILMASTER**
Infield Conditioner
 - Improves Infield Soil
 - Reduces Compaction
 - Absorbs Excess Water
- PRO MOUND**
Mound/Batters Box Packing Clay
 - Eliminates Deep Wear Holes
 - Provides Firm Footing
 - Reduces Maintenance
- RAPID DRY**
Infield Conditioner
 - Stabilizes Muddy Areas
 - Eliminates Puddles
 - Long Lasting

CALL FOR LITERATURE & SAMPLES

PRO'S CHOICE PRODUCTS
...Keeping Infields Playable...
1-800-648-1166

1926 Acton Hwy • Granbury, TX 76049
1-888-NEW GRASS
639-4727

GRASS

Ours **IS** Greener
On Your Side Of
The Fence!

SAND BASED SOD BAyr Root Turf 42" Big Roll SOD

Products & Services You've Trusted
For More Than **25** Years!!

Professionalism in STMA? -- You Bet!

continued from page 5

sod that was grown on a sandy soil which matched the field sand as closely as possible. The field had been overseeded with a perennial ryegrass blend. We saw the computer-controlled water level monitoring and pumping system.

From Atlanta, we flew to Knoxville, Tennessee. There, Bob Campbell, Director of Grounds Maintenance for the University of Tennessee Athletic Department, picked us up at the airport and took us to the largest college football stadium in the country. In fact, 11 days earlier I had been Bob's guest in this very noisy sea of Orange, made my Bulldogs look really bad with the help of a freshman running back from Atlanta.

Bob showed us the stadium field that was built like a USGA spec golf green without the choker layer which was not needed per the soils consultant. He had row-planted and sprigged Tifway bermudagrass into the field. Having been sprigged, this field had the smallest soil profile layer

over sand mix of all the facilities we visited. Here we saw the irrigation cannons located off the playing surface. Bob emphasized that he calibrated his irrigation system and irrigated on average every five days. He had already lightly overseeded the field with perennial ryegrass and was in the process of laying out a geotextile cover to protect against forecasted low temperatures.

Bright and early the next morning we were on our way to Baltimore. Because of numerous set backs, we arrived at the Baltimore Ravens home stadium about two hours late. Vince Patterozzi and Jay Warnick were still there waiting for us. Here we saw a SportGrass system with GN 1 bermudagrass. It was late in the afternoon and they had still not covered the entire field so we could see the turf and soil profile. We were given a very detailed explanation of the Wirsbo heating system they used to maintain soil temperatures so that they could maintain active bermudagrass growth throughout the season and thus not have to overseed.

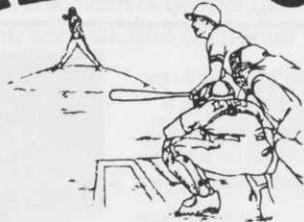
The next morning, we were guests of Don Follett at the very new home of the Washington Redskins. We arrived less than 10 hours after the Rolling Stones concert and, quite honestly, Don looked like an "old rolling stone." Nothing a couple hours of sleep could not cure. Along with Don was Grove Teates, the contractor that built the field this summer. I think Don arrived on the job in time for the laying of the 1.5-inch thick-cut Tufcote bermudagrass sod. The field mix was 80% USGA spec sand, 10% soil and 10% peat. What a sight! While construction crews were tearing down the stage and removing chairs and turf covers, Don squeezed in time to answer questions for us and then invited us out on the field. As Don said when I first called him, "If it's for education, I'll make time."

Our Korean guests were very gracious and appreciative of each of their hosts, and their hosts were TERRIFIC! The slight confusion among the visitors after the second stadium visit had now been quadrupled as they had seen four very different and successful sport turf systems. They also met some very honest and open PROFESSIONALS. People like these are the cornerstones of this profession at every level of our industry.

To all the participants in this venture -- I would like to personally thank each of you for being so gracious and PROFESSIONAL.

STM

KLAWOG®



A New Foundation for Sports

MOUND and BATTER'S BOX MIX

50 LB

Ground Stabilizer - Now Available in Red and Gray
Klawog® Mound and Batter's Box Mix - A patented processed clay compound designed to stabilize heavy-use areas. Formulated for controlled consistency. Klawog welds with itself for fast easy installation and repairs. Available in 50 lb. bags, no mixing, ready to use. Also manufactured for golf bunkers, horse stables and horse-shoe pits.

Wessco, Inc. • P.O. Box 4025 • Copley, Ohio • 44321
Phone: 800-650-9322 / Fax 330-745-9322