

# Doc's Dugout - An Inning from our Past & Present

by Dr. Kent Kurtz - STMA Historian

## THE EVOLUTION OF THE STMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION

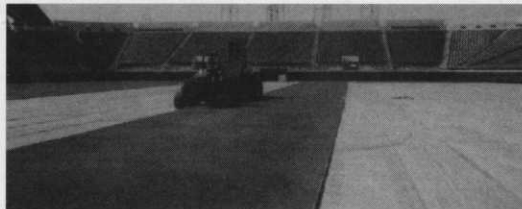
In 1984 STMA officers took a bold step and decided to break away from the the Parks and Grounds Management Institute (which they had been previously affiliated with), form their own national organization and have their own annual meeting. Once we established our first independent office (in my garage in Ontario, California), we approached the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) at their annual meeting and trade show in Washington, D.C., in 1985, to discuss the possibility of holding an educational meeting at their annual conference and allowing our members to attend their trade show. One of my former students, James Prusa, was the GCSAA's Associate Executive Director during this period and he arranged for STMA to be included in their conference in 1986 in San Francisco. In addition to holding our first *independent* annual meeting, STMA had a booth at the trade show.

Speakers at our first meeting included not only Drs. Beard, Daniel & Grau; but also David Frey, Barney Barron, Steve Wightman, Harry Gill, Mike Schiller, Don Marshall Tom Mascaro, John Souter and some I can't even remember

(sorry if I missed someone). By all accounts, our first attempt at an independent Conference was highly successful. We even launched our first "Seminar on Wheels," with stops at the athletic fields in Golden Gate Park, Candlestick Park and the Oakland Coliseum.

Our 2nd Annual Conference was held in conjunction with the GCSAA in Phoenix, Arizona. Not unlike our first attempt, this Conference was filled with great enthusiasm and hope for bigger and better things to come. We had an excellent educational program, a booth at the trade show, and our 2nd Seminar on Wheels which included stops at Sun Devil Stadium, the Chicago Cubs spring training facility in Mesa, and a visit to the Milwaukee Brewers new spring training site, Compadre Stadium, where Harry Gill and the Brewer's General Manager, Harry Dalton, led us on a tour and talked to the group. We also had our first banquet -- complete with keynote speaker, Joe Torre, former player with the St. Louis Cardinals, now a manager for the NY Yankees. The banquet also marked the first scholarship recipients, David Mellor  
*continued on page 9*

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## Doc's Dugout

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(Harry Gill Award) and David Arnold (Jeff Wishard Award). Jeff Wishard, who was permanently injured in a football accident and a paraplegic, was flown to the conference to honor him with a scholarship named for him and also made an Honorary Life Member. Also honored as Life Members were Tom Mascaro, Dr. William Kneebone, and John Souter.

The 3rd Annual Conference, held once again in conjunction with the GCSAA, was in Houston, Texas. The Seminar on Wheels tour visited the ballfields in Pasadena, Texas, and a worn out synthetic field. After a bus ride in a snow storm, we meet Eugene Mayer, who spent many hours making the turf plots at the O.M. Scotts research center, which the snow covered and we didn't get to see. This Conference marked the "winds of change" for STMA. The Board of Directors decided to move our headquarters to a new office building in Upland, California, and to initiate a conference and trade show separate from the GCSAA.

The 1st Annual STMA Conference & Exhibition was held in 1989 at Dodgertown in Vero Beach, Florida. We

arranged a large outdoor trade show for our commercial members and were able to utilize the ballfields for demonstrations of equipment, materials and products. Demonstrations included the painting of logos, topdressing of ballfields, equipment for scarifying skinned infields, and fertilizer plots. Speakers at OUR first Conference included; Dr. James Watson, John Souter, James Paterson, a bowling green specialist from Edinburgh, Scotland, and my late wife, Patricia. It was at this time, due to my wife's illness and eventual death, that I stepped down as Executive Director. The reins were handed to past president, Mark Hodnick, and then to Dale Keller from Las Vegas where the office was relocated. I was appointed by the Board to a new position in 1990 as Educational Director. I would like to thank, once again, the Board members from 1984 - David Frey, Dale Sandin, Mike Schiller, Don Marshall, Steve Wightman, Harry Gill, Roy Zehren and Barney Barton for the opportunity to serve STMA.

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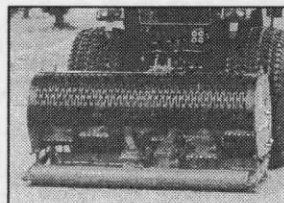
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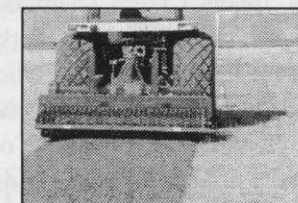
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