

Doc's Dugout

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I had the privilege of meeting Roger Baird recently, prior to the September 11, 1998, game with the Milwaukee Brewers. Baird credits his skills and knowledge to the man who trained him, Roger O'Conner. O'Conner was his close friend, role model and his father away from home.

Roger has made some changes during his short tenure as Head Groundskeeper. He instituted a split crew - one group for general field maintenance and the other for home games. Since the Wrigley Field scoreboard is operated manually, three members of his crew are assigned to that duty during the games and one crew member works in the press box and operates the balls, strikes and outs on the scoreboard. The remaining home game grounds crew drags the infield skin areas and changes the bases after the 5th inning.

In 1995, the field was heavily infested with nutsedge. It was fumigated to eradicate the nutsedge and the entire field was resodded during the fall of 1995 with big roll sod. Roger has instituted striped mowing patterns. He uses Kankakee River clay on the infield areas along with a small percentage of sand and calcined clay. The exact percentage of these three ingredients varies with conditions, weather and use. The field is fertilized at least 7 times per year. Fungicides are applied when disease symptoms are present.

Junipers have been planted in the center field area to create a green background so batters can see the ball more accurately. Prior to this, that area had been a green tarp or concrete. The junipers do create more work since they need to be watered in the summer 2 to 3 times per week with soaker hoses.

I came away from the old ball park feeling great - after all - Sammy Sosa hit his 59th home run and I met a new friend, Roger Baird.

In the next issue: A look at the history of night baseball and the job of designing and installing the lights at Wrigley Field to match the architecture of the old ballpark.

Headquarters Staff Expanding

Trusty & Associates has added two new employees to assist us in assisting YOU.

Angela Collinson has been hired as Office Manager. Angela will be doing most of the data entry for STMA memberships, bookkeeping, invoicing, etc. Angela has worked previously as a receptionist, tax secretary, and for the US Postal Service. She is married and has two sons, ages 15 and 10.

Jaci Pettie is our new Operations Coordinator. She will be in charge of most of the filing, faxing, mailing and general organization. Jaci is a single mother with 4 children ranging in age from 18 to 11. She brings with her great organizational skills from 11 years experience in her previous position.

We welcome both our new employees and hope you will too.

Q: What do all of these teams have in common?

Oakland A's
Arizona Diamondbacks
University of Texas Longhorns
San Diego Chargers
University of Southern California Trojans
California Angels
Arizona State University Sun Devils
San Francisco 49'ers
San Diego State University Aztecs
San Francisco Giants
San Diego Padres
Los Angeles Dodgers
Oakland Raiders
Arizona Cardinals

A: They are at "HOME" on West Coast Turf!

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