

Headquarters Report

by Steve Trusty, Executive Director

It was great to see so many of you in San Antonio. Preliminary review of attendees' comments indicates that this again was the best STMA Conference ever. We certainly had a record number of Exhibitors and Exhibitor personnel. Full Conference Registrations appeared to be down slightly, but final numbers are in the process of being tallied. We had conversations with many Exhibitors on the Trade Show floor and they almost unanimously reported "excellent traffic" and "worthwhile show".

One advantage that STMA has over many trade shows is that "no conflicting activity" is scheduled during trade show hours. The Conference Committee and STMA Board understand that interacting with suppliers is a vital element of sports turf management so no educational sessions or committee meetings are scheduled to draw attendees away from the trade show floor. Another advantage is that many of the Exhibitors are potential customers of other Exhibitors. Sod and seed companies use equipment, fertilizers and pesticides. Contractors use various products. And the list goes on. So, while we don't count Exhibitor personnel among our conference registrants, the number of Exhibitor personnel on the floor can help our Exhibitors conduct more business, which is what they are there for.

While we feel confident that this was a very good Conference, we know that there will always be room for improvement. It is very important that we hear from everyone that attended on what you liked and disliked about the Conference. Any suggestions for improvement will be thoroughly considered by the Committee already at work planning next year's Conference.

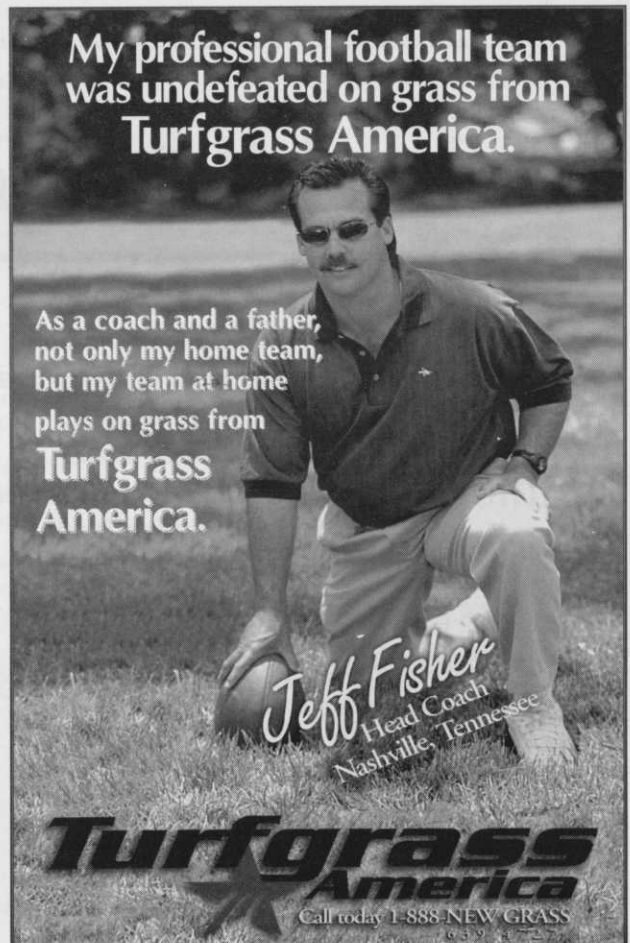
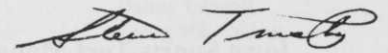
Speaking of next year's Conference, make sure that you have your calendar marked for January 21 - 25, 2004. We will be meeting at the Town and Country Resort & Convention Center in San Diego, California. As a testament to the success of this year's Trade Show, your Exhibitor's Committee has already received commitment for as many dollars income from Exhibitors as we had total for the 2002 Show in Las Vegas. THANK YOU! Exhibitors and Exhibitor's Committee.

If you couldn't make it to San Antonio we would also like to hear from you. Why couldn't you make it? Is there anything we can do to help you sell the program to those that control the travel budget? One suggestion we've heard many people use is to refer to the importance of the information they gained from a previous year's Conference. Point out how you were able to solve a problem because of what you learned from a Conference or Conference attendee. If you have to go to a Conference attendee or speaker to obtain help on a problem, explain to your "money person" that it would have been a lot easier and probably less expensive to solve the problem if you could have received first hand, in depth and intense information by attending the Conference yourself. As soon as the program is announced for the upcoming Conference, let them know the areas that you

would really like to learn more about and get them to buy into the savings that can actually be realized by having you attend in person. If you are in the market for equipment or supplies, let your supervisor know that the Conference is an excellent place to compare products and possibly take advantage of Show Specials, available only at the Conference. When preparing your annual budget include STMA dues, educational sessions and the Trade Show in your request. One good idea, properly communicated to your supervisor, can help assure that you will be able to attend the STMA Conference on an annual basis.

Dues renewals have been arriving in record numbers. If you have not as yet sent your payment in, you can save your association mailing costs by renewing before we have to send a second notice.

We hope to see you soon at a Chapter event. If you are ever in the Council Bluffs area, please stop by and say hello. The coffee pot is always on and the fridge is stocked with sodas.



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