

BALL DIAMONDS — Panel Discussion

This panel consisted of Bob Williams from City of Mississauga, Chris Mark from York University and Mike Regan from City of London, P.U.C.

Bob Williams has a big job on his hands. The park system is 4000 acres, has 92 baseball fields and, 170 soccer fields. In 1981 the Parks Dept. successfully changed sports group attitudes in the community. Each field is now rated in cooperation with the group in question. These groups consist of T-Ball, senior baseball, slow pitch and fastball. The City provides a maintenance program for senior baseball tapering to T-Ball. These groups help the city with the field maintenance. There are boxes with tools, markers, etc. at each location. Because of expectations by groups, the city did two things: 1) provided a standards manual — available soon by contacting Bob Williams, 2) produced a "Mississauga Sports Mix" — mixed for them to their specifications by a local gravel company. It is good because it has no sharp particles and brushes off an athlete easily.

Chris Mark at York University has 600 acres of heavy clay and 250 acres are grassed. Baseball and softball are not a big thing at York and football teams play at Esther Shiner Stadium in North York. Problems are over use and lack of funding. Badly infested with weeds for the last three years. He has a 250 gallon boom sprayer with anti-drift nozzles and sprays in early May and September. Also uses Weed-n-feed. Chris applies 4 lbs. of Nitrogen per season in five applications (16-4-4 June, July, August and September) plus a dormant application mid-November. Core cultivation is practiced before fertilizer is applied and the fields crossed in two directions. Grasses consist of 100% Palmer perennial rye and Yorktown II Kentucky blue. Operators have a good

understanding of maintenance practices, including height cut of two inches. And they cut a different way each week. Chris uses a CO₂ line marker with latex paint. He stopped using Roundup because of dished area which resulted, making an extra maintenance headache. Last purchase was a topdresser. Do very little dormant seeding because of poor results. York University, Chris stated, will be relocating their athletic fields in the 1990's. Right now ball diamonds are on the outer fringe away from any buildings.

Mike Regan operates Labatt Park, a beautiful facility which seats 5500 people, for the London Knights Baseball Club. Mike cuts his grass on a grid pattern (checkerboard) using a Turf King triplex mower and uses a Greensaire to do his core cultivation. Other maintenance practices include the use of moist clay for the pitcher's mound which he then covers with wet burlap; if it rains the mound is kept safe. Then burlap is removed before the game and the area topdressed with Turface. Mike showed slides of the home plate where a piece of square tubing attached to the bottom fits into a sleeve in the ground. By loosening material around the plate he can change same in less than five minutes. For batting circles he uses a steel hook which fits on the turf edger affixed to a steel pin in the centre of the circle. He uses Hollywood bases which are pebbled. These are scrubbed with water and brush then given a light coat of latex paint. The field has a 1% slope from home plate to centre field. Because his irrigation system is hand operated he waters continually. Lastly, material is brushed out of grassed infield back on to base paths daily. This means no ridge is left, hence better ball response. A groomer is used, part of which was designed by Mike and the P.U.C.

The 2nd Sports Turf Association Conference

Conference Proceedings

The second S.T.A. conference featured many fine speakers and another first. It was nice to see that another group, the Nursery Sod Growers Association along with the S.T.A. worked in co-operation with the CGSA to hold their own sessions at the Canadian Turfgrass Conference at the Toronto Convention Centre. We need to encourage more of these cooperative efforts with all sectors of the turf industry.

The trade show was excellent. Congratulations to the distributors for the amount of work they put into their exhibits. It should be mandatory that each delegate at a conference go through the exhibit area once.

Another highlight was the presentation of two honorary life memberships to Mr. James Boyce, turf consultant for some 57 years and to Mr. Norman Rothwell, Rothwell Seeds, both founding members of the S.T.A. Association.

At the S.T.A. Annual Meeting Bruce Calhoun of Bannerman was elected president, Peter Kleschnitzki, Town of Oakville vice-president, Bill Harding, City of North York moves to treasurer, Bob Allen, City of Toronto stays on as secretary, Geoffrey Corlett is 1990 Conference Chair and Michael Bladon, University of Guelph, takes on the newsletter, Chris Mark of York University was appointed a director and Stephen Bodsworth, Humber Arboretum, continues his term as director. S.T.A. members approved several amendments to the bylaws and the hiring of an executive secretary.

Mike Bladon, Past President

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