

SPORTS TURF

Newsletter

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...for better, safer Sports Turf

President's Message

Season's Greetings



s I write this the Christmas season will soon be upon us; for which the Board of Directors, and Executive Secretary of your Association wish

everyone a very good Christmas Season and Happy New Year.

As we reflect on 1994 it continued to be a difficult year with the grip of Social Contract, still trying to do more with less, and fending off challenges from councillors, bureaucrats and hired consultants who always seem to know your operation better than you. It seems the economy, however, is slowly starting to rebound, but the recovery is painfully slow. Innovation, adaptability and accountability have been and will continue to be the focus for the coming year.

During 1994 the Association tried extremely hard to serve the membership and stay upbeat and optimistic. The conference in Guelph was very successful, as was the Field Day at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute. Our Newsletter remained one of the most informative in the industry. We adopted the policy of distributing the minutes of Board meetings with the Newsletter to ensure all members are updated on all affairs of

the Association. Our books and videotapes continue to sell and to be valuable teaching aids. Membership plaques and updated by-laws, complete with membership directory was produced and distributed to all members.

We are currently in the midst of hiring a replacement for your Executive Secretary as Bob Sheard will be leaving us at the end of the month. Again Bob has put forth a superb effort in organizing our Sports Turf sessions at the Guelph Turfgrass Symposium on January 4, 5, and 6 at the University of Guelph. Please circle your calendar to attend the Annual Meeting on January 5 at the College Motor Inn. It is a breakfast meeting so please come out and join us at 8:30 am.

We look forward to seeing you at the January conference or at the June Field Day in Hamilton. Remember, this is your Association; if you have suggestions of how to provide better service do not hesitate to contact either myself or a director.

Wishing everyone better, safer sports turf and a blessed, Happy Christmas and much health and happiness for 1995.

Christopher Mark

EDITORIAL

How High Can We Go?

In preparation of the 'Understanding Turf Management' article for this issue I read an article by Eliot Roberts entitled 'How Low Can We Go'. His thesis was related to golf course management where the superintendents, since the late 70's, have been striving to maintain grass on fairways and greens at ever decreasing heights. This move has magnified their maintenance problems several times.

In my opinion low cut is the antithesis of a sports turf manager.

A few years ago Dr. Arthur Mittelstaedt reported on a survey of turf managers across the U.S. and Canada in which he attempted to establish a relationship between height of cut, playability of the field and athlete injury. No measurable indicators were found that related grass height to playability, such as athlete speed, yet there was a preconceived impression by coaches and players that "tall" grass was not desirable. At the same time, again without measurable data, injuries were thought to be reduced by "tall" grass.

No one thought to ask the grass plant what it required. Will the turf remain vigorous and free from stress if cut at three inches instead of two? Will the input costs be reduced by the higher cut? Will the weed pressures be less? Many other questions could be posed.

The question needs to be asked - of coaches and players, of sports field managers and of researchers. I am sure the grass would appreciate another half inch.

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