

Welcome Sonja Schneider  
New STA Executive Secretary

During the recent General Meeting of the STA, President Chris Mark introduced Mrs. Sonja Schneider as the new Executive Secretary. Effective January 1, 1995 Sonja assumed the position from outgoing Executive Secretary, Bob Sheard.

The recruitment and selection process for a new Executive Secretary was a rather time consuming process. We received over sixty applications from a classified advertisement in the Guelph and Kitchener-Waterloo papers. The task was complicated by the excellent quality of the respondents. A short list of five candidates was selected for interviews. After several interviews and discussions, the sub-committee consisting of Chris Mark, Jim Galbraith and Mike Bladon, unanimously recommended the position be awarded to Mrs. Schneider.

Sonja brings to the STA a diverse and comprehensive background in secretarial support and office management. She was employed for thirteen years with Urangesellschaft Canada, an international mining company as Executive Secretary/Office Manager. Her responsibilities included all aspects of secretarial support to senior executive management including reports and submissions to various levels of government.

We feel most fortunate to have Sonja working with us and look forward to her improving the office efficiency through her computer literacy. Among Sonja's responsibilities will be to market the Association, to increase our industry profile, to promote membership recruitment, and improve member support services. Welcome Sonja and we wish you much success!!

#### OFFICE HOURS

Mrs. Sonja Schneider will be in the office from 9.00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The office phone number is (519) 763-9431. At other times a message may be left on the Voice Mail system. Please include the vital information of name, telephone number with area code, and time of calling. The office may also be reached at any time on FAX # (519) 766-1704.

# Turf for The Sport of Kings

R.W. Sheard, Ph.D., P.Ag.

*"It is the bonus course on the continent, it has bounce seldom seen on a grass course", commented Roger Atfield, one of the top ten trainers in North America.*

*"I have never ridden on anything like it" says jockey Robbie Davis who rode Raindrop, a French-trained horse and winner of the Rothmans Ltd. International Stake on October 16, 1994.*

These were some of the superlatives offered about the new E.P. Taylor grass track which opened on Sept. 10, 1994 at the totally redesigned Woodbine Racetrack of the Ontario Jockey Club (OJC).

Early in 1993 the OJC decided to locate all their horse racing facilities in the Toronto area at Woodbine, and offer the standard bred track at Greenwood for sale. To accommodate three different types of facilities at one location they engineered a design unique for North America. It involved a total reconstruction of the existing tracks and the inclusion of a third track for harness racing.

The facility was designed as three concentric circles. The inner circle became a limestone track of seven furlongs for standard bred racing, the middle circle became a eight furlong, or one mile, dirt track for thoroughbred racing, and the outer circle became a one and one-half mile turf track for thoroughbred horses (Fig. 1). The latter has the longest home stretch in North America - 1440 feet.

Construction began following the last race in late October 1993, and over the next eight months millions of yards of dirt were moved, new access tunnels constructed, water systems realigned, irrigation upgraded, and even a portion of the front of the grandstand apron cut back to accommodate the new tracks.

The techniques used in the construction

of the dirt tracks were, in general, time honoured procedures. Completion of the new harness racing track was in time for the opening on January 01, 1994. Work continued, when possible, throughout the winter to allow the opening of racing on the new dirt track for thoroughbreds on April 01. At the same time progress was being made on the subgrade for the new turf track.

The first move following the construction of the subgrade was the installation of the drainage system. Beginning at the inside rail, 4-inch corrugated plastic tile lines were installed as concentric circles, 20-feet apart, with the exception that the second last line was 40 feet from the outer rail. At 300 foot intervals collector line was installed perpendicular to 4-inch lines to carry the drainage water to the outlet line at the inner rail. The tile lines were covered with crushed stone and a 4-inch layer of stone was laid over the entire subgrade.

The decision to build a state-of-the-art turf track using a sand based root zone required the extension of the principles formulated for a United States Golf Association (USGA) green to 15 acres of turf.

The principles of USGA construction call for a stone layer having 65% of the stone in the range of 1/4 to 3/8 inch, with not more than 10% greater than 1/2 inch, and not more than 10% below 1/10 inch. The use of this size of stone requires the spreading of a 3-inch intermediate layer (choker layer) of coarse sand (90% between 1 & 4 mm) over the stone to prevent infiltration of the sand from the rooting zone into the stone. The spreading of the choker layer is a slow, hand labour-intensive procedure as heavy construction machinery tends to rut up the stone layer and intermix the sand and the stone.

The alternative was to use a stone of smaller size; the route selected by the OJC. Three performance factors are required of the smaller stone 1) bridging, 2) permeability, and 3) uniformity. For bridging of the root zone particles over the pores in the stone layer to occur the D15 of the stone must be less than or equal to five times the D85 of the root zone mix.