

STA Atlantic Field Day

MORE THAN 100 PROFESSIONALS "MET US IN MONCTON" JULY 21!



An Energizing Inaugural Event.

THE CATCHPHRASE FOR THE EVENT was "Meet Us in Moncton" and the invitation was well received! More than 100 turfgrass industry professionals gathered at the geographic centre of the Maritimes for the Atlantic Sports Turf Field Day on July 21. The response was remarkable and the enthusiasm energizing for our inaugural eastern event.

A HANDFUL OF THE COMMENTS RECEIVED TO DATE:

- "Qualified presenters with research-based material."
- "Practical information that is easy to apply."
- "Highlights of major issues affecting turf maintenance and the importance of the turf manager."

>> Turn the page for photos and a summary of the day by Chair Bob Daniels.

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MONCTON



ATLANTIC SPORTS TURF FIELD DAY SUMMARY

The turf industry in eastern Canada reached another milestone on July 21 when the first Atlantic Sports Turf Field Day was held in Moncton, New Brunswick. The event was presented by the Sports Turf Association, in cooperation with the City of Moncton, and marked the first time that such an event was held in this region. A measure of just how successful this day was is that in excess of 100 individuals representing the sports turf industry were in attendance and participated in the events.



Throughout the years, several methods have been and are still used presently to provide education to sports turf managers. These have consisted primarily of specific week-long training sessions offered through the Office of Continuing Education at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College and a sports turf session component, first at the Regional Turf Conference held in Saint John, NB, for several years, and thereafter via a combined session with the Annual Atlantic Golf Superintendents Association meetings. Another learning opportunity was held in conjunction with the annual meeting and educational symposium sponsored by Plant Health Atlantic in Sussex, NB. While all of these were both successful and beneficial, the recent field day was the first time that a session specific to sports turf managers was held in Atlantic Canada.

The commitment and efforts of the two main organizers were the driving forces behind this event. The Sports Turf Association provided leadership in or-

ganization, speaker selection, advertising, promotion and registration, while the City of Moncton provided an ideal setting as host. Due to its central location, Moncton made the event accessible to a wide range of participants enabling most to make it a day trip substantially decreasing the cost.

The support and promotional assistance of Plant Health Atlantic, the numerous provincial associations who serve the industry, and Mike Jiggins, editor *Turf & Recreation* magazine, greatly contributed to the success of this event. Gordon Horsman, City of Moncton, and his staff did an outstanding job in having the sports facilities in excellent condition, providing individual tours to specific sport fields and ensuring that all events went smoothly. The attendance by Tab Buckner of the Western Canada Turfgrass Association gave us an east-to-west coast perspective.

Those who made the day most successful however were the 79 individuals who registered for the event and participated attentively in the educational sessions both in the morning, held inside, and the onsite

outdoor afternoon sessions. Suppliers of the turf industry also heavily supported this event, with 25 individuals representing 14 industry related suppliers participating in the successful tailgate trade show.

The day began with official opening remarks by Paul Gillen, President of the Sport Turf Association. Paul welcomed all attendees and expressed his commitment that the STA would like to continue its support with future sessions if interest by local practitioners remained keen.

The first speaker was Dr. Eric Lyons, University of Guelph, who focused on using fertilizers correctly and in doing so, reducing the need for pesticides. This was accomplished by providing a review on the role of each nutrient and the consequences of providing individual nutrients to turfgrass throughout the growing season. As all cultural practices significantly affect the overall health of turfgrass, such practices as correct mowing and seasonal aerations were incorporated into proper seasonal fertilizer usage. His position that a healthy turf results in a reduced usage of pesticides



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while still providing for an acceptable playing surface emphasizes the present and future environmental trend in sports turf maintenance.

Continuing on the reduced pesticide theme, Dr. Katerina Jordan, University of Guelph, delivered the presentation *Putting IPM Into Action*. First, she provided a background and basic review of IPM, emphasizing pests specific to this region. Tips on pest identification and acceptable thresholds were provided. Once these were established, individuals were given advice on how to scout for the various pests, and when found and identified, procedures on how to properly record their existence and establish threshold levels. Lastly, the importance of IPM in the overall seasonal turf maintenance program was discussed.

Third speaker for the morning session was Gord Dol of Dol Turf Restoration. His topic was *Synthetic Turf*. As many new and upgraded products are now available, Gord spent time explaining each, emphasizing their advantages. He also indicated specific usages, which is valuable information for individuals considering either replacement of an existing artificial surface or installation of a new artificial playing field.

Afternoon activities included a barbeque lunch and a tailgate trade show with individual suppliers present to explain their products and answer questions.

The afternoon concluded with a practical demonstration on the technique of infield grooming by George Bannerman, Gordon Bannerman Ltd. In addition, George gave demonstrations on removing infield lips on ball fields and mechanical drainage of individual localized wet areas. The grooming session emphasized the necessity of proper mechanical set up of both the field groomer and tractor. The pitfalls of improper preparation and operating techniques were also covered. The benefit of this type of onsite discussion and practical demonstration is that individuals can easily take the information home with them and implement it immediately.

Based on participant response, this event was a great success and support for continuing these sessions appears to be strong. Presently, all involved are evaluating the day and a decision will be made on how best to proceed in the future. It is most likely that future offerings will be based on a similar format whereby the expertise and leadership of the Sports Turf Association is combined with organization from within the region.

— R.W. Daniels

Editorial Note: The STA expresses appreciation to Bob Daniels, Adjunct Professor, Turfgrass Science, Nova Scotia Agricultural College, for his tremendous support, assistance and participation as chair of the event.



TRADESHOW EXHIBITORS

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