

Sports Turf Manager

FOR BETTER, SAFER SPORTS TURF. AUTUMN 2017. VOL. 30. NO. 3.

2017 Sports Turf Field Days We went coast to coast!



New Brunswick (Moncton)
September 6th, 2017
(report page 12)



Ontario (Richmond Hill)
September 14th, 2017
(report page 14)



(photo courtesy of WCTA)

British Columbia (Aldergrove)
September 20th, 2017
(report page 18)



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Board of Director's Message

BY ANNE BALIVA



We would like to take a moment to say thank you to our membership for electing your Board of Directors at our annual general meetings. Your input into the direction of our Association is very important and we'd like to share with you, what we do.

Your Board of Directors is the team of elected members who are responsible for defining the future vision and direction of the association, keeping in mind the founding directors' vision, and steering it towards a sustainable future. This is accomplished with legal governance and financial management. The Board also ensures the association has the resources and structure needed to advance its goals. It is important to ensure the right people with the right skills and experiences are represented on the board. There are legal requirements of the fiduciary duties of the board and each person can be liable if activities deter away from the association's vision.

Each member of the board brings their individual skill set and perspective to the organization while working as a team player. All directors are responsible to represent the interests of all members in all matters. The board is responsible for hiring the Executive Manager of the organization who has the responsibility of running the day-to-day operations of the association under direction of the board's decisions. The board then meets on a quarterly basis with the Executive Manager to provide their advice and thoughts on the information presented to them in regards to the operations and direction of the association.

Board members are the primary advocates for the association and contribute to its success by taking on responsibilities to accomplish its strategic goals. The Association abides by the *Canadian Not For Profit Corporations Act*. They demonstrate their support for the association by involvement in its programs, events and courses. Board members typically sit on one chosen committee. They are aware of the needs of the membership and they share the value and work of the association and explain the association's services to relevant audiences.

Continued on page 6

SportsTurfCanada.com 3

Event Calendar

January 15, 2018
Sports Turf Manager of the Year Award
Nomination Deadline

See page 10 for more information.
sportsturfcanada.com

January 16 to 19, 2018
Sports Turf Managers Association
Conference & Exhibition

Fort Worth, TX
stma.org/2018-conference

January 31, 2018
Sports Turf Canada Board of Directors
Nomination Deadline

sportsturfcanada.com

February 5 to March 2, 2018
University of Guelph
Turf Managers' Short Course

Guelph, ON
turfmanagers.ca

February 14-16, 2018
55th Annual WCTA Conference and Trade Show
Richmond, British Columbia
River Rock Casino Resort
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For up-to-date event information visit:

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"AUTUMN, THE YEAR'S LAST
LOVLIEST SMILE."

— WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT —

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WHAT'S ONLINE
SportsTurfCanada.com

Inside this issue...

REGULAR COLUMNS, DEPARTMENTS & SMALL FEATURES

- 3 BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE.** What we do.
- 4 New and Returning Members:** Welcome!
Event Calendar: Deadlines, Courses, Conferences and Trade Shows

Opinions expressed in articles published in Sports Turf Manager are those of the author and not necessarily those of Sports Turf Canada™.

Deadline for Winter 2017 Sports Turf Manager: Dec 7, 2017

- Login to the Members Only Section at sportsturfcanada.com to ensure your membership details are accurate for membership communication and invoicing.

- Register for the Sports Turf Managers Association Annual Conference & Exhibition in January 2018!

We have four key leadership roles:

President	Chairs all meetings of the Board, ensures oversight and facilitates Board activities
Vice-President	Learns the role of the President, fills in when the President is unavailable, supports association activities through committee support
Secretary	Oversees all the legal administrative requirements of the association, assists with organizational activities
Treasurer	Oversees financial management of the association, providing advice and guidance where necessary

The Past-President ensures consistency and understanding of past decisions and direction of the association.

We are all honoured to provide the support we can to Sports Turf Canada and we encourage other members to submit nominations for the Board of Directors. We accept nominations until January 31st of every year and our Nominating Committee reviews the submissions and recommends their slate of nominees to the entire membership at the Annual General Meeting held in the Spring every year. We are also available to answer any questions you have about the Board positions and responsibilities, feel free to reach out to the STC office to connect with us. •

**Join today and get the rest of 2017
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SPORTS TURF
1987-2017 CANADA 30 YEARS



Sports Turf Canada provides members with:

- Connection to nation-wide sports turf experts in the industry
- Commitment to sports turf through ongoing educational opportunities, resources and the support of research
- Regular communication through Sports Turf Manager magazine, enews and our website
- Promotion of both construction and maintenance for improved and safer sports turf across Canada
- Sharing of knowledge and information to assist with your turf issues
- Environmental stewardship – we value sports turf and its impact on the environment
- Links to other industry-related organizations

- **Sports Turf Canada Members are:**
- MUNICIPALITIES
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With Irrigation: Green = Safer

By Dr. Eric Lyons, University of Guelph

Sports turf managers have one very important goal: creating safe accessible sports fields for our communities and children.

To do this, proper mowing and fertility are a must and with the adoption of pesticide restrictions in many municipalities there has become a greater reliance on overseeding and irrigation. Irrigation can maintain growth and with proper mowing, fertility and overseeding can result in much better turfgrass stands. One issue with irrigation is often when the sports fields need it most, when access to our irrigation systems is inhibited due to restrictions on non-essential water use to preserve water resources. Recently, a paper published by researchers at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute (GTI) at the University of Guelph addressed the impact on water restrictions on field hardness and potential safety (Chang et al. 2017).

Water is an important resource for every community and should be used properly to assure proper conditions for turfgrass growth and conservation of the resource. For most Kentucky bluegrass sports fields, soil watering once a week is more than sufficient to maintain good turfgrass growth. In addition, when watering less often there is potential for rainfall to occur, reducing the need for supplemental watering. Watering once a week at a higher rate than you would water on a more frequent basis, allows for water to be deeper in the soil profile encouraging deeper rooting, and less need for irrigation during times of drought. On sand based sports fields watering frequency may be more frequent than once a week but still should be as infrequent as possible for the reasons listed above.

One issue with turfgrass fertilization and irrigation is that it is often believed that the reasons for fertilizing or irrigating are

cosmetic in nature. Those of us managing sports fields know that green turf is growing turf and that means it is recovering from wear from user groups. Green turf is also competing with weeds by growing into the voids left by excessive use.

During the summer of 2016 water restrictions were implemented in the City of Guelph that included the stopping of watering of irrigated sports fields. The GTI has two in-use sports fields at the research station and we decided to measure the effects drought had on turfgrass colour and safety of the sports fields. As they experienced the drought, areas of green and brown turf appeared as is common when turf undergoes drought (Figure 1). As soil moisture was depleted, volumetric water content of the soil was lower, although the green areas of the turf and the brown areas of the turf were similar in volumetric water content (Figure 2a). A surprising result was that the areas under the green turf were actually softer and therefore most likely safer than the areas under the brown turf (Figure 2b).

As sports fields become dry they harden. This occurs under both green and brown turf. Surprisingly though the green turf is softer than the brown turf (Figure 3). This shows that green turf is not cosmetic but serves as an indicator that the field is not excessively hard. When the turfgrass begins to brown it is a sign that the field is becoming harder and the addition of water may help soften the field making it more playable and safer for participants. During water restrictions, the use of your irrigation system should focus on the safety of the players and maintenance of the turfgrass playability. One good indicator of field hardness is dormant turfgrass and therefore irrigation to prevent dormancy will help maintain fields within the safe range with respect to field hardness. It is important during water



Figure 1. Sports fields at the GTI beginning to show the signs of drought having both brown and green areas of turfgrass.

restrictions to communicate why irrigation is necessary and to irrigate infrequently as possible only to prevent dormancy as

water resources are valuable and during times of limited water should be preserved.

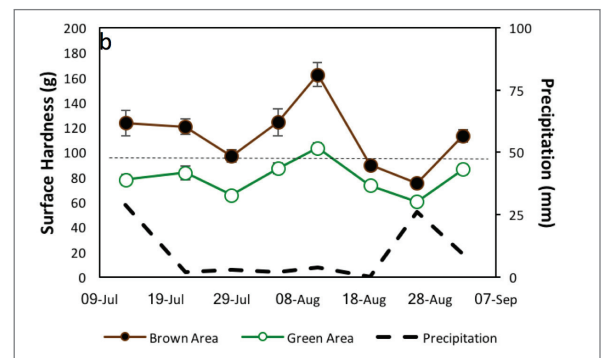
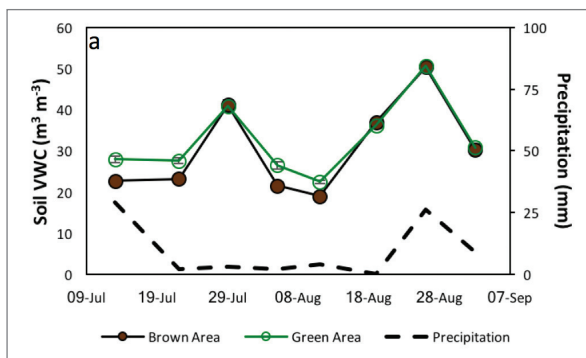


Figure 2. Precipitation data summed every seven days for days between sampling dates. a) Mean soil VWC measurements. While the error bars are present, they are too small to be seen on the figure. b) Mean surface hardness measurements. The line at 100 g represents the surface hardness threshold that may pose a safety hazard.

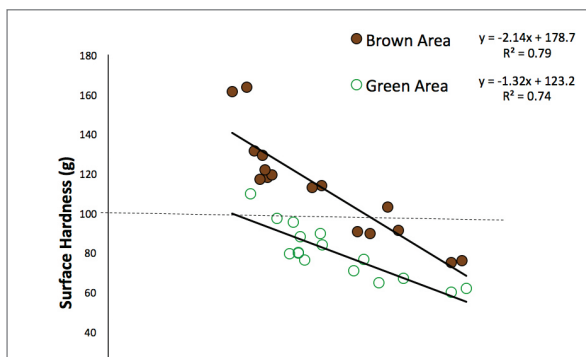


Figure 3. The effect of soil VWC on surface hardness in green and brown turfgrass areas in close proximity on each sampling date. The line at 100 g represents the surface hardness threshold that may pose a safety hazard.

Works Cited: Chang, Kuo Hsien; Powers, Jacqueline; Lyons, Eric. 201. Water restriction impact on surface hardness and soil volumetric water content on recreational sports fields. *International Turfgrass Society Research Journal*. V 13 (1): 614-618. •

ARE YOU THE NEXT SPORTS TURF MANAGER OF THE YEAR?

A Professional Award Program of Sports Turf Canada
With the Cooperation and Sponsorship of the Guelph Turfgrass Institute



Sports Turf Canada is the Canadian professional association dedicated to the promotion of better, safer sports turf through innovation, education and professional programs. In order to further this goal, and to encourage, support and acknowledge those working in the sports turf industry, the association has established the Sports Turf Manager of the Year Award program. By sponsoring this award, the Guelph Turfgrass Institute wishes to assist Sports Turf Canada in the recognition of sports turf managers who exemplify vision and leadership in the sports turf industry.

Purpose

- To recognize a sports turf manager for his or her professional ability and contribution to the Canadian sports turf industry
- To show appreciation for the individual's proactive and progressive efforts within the profession and the industry

Eligibility

- Nominees must be current non-commercial members in good standing of Sports Turf Canada
- Members of the Sports Turf Canada Board of Directors or Awards Committee are not eligible as nominator or nominee
- Sponsors are not eligible as nominator or nominee

Criteria

We invite nominations for an individual who is:

- Engaged in a management or practitioner role in the sports turf industry

- Engaged in regular professional development activities
- Regarded as an active contributor to the profession and the industry
- Regarded as progressive, displaying outstanding performance in any one of a number of key categories, suggested but not limited to:
 - Community Outreach
 - Commitment to Continuing Education and Professional Development (i.e. accrual of a diploma, degree or special certification)
 - Environmental Stewardship/Green Initiatives (i.e. responsible nutrient management, carbon reductions, water conservation, habitat creation, facility improvements, etc.)
 - Health and Safety (internal or external)
- Progressive Management Techniques for Sports Turf
- Project Management
- Special Promotion of the Profession
- Stewardship of Interns or Students
- Workplace Improvements and/or innovations
- Other

Policies

- Nominees will be judged on the basis of the information contained in the Nomination Form and supplementary material
- Nominations must be received by January 15 for consideration
- Presentation will be made to the award recipient at an appropriate industry conference or event

Nomination Requirements

Nominator must submit:

- A completed SPORTS TURF MANAGER OF THE YEAR Nomination Form (available at sportsturfcanada.com)
- Supplementary information detailing the manner in which the Nominee meets the Criteria and the particulars of why the Nominee should be considered for the SPORTS TURF MANAGER OF THE YEAR Award. Letters of support (maximum of 3) will strengthen the nomination. •



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Sports Turf Field Day: New Brunswick

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Discussion/Demonstration Topics:

- Testing and Benchmarking for the Sports Turf Professional
- Why Synthetic Turf?
- Troubleshooting Sports Turf Problems
- The Issue of Flooding
- Improving and Maintaining Clay Infields

Moncton's own Gord Horsman delivering the welcoming words

Thank you Moncton for generously hosting our Field Day!



Thankfully the rain held off until late in the afternoon. We can't say as much for the winds which challenged our outdoor exhibitor displays. The Moncton Coliseum was a fantastic host with a nice variety of breakfast items and coffee to start our day. The speakers were exceptionally well informed in their areas of expertise. Thank you for sharing what you know and offering your assistance. We learned about effective turf maintenance procedures and processes, products in the industry, services that are available to all and research that is continually happening in the turf industry. The sharing of how other turf professionals have resolved issues is a great learning opportunity and it was

great to meet others in the industry and learn how they handle their challenges. Thank you to all those potential STC members who attended and learned about STC's field days. Each municipality has their own best practices and we appreciate the sharing of those practices and the extension of contact information for available assistance. Our outdoor demonstrations kept us all listening and walking around the many fields at the CN Sportplexe. Moncton staff provided us with such fantastic support. Thank you to all our exhibitors and demonstrators who provided us with a variety of techniques and equipment relevant to our responsibilities. The day was a great learning event for all.

Thank you to our host!



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Exhibitors

Steven Boyd	BoydCo Golf & Turf	506-588-5464	boydcoturf@gmail.com	www.boydcoturf.com
Tom Jubis	Eastern Turf Equipment	902-499-8841	tom@easternturf.ca	www.easternturf.ca
Steve Tober	Halifax Seed Company	902-455-4364	info@halifaxseed.ca	www.halifaxseed.ca

Speakers

Testing & Benchmarking for Sports Turf Professionals

John Bladon - The Chimera Group
519-574-2013
jbladon.chimeragroup@rogers.com



Why Synthetic Turf

Alan Streach - Turf Masters Landscaping
902-384-2090
astreach@granview.ca



Troubleshooting Sports Field Turf Problems

Dr. Eric Lyons - University of Guelph
519-824-4120 x52232
elyons@uoguelph.ca



Infield Maintenance

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Sports Turf Field Day: Ontario

113 Delegates | 4 Informative Speakers | 27 Exhibitor/Sponsor Booths | 67 Representatives
Over 21 municipalities and 4 schools/school boards!



Indoor presentation and networking fun!

Discussion/Demonstration Topics:

- Drainage and Irrigation Techniques
- Ball Diamond Layout
- Athletic Field Construction
- Fraize Mowing
- Water Re-use

*Rob Elliott
welcomes
attendees to
the Field Day
and shares
Richmond Hill's
successes
and
challenges*



Between the exceptional location of the Richmond Green Sports Centre, the huge volume of vendors and sponsors, the very informative and energetic presentations, the fantastic weather, municipality staff who attended with enthusiasm, the students who were eager to learn, and the delicious lunch, we couldn't have asked for a better day. A huge thank you to all the vendors and sponsors who came out and set up early and brought company representatives to network with attendees, displays to share what they can help with and the equipment that they demonstrated. It truly was a collaborative effort. We encourage everyone to reach out to those sponsors and vendors. Their contact information follows this article.

The Town of Richmond Hill provided us with an exceptional opportunity with the space to network, learn, experience and enjoy a bottle of water on a hot day. Thank you to all their staff for their endless efforts to ensure a successful event. We couldn't have done it without you! The experience, expertise and enthusiasm of our presenters added a wonderful learning opportunity to our day. Thank you for your willingness to share. Thank you to both Mayor Barrow of Richmond Hill, and Diarmuid Salvadori of the Richmond Hill Soccer Club for joining our day and thanking our attendees. It's agreed that our members build sporting experiences for our communities and put smiles on people's faces.

Thank you to our host!



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Larry Moreland	Covermaster Inc.	416 745 1811	larry@covermaster.com
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Paul Turner	G.C. Duke Equipment Ltd.	800 883 0761	pturner@gcduke.com
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Sports Turf Field Day: British Columbia

129 Delegates | 4 Great Speakers | 31 Exhibitor/Sponsor Booths
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Delegates listening to presentations



Chafer Beetles by Peter Isaacson of Canadian Nursery Landscape Association



Hugh Norris receiving STC's Sports Turf Manager of the Year Award!



Josh Carlsen receiving STC's 2017 Professional Development Scholarship

Discussion/Demonstration Topics:

- Safe Slope Mowing
- Crumb Rubber – Safety Facts
- Chafer Beetle – Coming to a Field Near You!
- Baseball Infield Maintenance
- Aeration Best Practices

This Event in Partnership With



"It was a great event for junior municipal staff to attend because it exemplifies the professionalism of the turf industry"

"Any duplication of this year's event will be a huge success"

Between demonstrations, presentations and those face to face discussions, there was a whole lot of talk happening during the Field Day on September 20th.

We'd like to extend a thank you to the Township of Langley for their generosity in hosting our BC Field Day. They went above and beyond our expectations in getting all the fields ready for our arrival and handling the days activities. This year's support from exhibitors and sponsors was exceptional. Their participation ensures the success of events by allowing us to offer as many opportunities as we can. Their sharing of industry products and services assists in the industry's

successful field maintenance. Our delegates attendance ensures the expansion of knowledge and awareness of those maintaining sports fields. Thanks for the development. Luckily we were fortunate to have nice weather for our day. And much appreciation to our speakers for sharing their experiences and expertise with our attendees. Education is a key mandate of both WCTA and STC. Congratulations to Hugh Norris for receiving Sports Turf Manager of the Year and Josh Carlsen for winning the Bob W. Sheard scholarship.

A very delicious BBQ was provided by Corix Water Products who's hospitality and donation is so greatly appreciated.

Thank you to our host!



photo courtesy of WCTA



CORIX Water Products
providing BBQ lunch



Infield Maintenance with Mike
Hebrard with Athletic Field
Design



Slope mowing demonstration with
Greg Kornelson of Interior Turf
Equipment

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Dethatching demonstration with
Myles Kraft of WoodBay Turf
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Keso Turf Supplies – Scott Kraemer
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Habitat Sytems—Jeff Musson
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Exhibitors

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Duane Sharpe	Brett Young	604 417 9917	duane.sharpe@brettyoung.ca
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Cody Lasley	ESD Waste2Water	801 317 3600	codylasley@waste2water.com
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Darren Chapman	RDM Equipment Sales and Rentals Ltd.	604 576 8566	darren@rdmsales.ca
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Rob Rindt	Western Turf Farms	604 850 6660	rob@westernturfarms.com
Joe Mel	Westerra Equipment	1 800 563 7313	jmeleg@westerraequipment.com

Speakers



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 Interior Turf Equipment
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Crumb Rubber
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Canadian Nursery Landscape Association
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Congratulations to Joshua Carlsen for winning the 2017 Robert W. Sheard Scholarship!

Josh, who works as the Equipment Operator and Operation Maintenance Worker at the Township of Langley, BC, was highly recommended for the scholarship with the Association receiving many notes of support.

Josh has received a number of awards, including the Pat Dooley Memorial Award in April 2017, the TerraLink Horticulture award in March 2017, and the Ralph and Grace Fisher Endowed Horticulture Award in March 2016. Josh is the Past President of Kwantlen Polytechnic University's Turf Club. He has been involved with hosting and volunteering in three successful golf tournaments. His Turf Club "Golf Rounds for Research" contest has raised \$4,000 annually for Turfgrass Research. Josh has worked with the Turf Club to assist with the installation of USGA sand and local sod for the Solomon Island's Embassy in Brookwood, BC and volunteered at the PGA Champions Tour on Vancouver Island. He has found he can apply what he's learned both in school and on the job at these events.

In October 2016, Josh helped with the First Green event at McLeod Athletic Park in Langley, BC which we have shared with our members. Josh has worked for the Fort Langley Golf Course previously. His very first job was cutting his neighbours 84 acres of lawn over three properties. He didn't think then that he would be managing turf today. What started his interest in turf management? In 2013, while working in Vietnam, across the street was a brand new Greg Norman designed links style golf course. He connected with the General Manager and Superintendent and during his last five months in Vietnam, he asked them what he could do to help in exchange for some free golf. They asked him to teach their caddies about golf and also introduce some English. He agreed and from there he played golf every day and when the Superintendent had time, he would show Josh fertilizer applications, irrigation programs and installations and mowing techniques. Josh's goal is to become a Sports Turf Manager.

Josh was interested in applying for the scholarship to assist him in finishing his diploma and then enter a third year business diploma so he will have an understanding



of all sides of the turf industry to directly apply it to the role of Sports Turf Manager when and if he gets the opportunity.

Josh was interested in applying for the scholarship to assist him in finishing his Turf Management diploma and then enter a third year business diploma so he will have an understanding of all sides of the turf industry to directly apply it to the role of Sports Turf Manager when and if he gets the opportunity.

Josh devised a "how to train the trainer" program structure complete with a descriptive video. The word STANDARD can be used as a tool for his recommended program.

Safety | Tone | Ask | Narrate | Demonstrate | Advise | Record | Develop | Strict

You can check out the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FaE5EEXTss>

Watch our Winter edition of Sports Turf Manager magazine for the full program details!

What do others say about Josh?

Ashwant K Dwivedi of the Consulate General of Solomon Islands says ***"Apart from being responsible, Josh is a very trustworthy and talented young individual. He always strives to learn and apply his learning to the highest standards. He has also proven his ability to maintain confidentiality. He has always met his deadlines ahead of time in delivering on his targets."***

Stan Kazymierchyk of Kwantlen Polytechnic University said ***"Josh is clearly in the "Leadership" category of people. I have no doubt Josh will become an extremely effective Turf Manager in the near future"***.

As you have read, this recipient is very engaged in and passionate about the industry. Congratulations Josh!!!



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IS FRAZE MOWING RIGHT FOR YOU?

BY DARIAN DAILY

Is it “Fraise,” “fraise” or “fraize” mowing? These are all spellings used for the word that means aggressive thatch removal, field leveling, and weed removal from sport fields. This magazine uses “fraise.”

History

This maintenance process was originally referred to as “fraise” mowing by Ko Rodenburg. In the early 1990’s, Rodenburg developed this process of field renovations, while he was the leading parks superintendent in Rotterdam, Holland. He invented this process to help clean up/minimize thatch and to control organic buildup. Rodenburg found that this process also controlled and removed the *Poa annua* plants and seed accumulation while leaving the crown of the plant intact ready for regeneration.

Fraise mowing has been implemented all across Europe for decades to renovate soccer pitches.

Fraise mowing has been implemented all across Europe for decades to renovate soccer pitches. The process is used to “clean” the organic build up for the soccer pitches that used the Desso GrassMaster system. This process removes all the material so the groundsmen could reseed the pitches and still keep the Desso fibers intact.

Fraise mowing was first introduced to the United States in 2013 by Jerad Minnick, who conducted his own stateside research while at the Maryland SoccerPlex. Jerad discovered the benefits to warm season turf and declared that “Grass Can Do More” when fraze mowed. (Read Jerad and Allen Reed’s article in the August 2013 edition of *SportsTurf*.)

Research

I have known Allen Reed for many years. Allen is the director of stadium grounds for FC Dallas of Major League Soccer. Allen first told me about this concept

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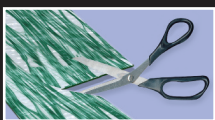
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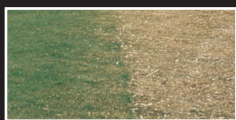
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Rhizomes exposed after thatch/organic material removed. All photos courtesy of Jerad Minnick.

at the STMA Conference in Daytona Beach in 2012, after he had begun working with Jerad on the team's main training grounds. Allen was very impressed with this process. When the conference concluded, he emailed me photos and videos of the process. When you see this process for the first time, you swear that you are destroying your field! It is such a "different" process compared with what we have seen or had been taught in the US. It took 2 years and several late night "meetings" at STMA Conferences for Allen to persuade me to try it. It is easier to try something new when a trusted friend has done it before you and you respect his work.

Selling it to the club

After talking with Allen and Jared, as well as several others throughout the country that started using the process, I pitched the practice to the Bengals' front office. The toughest part was trying to describe the fraze mowing process to people with limited turf knowledge. As hard as it was for Allen and Jerad to get me on board (someone with turf experience) it was doubly hard to get the club management on board.

During the 2013 training camp, we had one field that experienced excessive shearing. The players' cleats would shear the top ½ inch due to a buildup of organic matter and excessive thatch build-up.

After the season, I proposed to the club that we look at fraze mowing to help improve the playability of the field and to help with the shearing issue. I provided them with photos and video links and said that this would be a lot cheaper than sodding the field. I was specifically asked if this would work, knowing that if it didn't work, I would be a "former" NFL sports field manager. I told the club that fraze mowing would eliminate the thatch build-up and the developing organic matter issue we had on our oldest bermudagrass field and the field would play much better.

Implementation

June 2014 we started the process. We had an area field builder who was sodding our training camp field fraze mow. Neither he nor I had seen it done in real life; but we kept adjusting the depth until I felt comfortable that enough material was being removed and enough stolons and rhizomes were remaining (in hind sight we could have removed more material but I was honestly too scared!). It took about 3 hours to remove the field. We finished on a Wednesday, and then we waited...

Results

We came back in on Monday, 4 days after the process, and there was a haze of green grass growing! We



Six weeks after fraze mowing.



Thatch/organic matter buildup July 2013



Following fraze mowing compared to 5 weeks after mowing.

were surprised to see such a rejuvenation of the plant material in just 4 days. After 7 days we sprigged the field to insure the field would be completely filled by the beginning of training camp, just 6 weeks away.

We managed the field as if we were growing in sprigs. We applied lots of water and high fertility to push growth. Once the sprigs took hold, we backed the water off and lowered the fertility. Within 4 weeks, we could have played football on the field.

Going into the process, we knew that fraze mowing would remove all the thatch that we had and help remove the organic layer we had started to build up. This process got the field down to a firm footing. This was done not only by the removal of the thatch, but also as it allows the bermuda to grow laterally instead of vertically. This happens because the plant is a juvenile and will grow vigorously. After 6 weeks, the field was as tight as I had ever seen and there were very little damage after practices.

Something else we found was that we were able to “level” out some of our high spots due to spot sodding. The fraze mower would go over high spots and then mill down the spot to match the surrounding area. We also witnessed that, like Rodenburg, we had less weed issues. The process limited a great deal of weeds in the areas that were renovated and the areas that were not, we had more weed issues.

Moving forward

This process is revolutionary. Everyone I’ve spoken with that has tried this process has all said the same thing after the first pass: something like, “Holy crap! What have I just done!?” But what we have learned is that natural grass is a tough plant and the more we beat it up, the better and more resilient it becomes. Like anything new, it will take time before fraze mowing will be a standard in the States as much as it is in Europe. People may think you’ve lost your mind when they see the process the first time, but 6 weeks later you will look like the professional you are.

One note: After the great result of the 2014 season, we bought our own machine (KORO Universal Topmaker) and this past year we fraze mowed two of our three fields. This will be a yearly maintenance program at Paul Brown Stadium moving forward.

As Jerad Minnick says, “We need to think different so grass can do more!” •

Darian Daily was the head sports field manager for the Cincinnati Bengals before he died unexpectedly in 2016.

Touchdown!

Actual photo of real grass temporarily installed at the Rogers Centre

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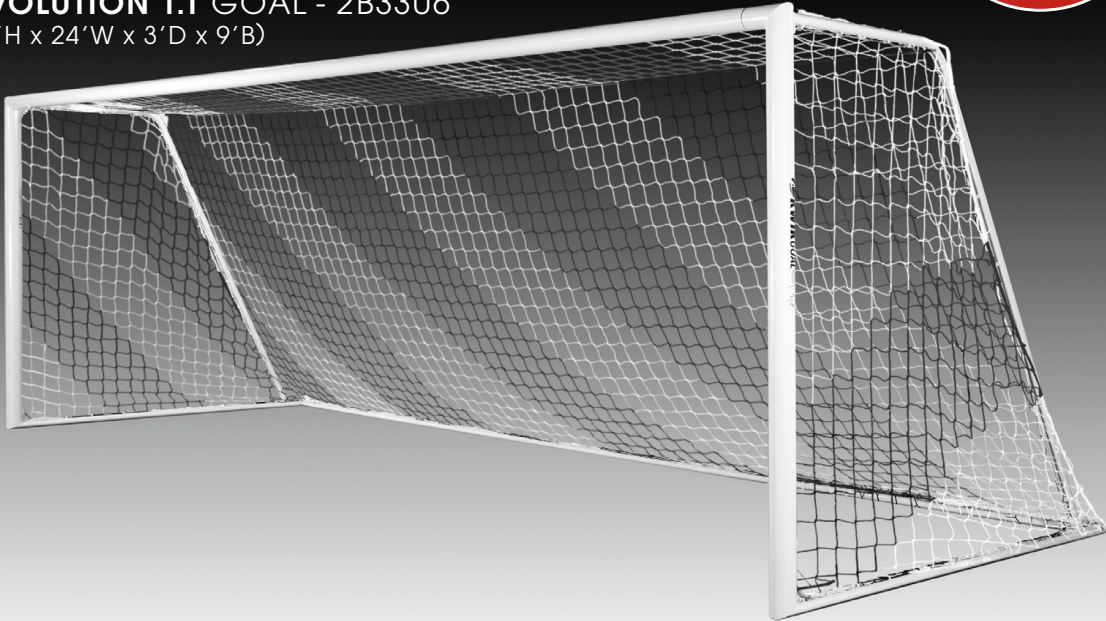
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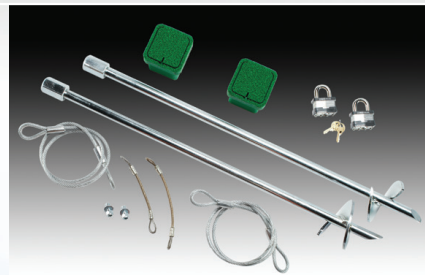
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