

Letters

Letter addressed to Mr. Michael Bladon,
Editor Sports Turf Manager.

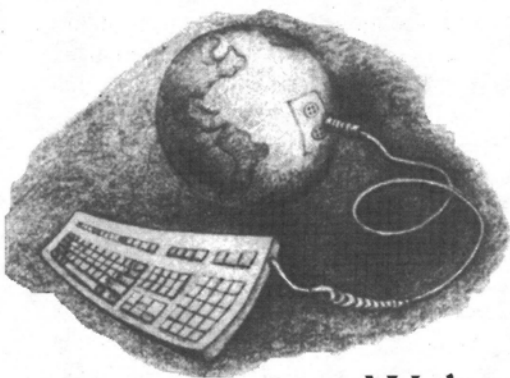
Dear Mike,

I wanted to take this opportunity to compliment you, as editor of *Sports Turf Manager*, on the quality of information and layout of the September 1997 issue. You and the directors of the Sports Turf Association of Ontario have created a publication that is useful to the industry and one which will be a benchmark for other associations to attempt to achieve with their newsletters.

Keep up the good work,
Best wishes.
John Howard
Director of Operations
Metro Parks & Culture

PLEASE NOTE

The articles written within do not necessarily reflect the views of the Sports Turf Association.



We're Wired!

Visit the Sports Turf Association's NEW! web page at <http://www.uoguelph.ca/GTI/guest/sta.htm>. Topics include information on membership, STA's mission statement and history, and awards, scholarships, bursaries and other educational initiatives. Drop us a line electronically at sta@gti.uoguelph.ca and let us know what you think!



Meet our new Executive Manager

Lee Huether joined us as the new Executive Manager of the Association effective October 14, 1997.

Most recently the Program Coordinator with the Lung Association, Lee administered the health promotion and education services of the Wellington County Community Office. She brings to the Sports Turf Association a wealth of administrative and organizational experience in both the public and private sectors.

A native of Woodstock, Ontario, Lee has resided in Guelph with her husband, Chris, and children, Tyler and Jessica, for 12 years. Having recently moved to the country, she is delighted with her view from the windows of the office of the Sports Turf Association.

Lee looks forward to working with the members of the STA and would like to thank everyone within the Association and the Guelph Turfgrass Institute for their warm welcome.

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Did You Know?



The President's Message

In the spirit of our 10th Anniversary we will be sharing with our members some highlights of the Association's history.

- ✓ 1992: Conjoint conference brought about by Annette Anderson; involved OGSA, PLCAO, the Sod Producers, GTI, OTRF, and the STA. In the same year, videotapes were marketed through the Independent Study Program at the University of Guelph in a shared agreement.
- ✓ 1993: Produced our strategic plan "Toward 2000" to redefine the future direction of the Association, assess our membership services, and to better fulfill our mission statement. The Association moved its office to the GTI, a building shared by other turf related organizations. This was the dream of past president Bruce Calhoun. 1993 was also the first year scholarships were given by the Association to graduates in the Turf Short Course at Guelph, and we produced member plaques and a membership address book.
- ✓ 1994: Dr. Bob Sheard resigned as Executive Secretary but continued as editor of the *Sports Turf Manager*, a job he had done since 1993.
- ✓ 1995: Hired Sonia Schnieder as our Executive Secretary. Ended agreement with the U of G on videotapes. President Chris Mark agreed to serve a second term.
- ✓ 1997: Hired Lee Heuther in October as Executive Manager after Sonia's resignation. Many presentations were made to associations in Ontario and Saskatchewan about sports turf. Word also spread through distributor mailings and the media. Started to produce information of use to the turf manager with the prime beneficiary being the athlete.
- ✓ Still to come: Unveiling of an Association logo in January 1998 at the AGM. The logo is being designed by students at Conestoga College. ◆

continued from page 1

an unbelievably enjoyable experience and one which I have had superb and constant support from all Directors and members. It has allowed me the opportunity to grow both personally and professionally. One of my most lasting memories will be all the professional and genuinely nice people I have met in this organization and in our industry. You have all been fantastic, and it has been a pleasure and an honour to serve such a respected organization and to work with so many fine people.

Finally, 1997 was also a special year for one of our longest supplier members, Pickseed, who celebrated their 50th Anniversary. Congratulations on half a century of serving the needs of the turf industry in terms of customer service and research. Pickseed has been one of the biggest supporters of the STA, and we offer them best wishes and continued success in the future.

To all members, I wish a happy and blessed holiday season. May the joy we share and feel during the holidays remain with you throughout the coming year. I hope 1998 is full of health and happiness for all of you.

See you at the Ontario Turfgrass Symposium on January 6-8, 1998. Join us for a social dinner prior to the AGM on January 6 at 7:00 p.m.

Wishing you better, safer sports turf. ◆

—Christopher Mark

Content Deadline for March Issue
January 16, 1998

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The Sports Turf Association of Ontario: A Celebration of 10 Years

Give people enough rope, and they will hang themselves. Just as likely, they will tie themselves up in knots.

On a February day in 1987, Mike Bladon convened turf industry people to discuss the feasibility of a sports turf association. That day, at the University of Guelph's Arboretum, he clearly established himself as somebody who could rope people into something—including myself. Mike introduced me to the twenty-odd experts as a new guy who would run their inaugural meeting. No one but Mike knew he had provided me with an agenda as tight as rails on a railway track. He knew he had to keep me on a short leash.

I recall after that meeting feeling confident in the Sports Turf Association; it's mission; it's reason for being. Everyone seemed elated that the organization was "off and running." All agreed that "this was a good start," and I had similar thoughts. But I don't think that anybody realized how far down the road an unleashed STA would run in the ten years since that initial 90 minute meeting.

Here are some of the markers along that decade-long road. First, membership growth from 20-something to nearly 200; second, field days in nine different locations after a first event at the

University of Guelph's Alumni Stadium; third, appointment of an executive secretary, Dr. Bob Sheard, who edited and published a field guide, the Association's newsletter and a three-part video series on turf for sport venues; fourth, establishment of the Association's office at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute; and fifth, creation of the STA's strategic plan, "Towards 2000."

Along the way, the Sports Turf Association exhibited commendable strength of character by providing three honorary life memberships to James Boyce, Norman Rothwell and Clayton Switzer. And, on top of all that, the STA built its profile as a "wired entity" with the creation of its own web site and electronic mail address.

What the coming decade holds for the Sports Turf Association will be revealed in the fullness of time. I only hope that whatever may be won't tether the association—its spirit or its imagination—but will usher it into its "field of dreams." The Association should be proud of its accomplishments to date and confident in its future. I am happy to be allowed to convey my wish for high fortune. ♦

—*Bill Culp is the Director for Independent Study/OAC ACCESS at the University of Guelph*

OPPORTUNITIES!!

Become a Trade Show Buff

Trade show season will soon be upon us which gives suppliers and attendees the opportunity to talk about products and services both old and new. To get the greatest benefit from trade shows and make the most effective use of their time, exhibitors and attendees alike have to come with a good attitude and know what they want to achieve while at the show.

Successful exhibitors come to a trade show with high expectations, high energy, and eager booth personnel. Good sales people greet attendees with enthusiasm, make eye contact when talking and are never seated. Instead they are ready to talk and explain to potential clients the features of their product or service.

Trade shows also offer tremendous value to attendees. Where else can you see so many products in a relatively short period of time and have all or most of your questions about a product answered. Attendees can get

the most out of a trade show by being prepared beforehand. Come with a written list of objectives so that you know who and what you want to see and what you wish to talk about. You can gain all kinds of information from salespeople who want to tell you about new products or new features on established ones.

Trade shows also offer the venue to meet with old friends and colleagues. It is the ideal setting to talk about the industry, new products and ideas, or just catch up and socialize.

To get the most from a trade show either as an exhibitor or attendee, come prepared to discuss, ask questions and listen. There are few situations that can be more productive or informative to the individual. Try it. I guarantee you'll enjoy it! ♦

—*Harold Van Gool is a Director of the STA and a contributing editor to Sports Turf Manager.*

Amendments and Supplements: Pros and Cons

Overuse, compaction, and lack of adequate management can decrease sports turf quality. Today, many professionals are using soil amendments or supplements to enhance their root zones and improve the health of their sports fields.

Our desire for tougher playing surfaces and our need to reduce waste has led to some very novel soil supplements, especially in the compost market. Imagine your turf feasting on compost derived from blueberries, Atlantic crab, herring, and beer residue. Whether or not these gourmet composts are more beneficial than traditional fair is still a topic for debate. Your best bet is to compare labels or call the manufacturer for more information on the nutrient composition of the compost. Agriculture and Agri-food Canada requires manufacturers to document all relevant information on their product labels.

Typically, the term amendment refers to any material added to the soil to enhance plant growth through the modification of the soil's physical characteristics. Organics such as compost or manure fall into the gray area between soil supplements and fertilizers because they also supply additional nutrients. Organic supplements help provide and retain nutrients, increase biological activity, and aid in aggregate formation thus improving soil porosity.

Synthetic compounds and starches have also been used as soil conditioners. They have been used to improve soil structure,

decrease erosion, increase infiltration, and improve water-holding capacity.

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Substances like sand, calcined clays, natural minerals, or man-made materials are inorganic and are used to optimize the physical growing conditions in the soil by changing the texture of the soil. Choosing the right supplement can improve water, air, and nutrient use thereby increasing grass performance and decreasing maintenance.

The Right Stuff

The most effective conditioner is the material that can cause the greatest im-

provement in soil characteristics per unit volume of soil. There are a number of factors to take into consideration before buying an amendment or supplement. These include:

- **Stability:** Is the material physically, chemically, and biologically stable? Materials that breakdown or change shape due to compaction or weathering may lose their ability to enhance soil physical conditions.
- **Consistency:** Is the product of consistent quality? Uniformity from batch to batch provides you with the assurance that you will get the desired result each time when applying the amendment at the manufacturers suggested rate.
- **Suitability:** Is the supplement physically and chemically suitable for your needs? A material that is difficult to handle, hard to mix, has an unacceptable pH, poor cation exchange capacity, or heavy metal content may lead to previously unanticipated problems.
- **Monetary:** Is the material readily and economically available? The product should be easy to get and fairly inexpensive. ♦

—Paul Grünthal has a Masters degree in soil science from the University of Guelph and currently works in Toronto as a Technical Specialist examining the potential of waste-based soil supplements.

Rod Young - Central Ontario
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PEOPLE AND PRODUCTS THAT GO THE DISTANCE

Woodbine Field Day Highlights

MICHAEL BLADON

Facilities at Woodbine were very good and the meals were nice although the sandwiches at lunch were a little dainty for hungry people young and old! For those of you who were unable to attend the Field Day, the following is a recap of the major events.

Tour of Woodbine Facilities

Sean Gault gave a wonderful tour of both the buildings and grounds associated with the Woodbine Race Track. Eighteen hundred thoroughbreds are stabled at Woodbine in the summer and 300 in winter. Of these, 100 are used daily to fill the nine-race card. The landscaping in the centre field bounded by the three tracks is very attractive as this is where all eyes turn—particularly at the end of a race. Of the three tracks, one has a limestone base and is used for standardbreds. An eight furlong dirt/sand track has been designed for thoroughbreds, and the E. P. Taylor track is turf.

All the ponds are cosmetic except one which is used for irrigation. All water from the stables is recycled and pumped to a pond north of Rexdale Boulevard and then used for irrigation.



Standardbreds are stabled at Mohawk Raceway or at farms and brought in on race day. Tunnels have been constructed under the tracks so the horses do not walk on the track when coming from the stables, prior to the race. In this way, track standards are maintained. Only if there is a problem, like a washout with the track, are races cancelled. Otherwise the standardbreds race all winter. In the case of thoroughbreds, fog or a frozen track can stop them from running. The standardbred track (seven furlongs) is graded daily, but Monday and Tuesday are the heavy maintenance days. The E. P. Taylor turf track (one and a half miles) is mowed once a week to four inches or 10 cm. This takes eight to 10 hours using tractor drawn rotary mowers.

A veterinarian is at trackside during all racing events to inspect the horses before and after the races. Two ambulances follow each race (both human and animal). Cameras also follow the race and are located on the corners and head-on on the backstretch and the homestretch.

Some of the equipment used are two graders, which are used daily, along with four tandem water trucks with a capacity of

some 3300 gallons. Each are used to wet the track. Also used are Mitchell cutting harrows, plus farm harrows, to give a finished job. Two starting gates are used as well, one weighing 10 tonnes. Lanes may be changed on the turf track by using movable railings. All major races are run on the inside lane, or first lane. Railings are made of fibreglass and because they are one of a



kind, are very expensive (\$200.00 each). These are placed on metal stakes which in turn are fitted into sleeves in the soil. Manure is disposed of under contract by Leaver Mushrooms. Turf is rolled two to three times per week and always in the opposite direction to the way the horses run in order to push down the divots. Then five to six employees topdress the lanes after the races the next day. It is a very intensive labour process the day after the races. Also six to seven pounds of nitrogen are applied each season.

The turf track at Woodbine has a very wide turn. This means the horses do not have to adjust their stride. The track also boasts the largest straightaway in North America, which is slightly downhill, so it's not as hard on the horses legs.

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Terry Quinn: A Mandate for Soccer at Home and Abroad

The Canadian Soccer Association is involved in an exciting period and has both international and national mandates. One is to elevate the game to the level of sports such as hockey, baseball and basketball. Another is to develop the game at all levels—youth, senior and professional. Today, soccer is the number one grassroots sport in Canada with 600,000 plus players,



is to develop players to meet and excel against the world's best. In Edmonton in 1994, 51,000 fans watched Canada tie Brazil 1-1.

More than 195 countries are members of FIFA, the world governing body of soccer, with 38 countries in our confederation, CONCACAF. International soccer is on a roll with more players, more interest, and more revenues than ever before.

There is a record increase in public interest in the National Team competing in the World Cup qualifying play for France in 1998 (Canada is now in tough shape after leading for most of the game and tying Mexico 2-2 in October).

Recent TV ratings have yielded viewer figures totalling 300,000 viewers per minute (VPM) which lags only behind NHL/Blue Jays baseball at an average of 400,000 VPM. It is forecasted that 38 billion viewers will tune in for the five week, 32 nation, 64 game tournament in 1998 with almost four billion watching the final alone. There will be constant pressure on FIFA to service the TV viewers, the paying spectators, and corporate sponsors by encouraging an entertaining product on the field with the highest technical standard of play.

For the future: grass, grass, grass!; more players in the female side of the game, including more World Cups for women; and continuing development in the skills of players, referees, and coaches (after all, soccer is just a kick in the grass!).

Editors Note: Attention to all those who believe that this article does not affect you. Canada is trying for the World Cup in 2010 and it is played only on natural grass. Does your field measure up? Would you like some of the revenues from being a host? What are your plans for more soccer fields in your municipality for this fast growing sport? Think about it!

Dr. Jack Eggens: History and Maintenance of Turf Tracks

Of all of the surfaces available for riding horses, and horse racing in particular, turf remains the most desirable.

The frequency of races on the same track, and the relative scarcity of suitable research on rootzones for horse racing, has led to the use of other surfaces such as sand. The better trainers and owners of standardbred and thoroughbred horses strongly desire a turf track over those made of wood, sand, or other artificial surfaces.

Major requirements of turf racetracks include:

- Flexibility (cushioning) - resulting from the development of mat. Pierrang and Catrice (1989) found that "flexibility of a turf track was a complex result of soil cohesiveness and ability to settlement and flow. A dry and fibrous thatch has to be developed while a moist and spongy mat must be seriously controlled."
- Firmness - the ability to resist the hard and repeated impact of hooves.
- Repair of severe divotting by hooves, especially on the turns.



- Development of a suitable mat (thatch) and its subsequent control in the off-season periods.
- Maintenance of turf density at the optimum mowing heights required to maintain a suitable sward. The turf is usually mowed at eight to 10 cm during the racing season and then dropped to four to five cm in the off-season to increase turfgrass density.

Grasses used frequently on horse racetracks include:

100,000 coaches, 10,000 referees, and an untold number of volunteers and organizers. The Canadian Coaching Association has recognized that soccer has more A and B level coaches registered than any other sport. An A license coaching certificate takes five to seven years to attain.

There are 11 domestic Canadian championships each year for both boys and girls, and ladies and men. In addition, 600 tournaments are held in Canada with a few like the Robbie which is known worldwide. Teams of all age groups from all parts of Canada travel to many parts of the world to play in soccer tournaments.

Soccer participates as a full partner in the Canada Games, the North American Indigenous Games and various regional and provincial games. This has made soccer more visible across the country. There has been a strong increase in the corporate sector of the game. In 1993, there were three national corporate sponsors. Today, 12 cover most of the programs. These are large organizations such as Burger King, JVC, Snickers, General Motors, Royal Bank, Air Canada, UMBRO, and Gillette.

The Soccer Association has over 200 full-time employees who work at the provincial and district/club areas to continue the development and organization of the game. In 1996, in conjunction with Con Agra, the house of the third Prime Minister of Canada was purchased as a national headquarters in Ottawa.

Pro Soccer

Presently there are five professional clubs in Canada, three outdoor and two indoor. The game is still evolving from a sport we play to a sport we watch.

At the international level, the mandate

Kentucky Bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*)

- produces a dense sward which has good trampling resistance
- maintains an acceptable density when mowed at 10-12 cm
- has a strong rhizome system for sod strength and healing
- is a relatively strong thatch or "mat" producer— provides flexibility and resistance to divots
- seedlings are weak; sward establishment from seed quite slow (at least 18 months from seeding to use); and has very poor overseeding success when overseeded into an established sward for repair

Perennial Ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*)

- establishes quickly from seed and produces a "trampling resistant" sward
- high lignin content
- has relatively low density at greater mowing heights, but because of its clumping nature, it tends to be somewhat hollow and lacks flexibility
- overseeds very well into an established sward
- rust is a problem for which there is very little control
- extremely aggressive at higher mowing heights and tends to outcompete Kentucky bluegrass

Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*)

- produces a sward with good density and flexibility but is sensitive to competition the higher you cut
- does not overseed readily and has poor healing potential
- used in the maritime climate of Britain and Europe, but suffers in the periodic high temperature stress in southern Ontario

Dr. Bob Sheard: Construction of the Woodbine Turf Track

Bob indicated that most of the information on the sand based turf track that he had advised on was covered in the construction pamphlet at the registration desk and had been sent to all members. He instead spent his time explaining the research being done at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute on the availability of water in sand rootzones. This was work he was involved with in 1995-96. See GTI HILITES in the September 1997 issue of *Sports Turf Manager* for more details. Essentially what the research showed was that many sand based greens are being overwatered instead of being allowed to dry down. Too much water may result in a waterlogged condition.

Andrew Gaydon: Irrigation at Woodbine

Here are the hard facts:

- two eight-inch pipes run down either side of the track; these constitute the mains for the irrigation system
- 12 to 14 sprinklers operate at one time
- on a manual start, the irrigation system goes through a complete cycle of 24 zones; however, the system has full automatic capability
- two men are employed full-time on watering and another in training; they have to be ready for sprinklers sticking, or for an underground break
- pump capacity is 700-800 gallons per minute
- watering is done on a five day rolling cycle, with water on the sixth day—20 minutes per sprinkler; takes seven to eight hours.

This is all run by a computerized system which results in savings in labour, money and water. Water will be crucial in the next 10 years as many local wells dry up. Woodbine is well off for water due to the ability to recycle and store the water from its stables in ponds (as mentioned earlier). The central computer also manages water, lighting, and the locking of gates (if required). The superintendent is close to the airport so he can download weather information to maximize the use of his equipment. Hand held radios or phones allow him to radio or phone to his office to change the irrigation cycle. ♦



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APOLOGY

to Dr. Bob Sheard and our members on the omission of graphs that accompanied GTI HILITES in the September 1997 issue of *Sports Turf Manager*.



Environmentally Friendly Sports Lighting

◆
J. SNELGROVE

We are all aware of the difficulties that programmers or facility schedulers have in trying to satisfy the sport facility needs of all user groups within a municipality. With escalating land values and the uncertainty of provincial transfer payments, parks and recreation managers are placed in the unenviable position of having to do more with less.

The increased awareness of our personal needs for physical fitness has greatly improved the quality and quantity of our fields over the last 15 years. The user groups have become more sophisticated and therefore more critical with respect to the condition of every aspect of their "home" fields. Intermunicipality competitions have increased the opportunities for many players to use facilities in other towns, and they are very quick to compare. We all know that "the grass is always greener..." A facilities manager's worst nightmare would be to have a councillor or Parks Commissioner who plays on a competitive "travelling" team.

As many sports programs involve evening play, a good quality lighting system virtually doubles the use of the complex. From mid-August on in some areas of the country, it is difficult to complete

even one night game, let alone consider or schedule a second. The capital cost, the life-cycle cost, and the maintenance cost of the lighting system are far less than the cost of the construction and maintenance of a second field.

In the past, a lighted sports park was required to be constructed either in an in-

As many sports programs involve evening play, a good quality lighting system virtually doubles the use of the complex.

dustrial area, or it had to be designed with large impractical buffer zones to reduce the light trespass on neighbouring properties. The round spun aluminum sports floodlights available for the past 30 to 40 years provide as much light above the aiming point as below. This creates a difficult, if not impossible problem of light control. The design of the spun aluminum

sports floodlight has not changed much over the last 25 years, and they are still the most capital cost-effective way to light a field. The addition of optical hoods, glare shields, and louvres to the fixtures is not a satisfactory solution as they can reduce the fixture efficiency by up to 50 percent.

Today's technology allows the experienced sports lighting designer to control the lumen output (light) produced by the lamp, thus eliminating light trespass and annoying glare. By definition, light trespass or spill light is a measurable amount of light outside of the primary playing areas of the field. Glare is a visual annoyance. A 150-watt floodlight on a boathouse one kilometre across a lake, aimed at your cottage would represent glare, not light trespass.

The first controlled optic sports lighting facility in Canada was built in 1981. There was only one product available then that could satisfy the on-field lighting standards as outlined by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America while eliminating spill light on neighbouring properties. There was a capital cost premium to be paid for that product over the cost effective spun aluminum fixture; however, using this premium product did

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