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STA OFFICE HOURS

Lee Huether is in the office from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Tuesday through 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 be reached at any time by faxing (519) 766-1704 or via e-mail.

The President's Desk

PAUL TURNER



Hello to our members.

Wow! Was that a summer! This year seemed to be even hotter than last year and who thought that was possible. The weather gurus say that

it was the hottest summer since records were kept and it sure felt like it.

We lost more days to the dreaded smog this year than any other and that trend might continue. Our equipment must become more multi-tasking than strictly being grass cutters, as pretty soon there might not be a lot of it growing in the summer months.

September Field Day

The 15th Annual Field Day was a resounding success! A great big thank you to all who attended this year's event in Oakville. Without membership/supplier support, events like these would be a thing of the past.

Special thanks to all the sponsors and exhibitors who carried the bulk of the costs for the day. It is with your participation that we can bring in quality speakers to make the day a success. You also allow us to keep the costs extremely low so that it is affordable to all.

I would like to single out several companies in particular for their outstanding sponsorship contributions:

- Ron Craig and Jamie Worden of Turf Care Products of Canada
- Brian Rosenberg of Nu-Gro Corporation
- Andrew Gaydon of Vanden Bussche Irrigation in association with Hunter Industries and Rain Bird International
- Paul Gillen and Matt Lindner and their respective companies AerWay and DiamondPro

To all our other great sponsors, thank you again and we look forward to your participation in 2003. Without you this day simply wouldn't happen.

New Website Coming

At the time of writing this message, our new web site is not functional; however, we would like you to bookmark the new address for the Association, www.sportsturfassociation.com. We are currently seeking ideas on topics that you, our members, would like to have available. If you have suggestions, we welcome them. We are accepting sponsorship proposals from industry suppliers to help our Association with on-going costs of the site.

Get Involved! Directors Needed

The Nominating Committee is searching for nominees for the position of director for the 2003/2004 term. There will be several positions available as some of our long-term directors are moving on to enjoy other ventures and hobbies. We are looking for new faces to guide our Association in these changing times. I realize that time is a problem for most people; however, we try to arrange our meetings at times of the year that are convenient and keep them punctual so we can all make the kids' soccer games! If you are interested, please call myself or another board member. It is a great opportunity to mix and mingle with fellow friends and gather some helpful knowledge which can be carried forward in our daily lives.

Still Room to Register

There is a joint ORFA/STA educational workshop October 23rd in Halton Hills (see page 21 for more information). Please contact the STA office for more details.

I hope you had a great summer and enjoy what looks to be a great fall! ♦

Please Note: Opinions expressed in articles published in *Sports Turf Manager* are those of the author and not necessarily those of the STA, unless otherwise indicated.

Kudos to Industry Professionals

CONGRATULATIONS ON A JOB WELL DONE!

Water Right Book Leads to Environmental Communicator Award

The STA congratulates Doug Fender, recipient of the 2002 Environmental Communicator of the Year Award. The book and brochure focus attention on the world's landscape water concerns, *Water Right – Conserving Our Water, Preserving Our Environment* and *Share the Water*, earned the title for the Executive Director of Turf Producers International.

The 64-page *Water Right* book, which provides a world-wide background on the growing water crisis and presents case study-based solutions, can be downloaded (free of charge) from the TPI website at www.TurfGrassSod.org. Hardcopies of the full-colour book are available for a \$5 USD handling fee by contacting the association at 1855-A Hicks Road, Rolling Meadows, IL 60008.



Doug Fender (left) receives the Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association 2002 Environmental Communicator of the Year Award in San Antonio from ProSource One representative Daney Kepple along with TOCA's Executive Director Den Gardner.

FIFA World Championships

Congratulations to STA member Larry Noon, Turf Manager of Edmonton's Commonwealth Stadium, on a superb job looking after the fields/facilities for the FIFA Under 19 Women's World Championships. Well done!



Craig Hinschberger (right), recipient of the 2002 STA scholarship for the Ontario Diploma in Horticulture is congratulated by STA Director Bob Sheard at the Graduation Awards & Donor Appreciation Luncheon held on June 11, 2002 in Guelph, Ontario.

STA Scholarship Winners

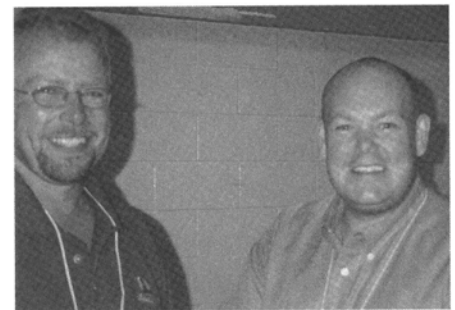
Craig Hinschberger is the 2002 winner of the Sports Turf Association of Ontario's award for excellence in turf management studies toward a Diploma in Horticulture from the University of Guelph. Craig also received the Nursery Sod Growers award. Craig is employed as the Assistant Superintendent of the Doon Valley Golf Course in Kitchener, Ontario. Doon Valley is a public course which is a division of the Parks Department of the City of Kitchener.

Craig showed determination and enthusiasm by obtaining his diploma through independent study, that is by correspondence courses, while employed by Doon Valley. He considers turf management a challenging occupation which is coupled with the enjoyment of spending much time outside in beautiful surroundings.

MEMBERSHIP PLAQUES

Now available! Sports Turf Association Display Membership Plaque in executive engraved walnut. Just \$50 plus S&H. Contact Lee Huether at the STA office to order.

The 2002 recipient of the Sports Turf Association scholarship for the University of Guelph's Turf Managers' Short Course is John Peek. John has been employed by the City of Mississauga Parks Department for twenty years and looks after major sports facilities as well as all horticultural functions in a specific district. John found the Turf Managers' Short Course very informative and it challenged him to apply the information he learned in the field.



STA President Paul Turner (right) congratulates John Peek, recipient of the 2002 STA Scholarship for the University of Guelph's Turf Managers' Short Course at the Association's Field Day September 12, 2002 in Oakville, Ontario.

Odds and Ends

Quotes of the Month

As We Are. Each of us tends to think we see things as they are, that we are objective. But this is not the case. We see the world not as it is, but as we are – as we are conditioned to see it.

Sharpen the Saw. The single most important investment we can make in life is investment in ourselves, in the only instrument we have with which to deal with life and to contribute. Never be too busy sawing to take time to sharpen the saw.

Winter 2002 Submissions

If you have something you'd like to submit for the next issue, please forward it to the STA office by October 25.

Coming Events

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

FALL 2002

October 17-18

Landscape Ontario Horticultural
Trades Association *Garden Expo*
Toronto, ON
Information: (905) 875-1805

STA HIGHLIGHT

October 23

STA/ORFA Educational Workshop
*IPM Cultural Practices and Equip-
ment*, Mold-Masters SportsPlex
Halton Hills, ON
Information:
(416) 426-7062 (ORFA)
or (519) 763-9431 (STA)

October 24-26

Irrigation Association
*International Irrigation Show &
Conference*, New Orleans, LA
Information: (703) 536-7080
www.irrigation.org

WINTER 2003

January 6-10

Cornell University
Turfgrass Management Short Course
Ithaca, NY
Information: (607) 255-1792

January 15-17

Landscape Ontario Horticultural
Trades Association
Congress 2003
Toronto, ON
Information: (905) 875-1805

STA HIGHLIGHT

January 21-23

Ontario Turfgrass Symposium
Regal Constellation Hotel
Toronto, ON
Information: (519) 767-5000

January 22 (at the OTS)

STA Annual General Meeting
Information: (519) 763-9431

February 3-28

University of Guelph
Turf Managers' Short Course
Guelph, ON
Information: (519) 767-5000

February 18, 25 & March 4

Guelph Turfgrass Institute
*Pesticide Applicators Preparation
Course*, Guelph, ON
Information: (519) 824-4120 x 2501

February 25-28

Turfgrass Producers International
*Mid-Winter Conference and Exhibi-
tion*, Birmingham, England
Information: (847) 705-9898
www.TurfGrassSod.org

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Organic Lawn Care

DOUG SMITH DISCUSSES THE NEED FOR STANDARDS AND CERTIFICATION

The term “organic” has by and large been accepted by our society. Education, especially by interest groups, has sent a strong “organic” message. The message has been picked up by the public, who have now created a demand for organic consumer goods and services.

The lawn care service industry has taken particular notice of this trend. As well as their conventional programs, some lawn care companies now also offer their customers organic programs to varying degrees. A select number of companies provide only organic programs and have noticed an increase in business.

At the same time as the lawn care industry is experiencing a growth in demand for organic lawn care, the real possibility exists that environmental legislation will ultimately prohibit the application of conventional chemical pesticides and fertilizers. It is therefore important that all lawn care companies accept there are forces beyond their control that will drive an even increasing demand for organic lawn care. It just makes sense that lawn care companies should give their customers a full range of options when it comes to lawn care, options that include both conventional and organic programs. It is time for

the lawn care industry as a whole to take advantage of the clear business opportunity that exists and decide to become proactive by adhering to a set of standards for organic lawn care and becoming certified organic lawn care providers.

The Need for Standards

Standards for organic lawn care are important because they will “set the bar” for both the consumer and the lawn care provider. A clear set of standards will provide direction on the principles, processes and products involved in organic lawn care. Standards that lead to certification will then create a level playing field for both the consumer and the lawn care provider. The provider is certified and able to deliver an organic program, while the consumer is in a much better position to compare those lawn care companies that are certified and provide organic lawn care programs.

With standards, there will be no basis for descriptive terms such as, “environmentally friendly,” “natural” or “organic-based.” Each lawn care business that chooses to provide organic lawn care can be measured against a common denominator: either you are organic by an accepted set of standards or you are not. There will be no more gray areas of confusion. In general, criteria for a functional set of standards include:

- they must be comprehensive
- they need to be dynamic so they can evolve over time
- they must be user-friendly to the lawn care service provider
- they must avoid semantics
- they must lead to certification
- they must be beyond reproach by all groups involved in furthering the implementation of organic lawn care

The Great Pesticide Debate

With the current and rather heated battle over the pesticide issue, it is this last

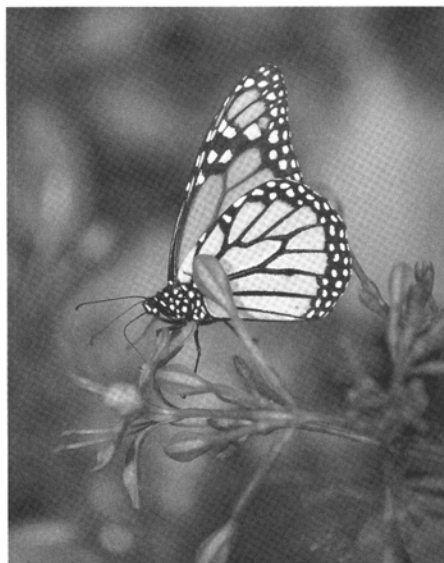
criteria that is especially significant, and which requires elaboration. In the pesticide issue, there are the two camps – those who utilize conventional chemical pesticides and fertilizers and those who oppose their use. It is important to accept that there will always be points of disparity between the two camps. It is time to go on with business and begin to focus and expand upon the common ground that exists between the two camps – the common ground that encompasses organic lawn care.

To this end, a viable set of organic lawn care standards should transcend the emotional politics that have become an obstacle in the delivery of organic lawn care to the consumer. The delivery of organic lawn care to the consumer is the common ground and an area that will become reinforced and expanded through a set of organic lawn care standards, which will ultimately lead to certification for the lawn care provider.

The common ground is where we all speak the same language, a language that is based upon fundamental soil science, agronomic and overall plant health care and not on emotionalism. Organic standards can convey the value of organic management within this system of soil/plant health. A lawn care service provider that comes to understand this value will more likely be motivated to offer organic programs and become certified. ♦

— Reprinted with permission from *Landscape Trades*, Volume 24, Number 4, May, 2002

Doug Smith is the technical director of Organic Turf Management, a company involved in the development and distribution of organic turf products. He participated on the Panel Discussion on Organics at the 2002 Ontario Turfgrass Symposium. Doug has also developed a set of organic lawn care standards and certification process for lawn care providers. He may be contacted via email at organicturf@idirect.com.



Cover Story Continued ... STA Annual Field Day

THANKS TO ALL SPONSORS AND EXHIBITORS FOR MAKING THE EVENT A GREAT AND AFFORDABLE SUCCESS!



Becky Kellar (left) with session Chair Jane Arnett-Rivers.

Winning the Gold

The speaker following refreshments was Becky Kellar, a member of Canada's gold medal winning Olympic hockey team. Becky received a big ovation as she stood up with her gold medal for all to see. She began her presentation on *The Olympic Experience* by playing a videotape of the last two minutes of the final game at Salt Lake against the American team (which Canada won 3-2). There was another round of loud applause at the end of the tape.

Becky talked about the extensive training leading up to the Olympics, first with a stint in Calgary and shortly after being told to report with hockey equipment and bicycles to the army base at Valcartier, Quebec. The latter were necessary because

team members had to use bikes as their sole means of transportation.

While in Quebec, they were given extensive fitness tests and some extremely challenging tasks to check their stamina. One of which entailed riding a stationary bicycle for a full minute at a level five – a feat their trainer thought no one would accomplish. They were screaming after 30 seconds, but all passed the test!

Prior to the Olympics, they played some exhibition games across Canada, in Finland, and eight games against the American team. The first games against the Americans were lost by big scores and team meetings were held to see what could be done. The Americans were bigger, faster and were scoring goals. The Canadian team had to improve their passing,

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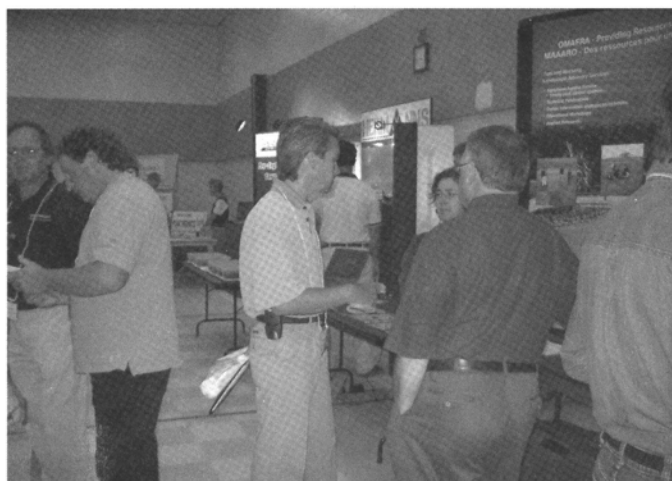
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start scoring goals, and generally work much better as a team. The next two games were one goal games so their confidence as a team was beginning to build.

Like most people, the Olympic experience for Becky was a dream come true. Marching into the stadium not as a hockey team, but united with ice skaters, skiers and toboganners as Team Canada, was an unforgettable event.

Becky has been with the Canadian team for five years. She was a member of the silver medal team at Nagano, Japan in 1998 and played in three world championships winning three gold medals in 1999, 2000 and 2001. She still gets butterflies before a big game and goes through the business of *what if as a defenseman I let in the deciding goal?* or *What if I do not score, or score the winning goal?* Luckily, once on the ice, all troubling thoughts go away.

She ended her talk discussing the semi final game against Finland where they were behind 4-3 at the end of the second

period. It was stressful with all the parents and fans in the stands who had already purchased \$300-500 tickets for the final. Luckily, they pulled off a big win. In the gold medal game, there were 13 penalties and the stars were on the bench. As penalties were killed, each person pulled their weight. It was the terrific team effort and desire to win that pulled them through. Lastly, Becky took questions from the crowd and then walked around so people could admire the gold medal.

Turf Covers Examined

Dr. Julie Dionne of the University of Guelph and the Turfgrass Institute concluded the morning sessions with a talk on turf covers. She stressed that most of the research has been done on golf greens (golf courses started using turf covers in the 1970s) so there is much to be done on sports fields.

Covers can be used in different situations. 1) for rain protection to drain the field without soaking it before a game and

2) to protect parts of the field where players stand (bench tarps) and where players come onto the field from the dressing rooms.

3) They are also used to prevent winter desiccation caused by the drying atmosphere, high winds and low humidity. Ice is a poor insulator and is in fact a conductor, and thus interferes with air exchange. Grass plants under ice for extended periods do not survive. Extreme winter temperatures and rapid decreases in temperatures can quickly cause winter injury.

4) Covers can enhance and stimulate seed growth, establishment and renovation and provide an early spring green up allowing play two to three weeks earlier than normal. (They ensure that heat in the soil is not lost from the day temperature.) Dionne also stressed that monitoring for diseases in the spring when soil temperatures rise is very important. With Kentucky bluegrass and the bentgrasses, temperature for germination is between 15-30C,

and with perennial rye and tall fescue, 20-30C is required.

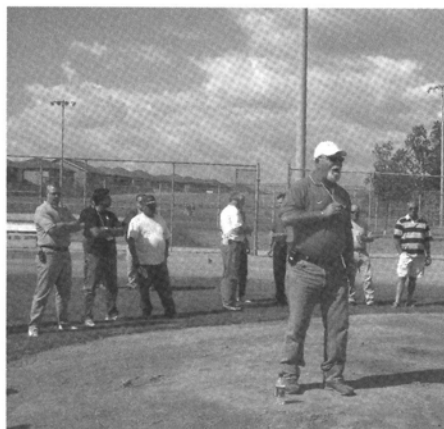
5) Covers also prevent erosion and seed movement.

She concluded her talk by saying that more research is needed on sports fields to develop a set of recommendations for Ontario. Following this presentation, session Chair Chris Mark from the Town of Oakville mentioned that tarps are very expensive but more importantly, they are labour intensive and heavy. With warm spring temperatures, tarps have to be removed for mowing and then replaced to keep the soil warm to aid in establishment.

Travellin' Man Mel Lanford

After lunch, delegates spent some time with the outdoor exhibitors prior to the last session featuring speaker Mel Lanford, a 30 year veteran of the groundskeeping industry and host and creator of the Ace of Diamonds Tour.

Mel gave an extremely informative hands-on talk on the ball diamond including reasons as to why maintenance is so important from a liability standpoint. He



also brought into play his many years of experience as to how to solve problems on the diamond.

Simply identifying the problems we all have is not good enough. Come September, every facility has "lips," and everyone knows how to remove them. The trick is preventative maintenance and not allowing them to form in the first place. This, of course, takes time.

"If I didn't have 12 diamonds to maintain, I wouldn't have lips," Mel stated. He's convinced that creativity is the way

to go. Mel has invented many types of drag mats with varying degrees of success.

"Let the person who does the work invent new alternatives – your staff know what works best. In conjunction, ask for what you need and explain why you need it. Don't just assume there are not funds for equipment, especially if it means the liability of the facility is decreased."

We then moved to the mound where he explained in great detail how to construct a pitching mound, the most important part of the diamond, from a pitcher's standpoint. When talking about the "table top" of the mound, comfort for the pitcher is optimum. The player should be focused on the throw, not falling off the mound. Don't be afraid to increase the table! Mel also showed us how, using amendments, to do a quick repair to the landing area of a mound. This is particularly important as many diamonds are used by two or three age groups during the season.



In closing, Mel stressed the importance of surface grading and of not being afraid of moisture on the infield. He was flattered to be asked to come, and thanked the STA and sponsors for making it possible. Mel also expressed a desire to stay more involved with the STA and that we partner further with our American counterparts at the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA).

All speakers received *Trans Canada Trail: the 16,000 Kilometre Dream* in recognition of their efforts to contributing to the success of our 15th Annual Field Day. We hope to see everyone again next year. ♦

— Michael Bladon

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more field day coverage ... see you next year!

