

SPORTS TURF MANAGER

... for safe, natural Sports Turf

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Good Turf Can Make Money!

TOM CLANCY REVIEWS THE 2002 ISC SCHNEIDERS WORLD FASTBALL TOURNAMENT

If you build it they will come. Tournaments are a pleasurable way to do a lot of work, provide great entertainment and if done properly, reap economic benefits for your community. To host successful tournaments, you need top notch facilities, good supporting organizations, numerous sponsors and many excellent volunteers.

One of the Kitchener Parks and Recreation staff suggested that we go after the International Softball Congress (ISC) World Fast Pitch Championship. We didn't have a suitable facility so we started researching and gathering facts. Eight years later we landed the tournament and had constructed a three diamond multi-purpose facility with 300 foot outfields.

Planning and Organization

We bid twice, once in 1995 and subsequently in 2000 for the 2002 tournament. You have to develop a strategy for bidding and work with local groups that know vital inside details and have an intimate knowledge of how the sport operates.



Tom Clancy, Tournament Chairman (right), and E.D. of the International Softball Congress Ken Hackmeister shaking hands on 'opening pitch' after two years of planning and contracts.

After considerable discussion, we bid \$48,000 (US) and signed a 10 page contract. The contract included 250 free room nights and 10 free vans for the 40 ISC Commissioners and umpires to travel around the area. It was a nine-day tournament. We also offered 20% of all profits over \$80,000 to go to the individual teams travel fund.

We attended the tournament the previous year in Eau Claire, Wisconsin and learned a lot about behind-the-scene de-

tails. It was helpful that the organizer was also head of Parks and Recreation and shared everything with us. We learned what to do and some things not to do – like sell food at event-style high prices. A hamburger at Eau Claire cost \$4 US and it wasn't even a good hamburger. They received many food-related complaints.

Once we were awarded the bid, we sat down and developed a Strategic Business Plan. This included listing the factors required to have a successful tournament, what could go wrong, budget items, etc. This was done in Febru-

ary, 18 months in advance of the tournament. We then developed an Event Plan with all the duties, tasks, who was responsible and the times for completion. That was a key step as it provided a "game plan" so everyone knew who was doing what and when.

At each bi-weekly Host Committee Meeting (of which there were 56), we looked ahead to the next three weeks and the tasks involved. The tournament required over 500... **continued on page 6**

In this 16 page issue of Sports Turf Manager, you'll find ...

Bringing you the latest from the Sports Turf Industry ...



- 3 President's Message
- 4 News Clippings
- 5 Coming Events
- 6 Cover Continued
- 7 New IPM-PHC Council
- 9 Pesticides Part III
- 11 Weather Tips
- 12 Creating Safe Fields
- 14 Press Releases