

SPORTS TURF MANAGER

... for safe, natural sports turf

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LEE HOGAN

NEW HEATED SOLDIER FIELD HOME OF THE CHICAGO BEARS

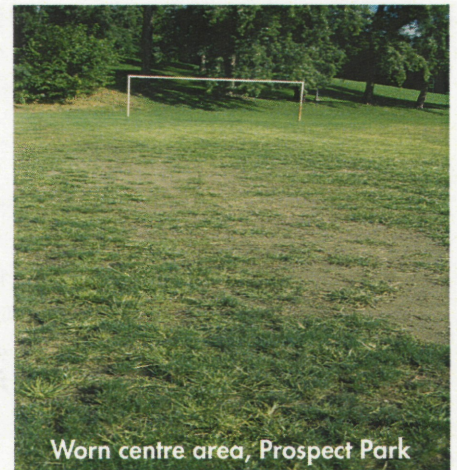
Page 10. Modeled after Halas Hall, the Bear's practice facility in Lake Forest, Soldier Field's construction allows it to withstand the chilly Chicago climate and daily player traffic.



Heavy Repetitive Overseeding

IMPROVING LOW-INPUT SPORTS FIELDS

Overseeding, or distributing seed over an existing turfgrass area to increase density, is a traditional practice followed by many turfgrass managers. Unfortunately, success in overseeding is not easily accomplished. Researchers in this study chose two low-input sports fields in New York State and applied three seeding rates for comparison. Results indicate that heavy, repetitive overseeding using perennial ryegrass can improve turfgrass density on low-input sports fields.



Worn centre area, Prospect Park

To improve the chances that a high rate of seed germination and establishment will occur, it is often recommended that some sort of cultivation is done before seeding. Types of cultivation include removing cores of soil (core cultivation), spiking and vertical mowing.

An aggressive overseeding program for a sports field might be to overseed four or five times per year, hoping each time for some limited success. Home lawns and commercial properties, which are not usually overseeded, might be overseeded once or twice per year in a "best case" scenario.

With limitations on the use of pesticides increasing, overseeding might seem to be a better option than ever. However, turfgrass managers often report disappointing results with overseeding (1). This is especially true on low-input fields, or fields where fertilizer, irrigation, weed management and other cultural activities are limited or nonexistent. The cultivation requirement attached to overseeding can be disruptive to the use of the turf area in

question, as well as adding costs. Clearly, easier and more effective ways to overseed turfgrass areas are needed.

In August 2003, a research project examining heavy, repetitive overseeding was conducted on two sports fields in the Capital District. This study was designed to put into practice the ideas of Dr. Frank Rossi, Extension Turfgrass Specialist at Cornell University (2). Rossi has demonstrated that dramatic increases in turfgrass density were possible when high rates of perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) were overseeded weekly on a simulated sports field.

Study Objective

To demonstrate the practice of heavy, repetitive overseeding on... → **page 7**

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