

# An Overview of the CSFM Program

Don Savard, CSFM, CGM\*

The Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) Program is a credentialing program developed and sponsored by Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA). The purpose of the program is to recognize the professionalism, knowledge and experience of the sports field managers who have qualified and met the rigorous standards. The process begins by contacting the STMA Headquarters and requesting a CSFM Packet. The packet contains all of the information about the program as well as an application. Candidates qualify for the program by first quantifying their education and their experience. The view of STMA is that a combination of education and experience are necessary to be the best possible athletic field manager. It recognizes that the sports turf industry is very diverse and that experience as a sports field manager must play a major role. It is possible to become certified with only a high school education if you have enough experience in sports field management. You cannot become a CSFM by education alone.

Once it has been determined that you are qualified, you then prepare for the written examination. The exam consists of 300 multiple choice questions in a multiple choice format, and covers four major areas of sports field management:

1. Agronomics - both cool and warm season turfgrasses
2. Pest Management – IPM, cultural and pesticides

3. Administration - budgets, people skills, first aid
4. Sports Specific Field Management –maintenance, playability and aesthetics (but NO field dimensions!)

I really must warn you; this test is not for amateurs! The CSFM packet contains a 20 page booklet describing all of the knowledge and competencies needed to pass the exam. The packet also suggests a reading list of books and articles that will be helpful in preparing for the test.

My impression of the test was that it was very fair. The questions were about real life problems and situations. By passing this test, it means that you have a broad working knowledge of sports field management that could get you in the door, anywhere in the country.

There is something special about becoming a CSFM. It demonstrates a commitment to excellence, acknowledged accountability, and increased professionalism. Certified Sports Field Managers are committed to field safety and dedicated to cost effective facility management. It is a valuable learning experience, and can open doors for future opportunities and earnings potential.

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## DID YOU KNOW?

Institutional (athletic fields, golf courses, school, etc.) purchases accounted for 18% of sod sales by New Jersey sod growers in 2001; whereas 51% of sod sales were to landscape contractors.

*-NJ Turfgrass Industry  
Economic Survey*

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Presently, there are 70 people who wear the designation of Certified Sports Field Manager. We invite you to take up the challenge. Do it for yourself. Join our ranks, and help us take our profession to greater heights.

## CSFM Requirements

A total of 40 combined education and experience points are required to take the certification examination.

Program	Points
Turf Related Associates Degree	8
Non-Turf Associates Degree	2
Turf Related Bachelors Degree	16
Non-Turf Bachelors Degree	8
Turf Related Advanced	24

**NOTE:** Education points are not cumulative. Experience points are per year for each activity you have served. No more than 50% of total experience points can be earned on a golf course.

Activity	Points
Sports Turf Crew	1.0
Sports Turf Supervisor	3.0
Sports Turf Manager	6.0
Golf Course Assistant Superintendent	1.5
Golf Course Superintendent	3.0

*\*Don Savard is a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) and Certified Grounds Manager (CGM); Director, Athletic Facilities and Grounds, Salesianum School; and a member of the SFMANJ Board of Directors*

## DID YOU KNOW?

Turfgrass is a major land cover in New Jersey, accounting for 880,542 acres and making-up 18% of the State's Total land area

*-NJ Turfgrass Industry Economic Survey*

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