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~A Look Back at Expo 2006~

Brad Park*

The 31st Annual New Jersey Turf and Landscape Conference and Expo was held December 5-7, 2006 at the Trump Taj Mahal. Presented by New Jersey Turfgrass Association (NJTA) and New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association (NJLCA), cooperating organizations include Golf Course Superintendents Association of New Jersey (GCSANJ), Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ), and Rutgers University.

Expo 2006 featured talks on synthetic infill fields delivered by Dr. A.J. Powell, University of Kentucky, and Joel Taylor, Haddon Township Board of Education. Dr. Powell discussed his investigation into the cost comparisons between natural and synthetic fields. Joel Taylor followed by describing his positive and negative experiences managing a synthetic infill system one year after installation.

School IPM was the focus of Tuesday afternoon, December 5. The concepts of turfgrass IPM and indoor IPM procedures were described by Rutgers University representatives Brad Park and Dr. George Hamilton, respectively. Mr. Bruce Reimbold, NJ DEP, followed by discussing the intricacies of the School IPM law as well as fielded questions from the audience. To conclude the session, Rich Watson, Pine Hill Schools, and George Van Haasteren, Dwight-Englewood School participated on a panel and shared their experiences in implementing the School IPM law at their locations.

For the second year in a row, Expo featured an Early Bird Sports Field Managers Networking Roundtable on Wednesday morning, December 6. This year's roundtable was again a success as attendees shared their thoughts on potential programming for Expo 2007.

Ken Mathis, SFMANJ Past-President, presided over the Association's annual business meeting on Wednesday afternoon, December 6 and randomly selected the "Sponsor in the Spotlight" from the list of Proud Sponsors published in every issue of *Update*. The Sponsor the Spotlight is awarded a one-half back-page ad in this issue of *Update*. The Sponsor in the Spotlight featured in this issue is Ben Shaffer & Associates, Inc.

Recognition of participation and achievement was the theme of the annual business meeting. Those boards of education and municipal agencies that submitted Field of the Year entries were acknowledged with certificates by Karl "Chuckie" Singer, SFMANJ Board Member. Bob Walker, Borough of South River Department of Public Works was presented with a plaque recognizing his hard work in making the Edward Grekowski Park baseball field in South River the 2006 SFMANJ Field of the Year Winner. Ryan Radcliffe, SFMANJ Board Member, presented Jon Bokmeyer, a Rutgers PhD candidate conducting research on wear tolerance in tall fescue, with a SFMANJ student member scholarship.

The Expo 2006 trade show proved to be an excellent location to investigate the latest product offering from green industry vendors, network with other industry professionals, and take advantage of the complimentary food and drink. This year's trade show was unique in that the NJTA-NJLCA partnership brought new vendors to the trade show floor and subsequently introduced attendees to new products and services.

As this January/February issue of *Update* is being assembled, printed, and mailed, Expo 2007 is already in the early stages on planning. SFMANJ and other organizations involved with Expo hope to see everyone in Atlantic City in December 2007 for 32nd Annual New Jersey Turf and Landscape Conference and Expo.

* Brad Park is Sports Turf Res. and Ed. Coord., Rutgers University; SFMANJ Board Member; and Editor, SFMANJ Update