

UPDATE

May/June, 2008

Vol. 8, No. 3

e-mail: hq@sfmanj.org

www.sfmanj.org

Sports Field
Managers Association of New Jersey



SPRING FIELD DAY AT SHORE REGIONAL/ MONMOUTH PARK: SFMANJ at its *Best*

by Matt Olivi

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ) held its annual Spring Field Day on May 7, 2008. Using a multi-venue program seemed to be an effective way to cater to the many educational interests and turf management concerns of the New Jersey membership. In the morning, attendees had the opportunity to view the many turf fields that make-up the sports complex facilities at Shore Regional High School in West Long Branch, NJ. The afternoon portion of the field day was hosted at the Monmouth Park Race Track facilities nearby.

After some early morning refreshments sponsored by the Viersma Companies, field day attendees made their way outside to the turfgrass facilities at Shore Regional High. Facilities Manager Marco Oliveira presented turfgrass management techniques and summarized field hockey maintenance operations at the school. Once attendees had been familiarized with the facilities, they were able to view several educational demonstrations that were presented by turf management experts from all over the state. Dr. James Murphy, Extension Specialist in Turfgrass Management, Rutgers University, explained how New Jersey turf managers could use soil testing to optimize the cost effectiveness of fertilization programs. In combination with irrigation auditing techniques that were presented by CSFM Don Savard of the Salesianum School in Delaware, members were provided with invaluable educational tools for maintaining their natural turf.

Educational techniques pertaining to infield skin surfaces were also covered in presentations by Scott Bills, Northern Nurseries and Sean Connell, Georgia Golf Construction, Inc. Attendees were able to view a laser demonstration that

instructed them how to use such equipment to grade their infields properly in order to effectively manage surface drainage and maintain a necessary constant slope across the entire infield. The demonstrators promoted laser equipment as a relatively inexpensive tool for drastic maintenance improvements to infields with common drainage problems.

The morning portion of the program was concluded with several equipment and product demonstrations by reputable New Jersey vendors. Demonstrations were presented by leading turfgrass equipment dealers such as The Viersma Companies, Storr Tractor Co., and Wilfred McDonald Inc. Attendees were able to view some of the newest mowing, aeration, topdressing and infield maintenance equipment as well as

infield amendments and conditioning products that are available to them to better manage their turf fields. All of the vendors in attendance helped to demonstrate the innovation of the newest technology in sports field maintenance equipment.

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SFMANJ Equipment Demonstrations at Rutgers Lawn, Landscape, and Sports Field Day at Adelphia Research Farm

SAVE THE DATE — Wednesday, July 30, 2008

By Brad Park

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ) will once again collaborate with the New Jersey Turfgrass Association (NJTA) and Rutgers University to take part in the annual Rutgers Lawn, Landscape, and Sports Field Day at the Rutgers Adelphia Turfgrass Research Farm in Adelphia, NJ. Both the morning trade show and equipment demonstrations will be sponsored by SFMANJ.

As a new programming format for 2008, vendor-sponsored equipment demonstrations will be incorporated into the educational tours. Additionally, the conclusion of the Field Day will coincide with lunch at 1:00 pm.

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Marco Oliveira, Facility Manager, ARAMARK-Shore Regional High School describes the management strategies he employs to maintain his field hockey field as part of the SFMANJ Spring Field Day 2008.

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The field day then changed venues to Monmouth Park Race-track where attendees were treated to lunch as they overlooked the racing surfaces and infield from high above in the grandstand's Turf Club room. The lunch was sponsored by Tuckahoe Turf Farms, Inc. After a good meal with good company, attendees were introduced to Steve Fischer who is the Turf Track Superintendent at Monmouth Park. Mr. Fischer, who has a lifetime of experience maintaining the facility, graciously narrated a tour of the turf track that has recently hosted events such as the 2007 Breeders' Cup. As the group toured the facility, they were given an overview of how complex turf management for horse racing can be and the many unique challenges that track turf managers face. During the tour, members were afforded the opportunity to view and ask questions about irrigation equipment and techniques, aeration techniques, pest control issues and even general information about horse racing. A large topic of discussion during the tour was the recent turf renovation project at the track that was the result of a collaborative effort between the track management and Rutgers University. Fortunately, members attending

the tour were able to have their questions answered first-hand by individuals who worked directly on the renovation. Dr. James Murphy and Brad Park from Rutgers assisted Steve Fischer in providing valuable insight as to the scope and duration of the renovation project.

Overall, the SFMANJ Spring Field Day was a great success. Many members of the organization participated in the discussions and showed great enthusiasm about learning new techniques to experiment with on their own turf facilities. All members of the organization can exchange a great deal of insight and knowledge between their peers in the turfgrass industry at events like this. The Spring Field Day was proof that all SFMANJ members and anyone interested in sports field management should try to take advantage of these valuable networking opportunities whenever possible.

*Matt Olivi is Sports Turf Manager,
Piscataway Board of Education, Piscataway, NJ;
and a member of the SFMANJ Board of Directors*

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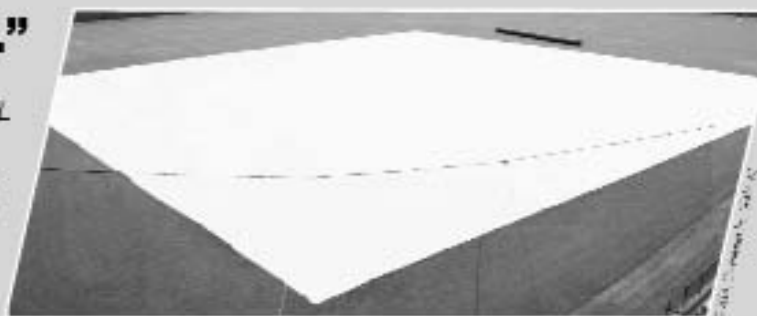
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