



## A Recap of SFMANJ Fall Field Day 2009

By Matt Olivi

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ) held its annual Fall Field Day on September 23, 2009. The Association was fortunate enough to have its turf managers from Monroe Township host this year's event. Monroe was the recipient of the 2008 SFMANJ Field of the Year award and proved to be the perfect place for the membership to gather this fall. Those who attended this year's fall event had the opportunity to tour two of the town's many sports field complexes, take a look at some of the newest turf management equipment on the market, and even earn pesticide credits through an educational seminar provided by Rutgers University.

Located at Monroe Township's newly constructed soccer complex, this year's fall event began with a satisfying breakfast donated by Northern Nurseries and The Viersma Companies. This provided a great opportunity for attendees to network and catch-up with old friends in the turfgrass industry. After formal introductions, SFMANJ President Don Savard, CSFM, CGM kicked-off the educational portion of the program with a spreader calibration demonstration. The demo provided attendees with a chance to see how to properly and effectively calibrate a large spreader to achieve desired application results. In addition to the hands-on demonstration, Don took the time to explain to the audience some of the concepts of spreader calibration such as gauging proper ground speed during an application and calculating the appropriate amount of product to be used in such applications.

Once Don had completed his presentation, he began passing the microphone to the many vendors who sponsored this year's event and gave them an opportunity to share and even



Tom Torpey, Sports Field Manager, Monroe Township, NJ, describes the management practices he employs to maintain his 2008 SFMANJ Field of the Year – which also served as a location for the 2009 SFMANJ Fall Field Day.

demonstrate some of the quality turf products and equipment available to sports field managers. Attendees were able to listen to and interact with professionals from companies such as John Deer Landscapes, Northern Nurseries, and TurfTrade



Don Savard, CSFM, CGM and SFMANJ President discusses spreader calibration at the 2009 SFMANJ Fall Field Day, September 23, 2009, Monroe Township, NJ.

who each had display booths showcasing their turf products and services. Storr Tractor Company began the vendor demonstrations by introducing Liam Philpott who explained the concepts of using lasers to mark sports field boundaries. After setting-up and calibrating his laser equipment, Liam constructed perfectly straight, professional stadium-grade sidelines and goal boxes on one of the nearby soccer fields. He then gave attendees the opportunity to

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demo the laser field marker themselves. Attendees seemed amazed at the ease of use of the machine and the quality of the field markings it produced. The microphone was then passed-on to Aer-Core and Dryject. Both companies showcased their equipment (Dryject: the Dryject machine; Aer-Core: drill-and-fill machine) that can be used to add necessary soil amendments to turf fields in order to improve drainage and aeration problems. Attendees then watched collaborative demonstrations from The Viersma Companies and Wilfred McDonald. The demo began with an overview of the Thatchmaster which quickly and effectively removed thatch and debris from the soil and brought it to the turf surface. Ready for collection, Wilfred McDonald fired up its Smithco Sweepstar 60 Turf Sweeper and quickly collected any debris left on the turf.

After the conclusion of the demonstrations, all of the attendees gathered for an informal, yet informative talk with Tom Torpey and Virgil Caputo who are turf and grounds managers in Monroe Township. Tom and Virgil shared some of the many challenges and obstacles faced by their grounds crew throughout the year and offered some tips for success. Attendees were able to interact with each other and ask Tom and Virgil questions. All parties seemed to benefit greatly from the discussion. The discussion continued after a short trip down the road to Monroe's softball complex and the 2008 field of the year. Once the attendees arrived and gathered on the field of the year, Tom gave everyone an overview of the maintenance program that his crew uses to achieve an award winning softball field. Once again, Tom shared with his audience the challenges faced by his crew and answered any questions that were raised.

After a quick lunch at the softball complex, tradeshow equipment demonstrations continued. Vendors such as Storr Tractor Company and Wilfred McDonald showcased the newest infield grooming and core aeration equipment. Also, Mike Viersma of The Viersma Companies demonstrated a large capacity topdresser by quickly spreading compost on the outfield of one of the softball fields. At the conclusion of the equipment demonstrations, attendees had the opportunity to ask questions and look over the equipment displays.

The SFMANJ Fall Field Day was wrapped-up with an opportunity for those needing pesticide Core credits. Brad Park, Sports Turf Research & Education Coordinator, Rutgers University, provided an IPM talk about Basic Pesticide Calculations. The talk covered concepts such as pesticide formulations, product mixture preparations, acreage calculations,

and much more. The pesticide talk peaked the interest of all who attended as many follow-up questions were asked stimulating further discussion.

All together, the SFMANJ Fall Field Day proved to be a great success. Attendees had opportunities to see some of the newest quality turf maintenance equipment, network with their peers in the turfgrass industry and come away with some excellent educational resources. Monroe Township proved to be a prime location for a fall field day. The 2008 Field of the Year at the softball complex was showcased perfectly by its hosts. Tom Torpey and his highly motivated, professional crew of sports field managers provided all in attendance with inspiration and insight for success.

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