

Run the lines

By Bernard Luongo

When I was a young man many sports seasons ago our household had a subscription to Readers Digest. While there was many a good serious article with excellent content there was also small columns about humor in life. One that always caught my attention was the Humor in Uniform column. Now there is a serious profession with dedicated people, a lot of training, in charge of a lot of territory, and they wear a uniform. Sound familiar? If they can find humor in what they do, what do we have?

Now, don't get the wrong impression, I don't want to turn our newsletter into an Alfred E. Newman Mad Magazine rag. But, I know we have better stuff than that. We as professional Turfmeisters have stories to tell. Heck, it happens several times a day. One that I know we all share and I liken it to the running of the bulls in Spain. It is what I like to call the running of the lines. Whether it's lacrosse in the spring, or field hockey or soccer in the fall, the rallying cry that is heard at the start of every practice throughout the state is RUN THE LINES. Like the bulls in Spain, don't get in their way. They don't stop. Even on the hardwood floor in the winter time. RUN THE LINES. I am beginning to wonder with all the running of the lines that coaches in previous lives must have been fishing captains.

If you are a new Turfmeister and never witnessed this phenomenon of nature you are in for a treat. This event would make any 5th grade

geometry teacher proud. A herd, running in unison, following a parallel line and cutting the most perfect 90-degree angle on a beautiful green plane. Now folks, if that is not geometry, I don't know what is. I am most tempted just to humor myself to prove a point (sometimes explaining to coaches in layman terms the consequences of 'running the lines' just doesn't sink in). So maybe a visual is worth a thousand words.



Sometime this fall, after the players have been running the lines for two weeks, I am going to extend the perimeter line by 50 feet (geometry again), sit back and watch them run the lines. If the experiment goes to plan they will run right off the grid. I wonder if they run out of line if the ones out front will stop and all the others will run into them. It would be quite a sight. I will let you know how it turns out in the next issue. Keep on turfing.

Bernard Luongo is Lead Groundsperson, Northern Burlington County Regional School District, Columbus, NJ; and SFMANJ member.

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