

UPDATE

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Sports Field



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SFMANJ does not necessarily support the opinions of those reflected in the following articles.

SFMANJ 2018 Spring Field Day: NY Red Bulls and NY Jets

By Zack Holm, CSFM

The 2018 Sports Field Managers Association of NJ (SFMANJ) Spring Field Day will take place on Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at the New York Red Bulls training facility located in East Hanover, NJ. Following the New York Red Bulls portion of the Field Day and lunch, an optional tour of the New York Jets Practice Facility in Florham Park, New Jersey.

The original Red Bulls training facility opened in 2013 and consisted of three fields (one synthetic and two natural grass) with the middle field having an underground heating system.



Over the past two years, the facility has been expanded with another building and natural turfgrass field dedicated to Red Bull's seven academy teams. The facility is used 12 months of the year and is home to 15 different Red Bull teams from the first team through the academy and down to the regional development teams.

Red Bull Training Facility was the first facility to be Environmentally Certified by Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) in 2016. The facility has also served as a temporary home for top international teams during United States tours and hosted the finals of the Danone Nations Cup, the largest youth tournament in the world. Three million kids start the tournament around the world with the top 38 teams playing 108 games in two days at Red Bull Training Facility. The Facility experienced a busy year in 2017 with over 1,350 practices/games/events and over 175 teams holding a practice or game.



Please visit www.sfmanj.org or call 856.514.3179 for more details on the this Field Day and the optional tour of the NY Jets Practice Facility.

Zack Holm is a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM); Sports Turf Manager, NY Red Bulls Training Facility; and SFMANJ Treasurer

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IS YOUR FACILITY SAFE?

By Scott Bills, CSFM

Editor's Note: This article first appeared in the August 2017 edition of Sportsturf, the official magazine of Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA).



My goal in this article is to help readers learn about the Theory of Liability and Standard of Care as they relate to the responsibility of administrators, facility managers, athletic directors and coaches to provide safe and playable athletic facilities.

Theory of Liability

There are four factors that make up a complete Theory of Liability:

- **Dangerous Condition.** A dangerous (or improper) condition must exist (if someone trips and falls on a sidewalk and is injured, but there are no cracks or unevenness or anything that makes it irregular or dangerous, there is no liability).
- **Causation.** The dangerous (or improper) condition must have caused the incident (and injuries or damages). Maybe the sidewalk was cracked and uneven in one spot, but the injured party tripped and fell somewhere else/ nearby, then there is no liability.
- **Notice.** Must be established that the defendant(s) either knew or should have known, with typical/proper/ reasonable attentiveness (consistent with the actions of a reasonable man and/or the normal standard of care) of the dangerous (or improper) condition. Alternatively, if the defendant(s) created the dangerous/ improper condition, this covers or is considered notice.
- **Standard of Care.** What would a reasonable person do? It must be shown that the defendant(s) violated the typical/normal standard of care. Often the expert, who should have relevant knowledge and/or experience, establishes the standard of care (of/for the defendant[s]) and then opines on whether or not it was violated.

The definition of "standard of care" is the watchfulness, attention, caution and prudence that a reasonable person in the circumstances would exercise. If a person's actions do not meet this standard of care, then his/her acts fail to meet the **duty of care** that all people (supposedly) have toward others. Failure to meet the standard is **negligence**, and any damages resulting there from may be claimed in a lawsuit by the injured party. Negligence is conduct that falls below the standards of behavior established by law for the protection of others against unreasonable risk of harm. A person has acted negligently if he or she has departed from the conduct expected of a reasonably prudent person acting under similar circumstances.

The problem is that the "standard" is often a subjective issue upon which reasonable people can differ.

In order to establish negligence as a Cause of Action under the law of torts, a plaintiff must prove that the defendant had a duty to the plaintiff, the defendant breached that duty by failing to conform to the required standard of conduct, the defendant's negligent conduct was the cause of the harm to the plaintiff, and the plaintiff was, in fact, harmed or damaged.

What separates a "common accident" from an "act of negligence" is the standard of care. By neglecting the proper standard of care for a given situation, an individual may be found liable for any resulting injuries. You can be found negligent if a "dangerous condition" existed, caused the incident, you had "notice," and your actions or inactions violated the standard of care.

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Hiring New Employees

Editor's note: This article appears courtesy of Keystone Athletic Field Managers Organization (KAFMO) and Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council (PTC). It first appeared in the Between the Lines section of Pennsylvania Turfgrass (Winter 2018) the official magazine of PTC.

Below, seasoned sports field managers discuss the hiring process, what they are looking for in job candidates and how you can make a winning impression.

Advertising the job

Most job announcements are posted to industry websites (STMA, Teamwork Online and TurfNet), social media, university websites and external job boards. Networking in the industry and relationships built within KAFMO also provide valuable resources when searching for candidates. Managers often reach out to members of KAFMO for recommendations or knowledge of candidates.

Sorting through applications

Candidates are required to submit a resume, cover letter and references. Managers share the top four items they look for in those documents:

- Make sure all information is correct and that the letter and resume are free from errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling. Nothing gets you disqualified faster than when you send a cover letter addressed to another company.
- Keep the cover letter brief. Shawn Kister, Grounds Division Leader at Longwood Gardens, Inc., advises, "Make sure it is specific to the job you are applying for and that it does not read like a form letter. Do not repeat information that can be found on your resume. Do some research on the organization to which you are applying and let that knowledge show in your letter. This shows a high level of interest and personalizes your letter to set it apart from others."
- Keep the resume to one page, and don't get too fancy. The resume should be a concise, yet informative reflection of the candidate's work history. Include all relevant work experience pertaining to the job for which you are applying.
- Set yourself apart. CJ Lauer, Associate Director of Facilities at The Episcopal Academy, recommends, "Make sure that the few sheets of paper can somehow set you apart from the stacks of resumes that file in for a position. Be creative to get yourself known. On the cover letter, I like to see a quick glimpse into the personality of the candidate. I do not need a work history, as the resume will explain that. I would rather see an interesting part of their work history described or why the position is something they desire. Also, if it is sent electronically, maybe add photos of accomplishments in the field."

The interview

Typically, the first point of contact is a phone or Skype interview to see if the candidate is a good fit. The in-person interview may be one on one, in front of a panel or both. A facility tour is usually included, along with meeting a human resources representative. Occasionally, a working interview will be required to measure how the candidate interacts with coworkers and approaches tasks.

Hiring managers shared some of the qualities that make a candidate stand out in an interview:

- Previous experience. Chris McCardell, President/Senior Sports Turf Manager at Windview Athletic Fields, shares, "If you have jobs listed on your resume, be prepared to speak in-depth about each one and give examples of projects/tasks you performed." Managers are gauging general turf knowledge and how previous experiences apply to the position. They also want to know what you liked and disliked about previous experiences.
- Personality. Enthusiasm is a key trait that managers are seeking. Managers want to learn what you find fulfilling in a job, how you work as part of a team and independently, and how you can contribute to making the organization better.
- Goals. Ryan Hills, Director, Field Operations for Lehigh Valley IronPigs, will ask, "What are your goals? What goals have you set for yourself for the next five years, and how will you go about reaching those goals?" Managers also want to know what your expectations are for the position.
- Professional appearance. First impressions are crucial, and there are many jobs where expectations regarding appearance are very high. Wear a dress shirt, slacks, tie and a sport coat, and comparable attire for women. As Mike Boekholder, Director, Field Operations for the Philadelphia Phillies, puts it, "My theory is you can't overdress. Dress for success!"

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MANAGING WATER FOR

PLAYABILITY

By Brad Park, Rutgers University

Editor's Note: This article has appeared in Sports Turf Managers (Autumn 2015), the official publication of Sports Turf Canada; and Sportsturf (March 2016), the official publication of Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA).

Much has been written about sports field drainage - an essential element in the playability of sports fields. Dr. Andrew McNitt, Penn State University, described methods in practical terms to improve sports field drainage in an article titled, Understanding Field Drainage that appeared in Sports Turf Manager (McNitt, 2006). The textbook, Sports Fields: A Manual for Design, Construction and Maintenance (Puhalla et al., 1999) provides excellent details on sports field drainage. The most comprehensive textbook in which the author is aware on the subject is Practical Drainage for Golf, Sportsturf and Horticulture (McIntyre and Jakobsen, 2000).

This article will attempt to add to the existing base of knowledge on this subject by discussing the author's own observations in dealing with sports field drainage as well as baseball/softball skin surface water management issues in a University Extension setting.

Sports field design and construction

It has been the experience of the author that many sports field architects and engineers have unrealistic expectations concerning the way native soils or sand-modified soils drain internally. Architects and engineers will often develop a specification for a sports field calling for construction using a sandy loam soil (or finer in texture), perhaps native to the site, and design the field with minimal surface pitch (i.e. slope) with the expectation that it will exhibit rapid internal drainage. Following field construction, often performed by a contractor who employs heavy road building equipment to manipulate soils during construction, the field drains poorly, negatively impacting the playability of the surface.

A sports field can be constructed with minimal surface pitch (e.g. 0.5%) if the rootzone conforms to specifications for golf course putting green construction developed by the United States Golf Association (USGA). While subtle deviations (i.e. greater fine and very fine sand, silt, and clay) from the USGA specifications may still allow for acceptable internal drainage and limited surface pitch, McIntyre and Jakoben (2000) do a very nice job describing how the internal movement of water through soil profiles (including 'golf' sands with too many fines and sandy loams) becomes increasingly restricted under greater compaction levels - compaction being a more-often-than-not sports field construction reality.

The most pragmatic strategy in working with non-USGA conforming rootzones and certainly native soils is to design sports fields using these soils with adequate surface pitch. For example, in the design of a soccer/lacrosse/North American football field using a native soil (e.g. sandy loam, silt loam, etc.), the plans should include a "crown" that has no less than 1.5% surface slope from the middle of the field (goal to goal; or endzone to endzone) towards the sidelines.

The multipurpose field dilemma

A reoccurring sports field design problem entails the creation of multipurpose fields constructed using native soils or soils poorly modified with sand that are tipped diagonally from one corner

of the field to the other. These designs are desirable from the perspective of athletic directors, coaches, business administrators and other decision makers as an appearance is created that field space is maximized. Who could not resist fitting a baseball field, softball field, and soccer/lacrosse/field hockey field in one two-and-half acre footprint? The author has often observed the placement of a baseball or softball skin surface in the lowest corner of the field where water is forced to surface drain (i.e. run down hill) onto the infield skin.

On the issue of multipurpose fields, Puhalla et al. (1999) note that sports fields should be treated as individual drainage units, and should not be expected to perform acceptably with water running onto a sports field from an adjacent field; moreover, within each field, an infield skin surface should not be lower than the outfield.

Improving drainage on existing fields

There are several strategies that can be employed to improve the drainage of existing fields as field reconstruction is typically not feasible. The following strategies are meant to improve, or 'augment', the surface drainage characteristics of a field with some existing surface pitch, either in the form of a crown or tipped from one side to another.

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Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey: Field of the Year 2017

By Scott Bills, CSFM

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ) received only one application for 2017 Field of the Year.

The entrant was no stranger to the Field of the Year process, having previously won the award for the softball field at The Torpey Athletic Complex.

Dave Kuczynski, grounds supervisor for the Somerset County Park Commission at the Torpey Athletic Complex once again applied for the baseball field. Dave inherited a field that was designed poorly, with most of the infield pitched towards home plate. As a result, Dave is constantly doing hand work to keep the field playable. Dave's

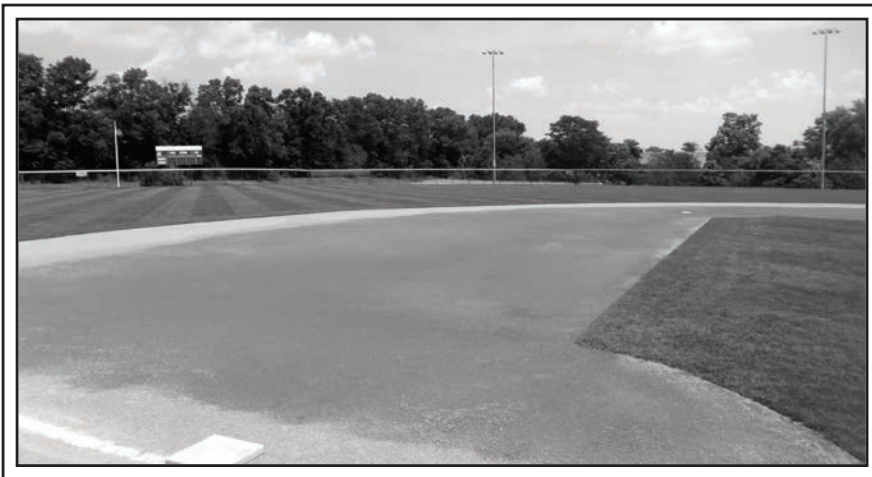
by numerous local high schools, college summer leagues, plus American Legion, travel, women's, and men's recreational teams. Both fields have natural turf, with the baseball field having a grass and skin infield and the softball field being all skin. Dave credits his years working with Ray Cipperly and Dan Purner at TD Bank Ballpark, home of the Somerset Patriots with giving him the skills and confidence to become a superior sports turf manager.

In addition to both ball fields, which have lights, Dave is also responsible for a lighted all-purpose synthetic field. From late April until late October, Dave estimates 25-30 ball games are played 7 days a week, on each of his two fields. Like many experienced groundskeepers, Dave performs much of the infield grooming by hand. His pre and post-game routine, learned at TD Bank Ballpark, includes making sure all displaced infield mix is swept from the grass to prevent lip build up. Dave will then make sure the pitcher's mound and home plate area are leveled with moistened clay and compacted. If no games are scheduled during the day, Dave keeps tarps these areas to retain the moisture in the clay.

In addition to The Torpey Athletic Complex, Dave has been given the responsibility to oversee the newest Somerset County park. Mountainview Park opened on Saturday, April 22, 2017 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 141 Mountain View Road in Hillsborough, NJ. The site of the former GSA Belle Mead Depot. The 369-acre park includes two (2) adult baseball fields, four (4) youth baseball fields and one (1) special needs Challenger Field. All fields are lighted. Amenities include batting cages, playground, pavilion, a concession/restroom facility, park maintenance facility, and a paved perimeter multi-use trail with associated parking. The facility will allow the potential for future development of six (6) additional baseball/softball fields.

Mountain View Park is contiguous to the County's 5,500-acre Sourland Mountain Preserve. It is flat and relatively open, providing a sweeping vista of the nearby Sourland Mountain.

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enthusiasm, knowledge and hard work provide baseball teams who are lucky enough to play on the field with a safe, playable surface. Not only is the infield skin surface, pitcher's mound and home plate area of professional quality, Dave continues to maintain high quality turf. Dave designs and implements a consistent fertility program to keep the grass plants healthy. In addition, cultural practices such as topdressing, aeration and over-seeding are part of Dave's annual treatments.

Dave has transformed both the softball field and baseball field into very playable surfaces that are perhaps two of the best public ball fields in New Jersey. As a result, the fields are sought after



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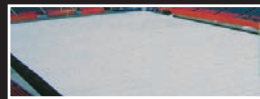
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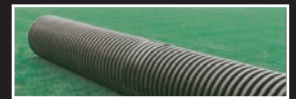
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Rutgers Turf Student Flies



Two-Year Turf Management Certificate Student Conor Geisel Talks About His Summer Internship with the 2018 Super Bowl Champions

By Casey Sky Noon

Winners of Super Bowl LII, the Philadelphia Eagles played hot while their grounds crew kept their home playing field warm. To be exact, the turf managers kept the soil at precisely 59 degrees warm throughout the summer and winter months using 28 miles of underground heating pipes. This intricate turf-warming system is divided into six zones and creates an optimal root temperature that keeps the grass growing through the end of the NFL post-season.

The science behind keeping Lincoln Financial Field at peak playability goes well beyond regulating temperatures. The sports turf team also monitors a SubAir system that can suck moisture out of the ground, so that excess water does not linger in the soil. Mowing heights and fertilizing schedules are also precisely calculated and controlled. Professional sports fields like the home of "The Birds" are perfect examples of the art and science of turfgrass management.

To get this insider's view, we spoke to Conor Geisel, who interned on the grounds crew for the Philadelphia Eagles this past season and will graduate from The Rutgers Professional Golf Turf Management School's Two-Year Certificate Program in March 2018.

After he arrived on the Rutgers campus, Conor dove right in, leveraging the Rutgers turf community to grow his professional network. Conor started by asking Steve McDonald, instructor of our class on turf weeds, for help making connections in the sports world. Founder of Turfgrass Disease Solutions, LLC, McDonald has over 15 years of experience consulting with more than 100 golf courses annually. He put Conor in touch with Tony Leonard, the Eagles' director of grounds. The Rutgers turf student submitted a resume, interviewed, and secured a coveted internship with the Eagles' franchise.

"Networking is key," Conor said. "You never know who you may meet in a day who can help you further your career. Even if it is just getting an internship, you never know where it may lead."

Conor worked as part of the sports turf team for the Philadelphia Eagles in the 2017-18 season during his time off between his two 10-week academic sessions at Rutgers. Turfgrass management is soil fertility, irrigation, aeration, diseases, weeds, and insect pests whether you maintain a golf course, municipal park, or baseball field. Nevertheless, working on an NFL football field certainly has its own unique attributes.

As an intern, Conor helped care for the team's practice facility (275,000 square feet) as well as the stadium field itself (75,000 square feet). Interestingly, the Eagles use both warm and cool season grasses to blanket the playing field. Conor explained that the Philly facility uses bermudagrass in the warmer months because it plays better and grows fast. For the November, December, and January games, the grounds crew ripped up the entire field and did



a number-to-number, goal-line-to-goal-line re-sod with Kentucky bluegrass.

Because Lincoln Financial Field is also used for Temple University

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SFMANJ'S SPRING FIELD DAY Wednesday, April 4, 2018



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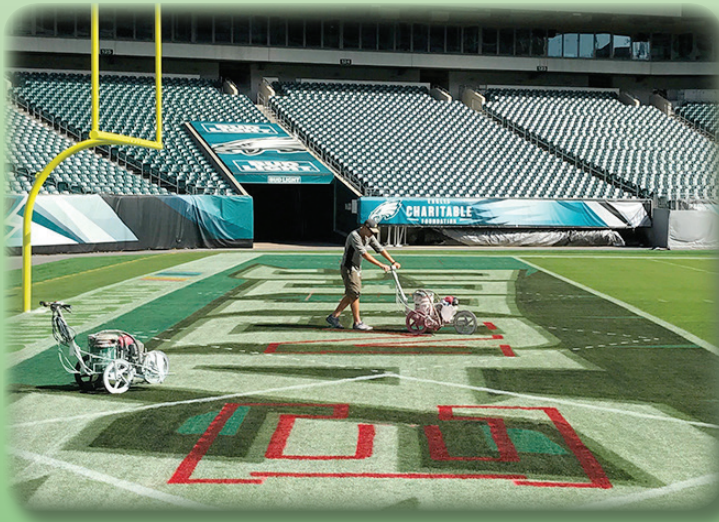


Rutgers Turf Student Flies with the PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

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college football games, the field is painted and repainted each week. After the completion of each Temple Owls game, Conor and his coworkers ripped up the end zones and laid new sod down as a “fresh canvas” for the Philadelphia Eagles logo.

“We rolled out huge stencils,” Conor explained, “to paint both end zones, the sidelines, the numbers, the hash marks, and the four-color Eagles logo in the middle of the field.” Once the Eagles finished playing, the grounds crew would paint the cherry red and white Temple patterns right over the Eagles’ midnight green. Conor estimates that painting and repainting the field takes about 400 gallons of color -- every week!



As exciting as it is to be around Super Bowl champions, the work takes precedence. Sharing the same cafeteria and working in the same buildings, Conor was often near the famous athletes, but he remained professional. “We are all at work, so it’s not like I’m going to sit there and ask for an autograph,” he said matter-of-factly. “The majority of my conversations with players were asking them to stay off the wet paint,” he laughed. But some of his brushes were exciting. For example, once at a charity event, wide receiver Tory Smith mistook Conor for quarterback Carson Wentz. “I have actually gotten that a few times,” he chuckled.

Besides the close proximity to the likes of Nick Foles, Malcolm Jenkins, and Zach Ertz, one of the perks of working for the Philadelphia Eagles grounds crew was being on the field during each game. Part of Conor’s job responsibility was to pull the safety nets behind the uprights when either team lined up to kick a field goal. The team even sent him to the Super Bowl. Indeed, he had the pleasure of watching the Philadelphia Eagles defeat the New England Patriots live and in person at the U.S. Bank Stadium in Minneapolis, Minnesota. While there, he took advantage of the opportunity to hold the Vince Lombardi Trophy.

“I always wanted to work with turf,” he said. Conor grew up in a sports family. His father coached and both he and his brother played



football. He has fond memories of going to training camp as a kid. “There is just something about the smell of grass getting cut early in the morning,” he said. At a young age, Conor appreciated the look of manicured sports turf and knew that he wanted to forge a career in the turf industry.



Casey Sky Noon is Program Coordinator, Rutgers Professional Golf Turf Management School

MANAGING WATER FOR PLAYABILITY



Continued from page 7

Sand-slit drains can be designed and installed as sand-filled trenches (e.g. 3 to 4-inch wide; 12-inch deep) with a strip drain embedded in the base of the trench; the goal of this system is to intercept surface-draining water and rapidly move it off the sports field into a collector drain(s) (Puhalla et al., 1999). These authors provide excellent schematics of these systems and note that the drains should be installed at a 45-degree angle to the direction of the surface runoff. McNitt (2006) advises that after installation of a sand-slit drain system core cultivation of the field should be followed by core harvesting and sand topdressing; this management style, similar to that of a 'push-up' golf course putting green, will preserve the integrity of the sand-filled trenches.

Sand-slit drain installation is a dramatically underutilized technology in the school/town sector of sports field management. Having made dozens of sports field consultations during the last 13 years, the author can only recall a handful of occasions where this sand-slit drainage has been employed. This drainage technique can be installed on both existing sports fields as well as part of the construction of new fields. Unfortunately, in the eyes of many decision-makers a sand-slit drainage system is viewed as an unaffordable 'luxury' that is only reserved for the premier field of the school, town, college, etc. During the last 10 to 15 years, the primary 'improvement' made to many school and town premier sports fields has been the removal of natural turfgrass and installation of synthetic turf - considerable costs both at the time of installation and at eventual tear-out and resurfacing.

Newer machines (e.g. BLEC Sandmaster, WaterWick, etc.) have appeared on the market in recent years that mimic sand-slit drainage installation where sand channels can be more rapidly introduced into a sports field in lieu of traditional trenching practices, creation of spoils, etc. While these tools will effectively create sand-filled trenches and improve drainage, they do not provide the advantage of an installed pipe at the base of the trench that will accelerate water movement. Similar to slit drains, operation of these machines should be made at a 45-degree angle relative to the surface flow of water.

Baseball/Softball Infields and Infield Skin Surfaces

Several useful resources have been developed in recent years that provide practical information on the subject of baseball and softball infield skin surfaces. The Rutgers Cooperative Extension Fact Sheet, Skin Surface Selection and Management for Baseball and Softball Infields summarizes infield mix selection criteria developed by American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM, 2007) and management information derived from field research and experienced sports field managers. This document can be accessed by performing a simple search using any web browser. Baseball and Softball Fields: Design, Construction, Renovation, and Maintenance is a textbook dedicated to this subject matter (Puhalla et al., 2003) and is a must-have resource for engineers and architects who are in the business of designing sports fields.

Infield design

There are two primary considerations when designing baseball and softball infields: 1) The infield should be designed/constructed in such a manner to move surface water away from the infield towards

the outfield and foul territory; and 2) Infield mixes/skin surfaces should not be expected to exhibit acceptable internal drainage and should therefore be part of the larger infield design to direct water towards the outfield and foul territory via surface pitch.

Regarding the first design consideration, as previously noted in the discussion concerning multipurpose fields, surface water should never be directed onto a baseball/softball infield. Moisture management plays a key role in the maintenance of infield skin surfaces; the sports field manager needs to have the ability to apply water to the skin at his or her discretion to maximize the playability of the surface, not be preoccupied with unwanted surface water running onto an infield skin surface as a result of design flaws. Puhalla et al. (2003) show an excellent set of drawings to illustrate grading designs with added 'good', 'better', and 'preferred (best)' commentary in order of effectiveness in moving surface water both away from the infield and off the entire playing surface in the most rapid manner possible.

All good designs call for some minor pitch (e.g. 0.5%) to infield skin surfaces to provide surface drainage. While extremely sandy infield mixes may allow for some internal drainage, most contain enough fines that under compacted conditions internal drainage will be compromised resulting in surface pitch being a necessity.

Infield skin surface management

Skin Surface Selection and Management for Baseball and Softball Infields (Park and Murphy, 2009) summarizes the importance of

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Continued on page 5

Reasonable person

The so-called “reasonable person” in the law of negligence focuses on how a typical person, with ordinary prudence, would act in certain circumstances. The test as to whether a person has acted as a “reasonable person” is an objective one, and so it **does not** take into account the specific abilities of a defendant. Thus, even a person who has low intelligence or is chronically careless is held to the same standard as a more careful person or a person of higher intelligence. A jury generally decides whether a defendant has acted as a reasonable person would have acted. In making this decision, *the jury generally considers the defendant’s conduct in light of what the defendant actually knows, has experienced, or has perceived.*

Proof of negligence

In a negligence suit, the plaintiff has the burden of proving that the defendant did not act as a reasonable person would have acted under the circumstances. The court will instruct the jury as to the standard of conduct required of the defendant.

For example, a defendant sued for negligent driving is judged according to how a reasonable person would have driven in the same circumstances.

A plaintiff has a variety of means of proving that a defendant did not act as a reasonable person would have acted. The plaintiff can show that the defendant violated a statute designed to protect against the type of injury that occurred to the plaintiff or a plaintiff might introduce expert witnesses to provide evidence of a customary practice.

If you don’t want to get sued, here are some basic industry expectations:

- Establish standard operating procedures. Inspect the premise regularly and keep maintenance records customary for the site or sport.
- Repair defects immediately or pre-vent exposure to users, participants or spectators until the premise is made safe.
- Keep users, participants or spectators safe during the use of the premises by having a plan for reasonable supervision and security.
- Use reasonable employee recruiting, selection, hiring and training practices.
- Have a written emergency and medical plan
- Practice the plan

Risk management is the process of identifying and minimizing elements that could cause injury or harm to users, participants or spectators. Four elements of risk management include:

- Identification with regular inspections
- Evaluation by prioritizing based on severity and frequency
- Treatment by stopping the activity, reducing the risk, transferring liability through contract (hold harmless clauses), and assuming the risk is worth the liability exposure
- Implementation—once a treatment is implemented, reevaluate to ensure it was the correct option

You can be subject to a lawsuit for negligence if a dangerous condition exists, is the cause of an injury, and you had notice and violated the standard of care. Inspect your facility as if you will be a participant, parent, or spectator.

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UPDATE

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Past issues of Update, dating back to 2001, can be assessed through the Michigan State University Libraries.

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MANAGING WATER FOR PLAYABILITY



Continued from page 13

water management in maintaining infield skin surfaces. In the most basic terms, water is needed to soften fine-textured infield mixes (high silt and clay content) and firm coarse-textured mixes (high sand content) (ASTM, 2007).

In the experience of the author, outside of natural rainfall events, water is not regularly applied to most school and town infield skin surfaces in New Jersey for the purpose of managing surface hardness and playability. The majority of mixes encountered by the author at schools and towns consist of approximately 80% sand and 20% silt+clay. While appropriately applying water could certainly improve the playability of these surfaces, many perform adequately considering the level of play in lieu of supplying water. On a cautionary note, high sand content infield mixes can be over-scarified with motorized infield grooming equipment equipped with large 'teeth'. Without the ability to apply water to firm these mixes, the loose, cat litter-like conditions that result from overly-aggressive grooming are difficult to firm until natural rainfall supplies the necessary moisture.

Similarly, grooming practices should be performed in such a manner to maintain a grade that allows for surface drainage. Water will pool in low-spots, sometimes referred to as 'birdbaths', if grooming procedures regularly remove infield mix from one area of the skin surface and deposit on another location of the skin surface (i.e. creating a high spot). Periodic laser-guided grading of infield skin surfaces is a highly effective means of re-setting grades (and good surface drainage).

Conditioners (e.g. calcined clay) can be spread on top of skin surfaces to improve playability over a range of weather conditions. Conditioners are often used to soak-up excess water after rain; finer-textured conditioners work best for this purpose (Puhalla et al., 2003) but should be removed from the skin surface after play (Sherry, 2006). Skin surface water retention is a function of the amount of silt and clay in the infield mix, not the amount of calcined clay on the surface; calcined clay applied to the skin surface will often dry before the underlying infield mix resulting in some grounds managers applying unneeded irrigation water (Brosnan and McNitt, 2007).

Conclusions

A trained, competent sports field manager can employ the finesse that is required to manage water for playability. Sports fields design parameters and construction methods are not always conducive to good drainage – and the costs and/or field down time necessary to improve these problems dictate that a sports field manager must often "work with what he or she's got". Case in point: Poor sports field drainage can be compounded with bad irrigation management; that is, a timer/clock programmed irrigation system may be allowed to deliver additional water following a natural rainfall event rendering a sports field unplayable. A sports field manager with site-specific experience will have the feel/finesse to properly irrigate a poorly drained sports field to maintain plant vigor yet provide good playability on a surface that is highly susceptible to being compromised with over-watering.

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Brad Park is Sports Turf Research & Education Coordinator, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; a member of the Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ) Board of Directors since 2003; and Editor, SFMANJ Update newsletter.



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Hiring New Employees

Continued from page 6

- Sell yourself. Managers want to know why they should choose you. Shawn Kister advises, "Do not shy away from a question that asks you to sell yourself; other candidates are being asked that same question and are selling themselves in their answers, so you need to also." Hiring managers also shared what you should avoid during an interview:
- Don't be late. Do not plan to arrive "on time"; on time means early.
- Hiring managers agreed the most difficult part of an interview is if the candidate is not prepared. It is always good when a candidate wants to learn about the company culture and if the position is the right fit. Don't be afraid to ask questions during an interview. It's important to be well informed about any potential job. Ask purposeful questions, such as:
- Please provide a brief overview of the facility, operations and crew structure.
- What does a day look like in this position?
- What can I do to succeed in this position?
- What can I do to help or improve the organization?
- What are your performance expectations at the end of my first six months working in this position?
- What are the learning opportunities available?
- Please explain the salary, benefits and overtime.
- If you're entering the professional sector, Mike Boekholder recommends, "Don't be a 'Super Fan.' We are hiring for a job, not looking to bring someone on staff who is so infatuated with the team or the game that it would potentially be a problem for them performing their job duties."

Post interview

Hiring managers expect a follow-up because it shows interest in the job. Some managers prefer phone or email, while others appreciate handwritten thank-you notes. In your note, restate your interest in the position and what you will bring to the organization.

Closing advice

When interviewing or starting a new position, CJ Lauer advises, "Keep an open mind. Expect to learn a lot and respect the leadership of your supervisors. Always have a positive attitude. See everything as a new opportunity. Take initiative when it is needed. Do not be afraid to fail or make mistakes. It's the best way to learn."

Thank you to the following professionals for their contributions to the article:
Mike Boekholder, Ryan Hills, Shawn Kister, CJ Lauer and Chris McCardell.



Meet Our New Board Members

Zachary Holm

My name is Zachary Holm, Facility Manager at the New York Red Bulls Training Facility. I graduated from Delaware Valley College in 2011 with a degree in Turfgrass Management and recently completed my Master's degree in Sports Management from Southern New Hampshire University. I live in Byram Township with my Wife and 18 month old son. Prior to the Red Bulls I was a Sales and Service Associate for Grass Roots Turf Products. Other work experience includes: Head Groundskeeper for the York Revolution, Assistant Groundskeeper for the Staten Island Yankees, and Intern for the Boston Red Sox, Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Yankees, City of Peoria (AZ) and San Diego Chargers.

Zack has also accepted the position of SFMANJ Treasurer.

Reese Parker Kerlin

I am an assistant groundskeeper for the New York Red Bulls professional soccer team. I began as an intern in March 2016, and on September 1, 2016, I was hired on fulltime. I assist with work at Red Bull Arena and Red Bull Training Facility, which was awarded the 2016 STMA Environmentally Responsible Management Certification. The former is located in Harrison, NJ, the latter in East Hanover, NJ; facilities are approximately 15 miles apart. Prior turf grass experience includes an internship (summer 2015) at Merion Golf Club, the 10th ranked golf course in the world per GolfDigest.com, located in the suburbs of Philadelphia, PA.

I became a SFMANJ member in 2016, and have been attending chapter meetings since February 2017. December 2016, I received my associate of applied science degree in Commercial Turf & Grounds Management from the State Technical College of Missouri located outside of Jefferson City, Missouri, the capital. While enrolled at State Tech, I participated in State and National Post-Secondary Agriculture Student competitions, where I placed amongst the top of my peers both individually and with my fellow classmates. I am currently pursuing an online Bachelor's Degree in Business-Marketing from Southern New Hampshire University. I currently live by myself in Jersey City, NJ, right across the river from Manhattan.

Jessica Phillips

My name is Jessica Phillips and I have recently become involved with SFMANJ and am very excited to be running for a spot on the Board of Directors. Graduating from Rowan University in 2015 earning an advertising degree, I am aspiring to use that degree working in the turf industry. Currently I am continuing my education on Penn State's World Campus Online, studying turfgrass science. Further I am working for Turf Trade which is a seed, fertilizer and plant protectant company using my marketing and advertising background to direct the company's future. As a sales representative, I have territorial responsibility over New Jersey supporting sport fields, landscaping and fine turf sales development. If elected I will work diligently to support the turf and landscape industry promoting a stronger membership alliance for the turfgrass industry.



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SFMANJ: Field of the Year-2018

Continued from page 8

The project continues to promote the goals of the Somerset County Parks Recreation and Open Space Master Plan (December 2000) by implementing the goal of providing open space for a diverse mix of quality recreational experiences appropriate for a County-wide park system.

According to Ray Brown, Director of the Park Commission, "Mountain View Park is significant for many reasons including the transition of an environmentally tainted site to an extraordinary athletic complex that will benefit the entire county."

Freeholder Director Peter Palmer added, "This beautiful and functional park is the result of cooperation among many agencies including the GSA, the Freeholders, the Improvement Authority, Hillsborough Township, and the Park Commission. Without the cooperative effort, we would not be standing here today."

Despite the added responsibilities, Dave already has plans for improvements. After the first year of use, Dave feels he has a grasp on what needs to be done to insure the fields are not only safe and playable, but also less costly to maintain.

SFMANJ congratulates Dave Kuczynski and The Somerset County Park Commission for winning the 2017 Field of the Year award.

The SFMANJ Field of the Year program recognizes the efforts of member sports turf managers throughout New Jersey. Applications for the 2018 Field of the Year are due by the end of October 2018 and are awarded at the NJ Green Expo in Atlantic City, NJ in early December. In addition to a plaque, the winner will receive a complimentary registration to all education sessions, the two-day trade show, dinner, and one nights lodging at the Borgata.

If you have any further questions regarding the program, please feel free to contact the SFMANJ office.

Scott Bills, is a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM); SFMANJ Board Secretary and Public Relations Committee Chairman; and Owner, Sports Field Solutions, LLC, Frenchtown, NJ.

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New and Renewed SFMANJ Members

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Carl Olivi
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