

UPDATE

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Sports Field
Managers Association of New Jersey



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P.O. Box 205, Pennsville, NJ 08070 • 856-514-3179 • www.sfmanj.org • e-mail: mail@sfmanj.org

SFMANJ Spring Field Day

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Wednesday, April 17, 2019

Also Inside:

Professional Relationships

Infield Soils and Topdressings

Renovation Project at Lindo Park, Pheonix, AZ

2018 SFMANJ Field of the Year

SFMANJ Spring 2019 Field Day Agenda

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National Organization

Sports Turf Managers Association
www.stma.org

SFMANJ Spring Field Day

Wed. April 17, 2019

call 856-514-3179 for info

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For information regarding this newsletter, contact:
SFMANJ at (856) 514-3179 or Brad Park at (848) 932-6327
Editor: Brad Park, Rutgers University, Email: park@aesop.rutgers.edu
Layout and Design: Debra Savard, Email: mail@sfmanj.org

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

Professional Relationships: A Key to Success

By Virgil C. Caputo, CPRP.

To be a successful sports field manager, as with most any career, you can not go it alone. The successful sports field manager must surround themselves with a network of professionals that facilitate their endeavors and help to reach their goals. This network may include outside vendors, support staff, as well as the administration or board that you are working for. As the sports field manager, you may have partial or complete control over some of these entities, allowing you to surround yourself with those you feel are like minded and driven towards your particular mission. In other cases, such as with superiors, you may need to be adaptive and receptive yourself in order to extract the most benefit from the relationship.

Vendor/Supplier Relationships

Vendors are a crucial component to any sports field management operation. They supply us with what we need to do our job successfully. They can often introduce us to the latest products on the market, show us exciting new equipment, and can offer a wealth of knowledge on the products they offer. A few tips can go a long way towards fostering a positive experience with your suppliers.

Always familiarize yourself with the product or service you are soliciting prior to engaging with the vendor. Educating yourself ahead of time will allow you to interact on a more level playing field. It will allow you to discuss the product or service intelligently, and help you to be sure to ask all pertinent questions.

Be sure to know any purchasing regulations that you must abide by. This is particularly important for those of us in the public sector and governed by strict purchasing laws. Knowing ahead of time which price thresholds require multiple quotes or formal bids is imperative to streamlining the process. Engaging suppliers that are part of state contracts or pre-approved purchasing cooperatives can be an excellent way to simplify the purchasing process by eliminating the need for competitive quotes or bids. However, it is important not to settle for products that may not be exactly what you are looking for simply because the pricing is pre-approved. If necessary, do the work and seek out competitive pricing for the particular product that you want from vendors that you feel will serve you organization well.

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Infield Soils and Topdressings

By Paul Zwaska



Editor's Note: The following article was written in 1999 when the author was Head Groundskeeper, Baltimore Orioles.

Baseball is a unique sport in grounds management. It's the only major sport that is played on a field that has both turf and exposed soil for a playing surface. Ballplayers scrutinize the playability of your skinned areas more closely than you're turf areas. Your reputation as a groundskeeper will depend on the skin you keep.

This is not to say that the turf areas on a baseball field are unimportant. But if you think about it, 75% or more of the game occurs on the skinned areas of the field. Unfortunately, this crucial subject is avoided by the academic institutions that teach many of today's up and coming athletic field managers.

With no written guidance, new groundskeepers must resort to trial and error if they haven't been lucky enough to learn from another groundskeeper in the business.

Goals for a quality infield skin

Traction: Most players desire the same quality in an infield skin: traction. That's the reason for the spikes in their shoes.

Nothing makes a player happier than a firm infield skin that is moist and cork-like, not hard and baked dry. The cleat should penetrate the skin and leave a perfect imprint. Very little soil should be disturbed or displaced. When players plant their feet to throw, field the ball, or run, the soil should not give way under them. The traction in your infield skin comes from its base soil. Choose your mix carefully. Many companies that sell infield skin mixes know nothing about their proper function.

Many mixes are too sandy. Soils that don't firm up (high sand content of 75% or higher) are more mobile. This creates low spots in high-traffic areas (around bases and fielders' positions) more quickly, especially as the field dries out. The loosened material is more likely to be carried to other portions of the field to create high spots and huge lips at the infield skin/turf interface.

These sandy infield mixes increase infield skin maintenance problems. The loose soil also causes unstable footing for ballplayers, increasing the risk of foot, ankle, and hamstring injuries.

Drainage: The proper drainage on your infield skin dictates how quickly you will resume play after a rainfall. About 95% of the water that falls on the skin should run off the surface.

Good surface grade and proper maintenance techniques will give you the best results. Your infield skin should have a minimum 1-1/2-inch fall from the front of the skinned area to the back. Percolation rates on a good, firm infield skin should be 0.03 to 0.05 inches of rain per hour. Only in rare, special problem areas should a sandy infield mix be used to help drainage problems.

Drainage lines installed under the infield skin are a waste of time. If you use the proper soil for the skin, it will never perk enough rain to reach the drain tile. A drain line is more appropriately positioned five to 10 feet behind the infield skin in the shallow outfield. Here it will capture water that runs off of the skinned areas.

Amending infield soils with various miracle materials to enhance drainage throughout the skinned area usually proves unsuccessful. At best, these amendments provide a very short-lived remedy.

Topdressing: Choose the proper topdressing to work with your base mix. Think of your skin as a two-tier profile: the top 1/4- to 1/2-inch consists of your topdressing, and the remainder consists of your base infield mix.

The topdressing on the skin provides a cushion for the players. It creates a buffer zone between the players' cleats and the moist base soil mix and prevents the soil from sticking. The topdressing layer also helps you endure light rain showers during games.

Don't go any thicker than a 1/2-inch layer of topdressing on the surface of the skin. A deeper layer will cause the ball to skid under infielders' gloves instead of taking the proper hop. It can also drastically influence a ballplayer's traction.

Infield base soils

Testing: If you don't know the percent breakdown of sand, silt, and clay in your skin base mix, have it tested to give you a reference point for comparisons. Send a sample of your soil to a private testing lab or county extension office that performs particle size analysis or soil texture analysis work. These labs will give you the composition percentages, and they'll show you where your soil fits into the soil texture triangle. A simplified home version of the test is also available. It can give you a ballpark figure of your percentages.

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Volunteers Hit A

Home Run At The STMA National Conference

By Scott Bills, CSFM

The Sports Turf Managers Association national conference took place in Phoenix, Arizona in January. On Monday, January 21st the STMA teamed with Project Evergreen to tackle a ball field renovation project at Lindo Park. Scott Bills, CSFM who is on the executive board of the Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey and also serves on the board of directors of Project Evergreen planted the idea with both associations that we should use the resources of the most talented sports field managers in the country to leave a lasting imprint on the City of Phoenix. He credits Sarah Martin, CSFM, 2018 President of STMA and supervisor for City of Phoenix Parks Department with setting up a meeting in September 2018 to tour potential sites. He also credits Cindy Code, Executive Director of Project Evergreen and Kim Heck, Executive Director of STMA with a large amount of planning and communication. Cindy Code was responsible for securing all of the volunteer services and donated materials for the project. Kim was responsible for communicating with the STMA members attending the conference and getting over 100 volunteers to sign up to help with the project.

After selecting the ball field at Lindo Park based on a site visit in September with Cindy Code and City of Phoenix parks officials, Scott Bills, CSFM developed a scope of work that detailed the improvements the field required, plus a list of materials and services that needed to be secured.

The scope of work included:

- Surveying the field to determine existing and proposed elevations of the infield.
- Redefining new grass edges at the infield radius and along the base lines.
- Inspecting, adjusting and repairing the irrigation system to insure proper coverage of the turf areas.
- Laying out and rebuilding the pitcher's mound and installing a new pitching rubber.
- Laying out and rebuilding the batter's boxes/catcher's box and installing a new home plate.
- Installing new base anchors at 60' and 90'.
- Grading the infield surface to cut high areas and fill low areas.
- Installing sod to repair areas of damaged turf and re-define the infield radius and base lines.
- Fertilizing, slit seeding and topdressing nearly 60,000-square-foot of outfield turf.



The list of tools, supplies and materials required to complete the above work included

- 25 Tons of Infield Mix
- 80 Bags of Mound Clay
- 120 Bags of Infield Conditioners
- New Home Plate, New Pitching Rubber and New Base Anchors
- Field Paint
- 25 Tons of Topdressing Sand
- 5,000 Square Feet of Bermuda Sod
- Grass Seed
- Fertilizer
- Soil Amendments
- Irrigation Heads and Parts
- Laser Level
- String lines, measuring tapes, hand levels, shovels, rakes, brooms, hand tampers and lots of hand tools.

The list of equipment and services required included:

- Tractors with grading boxes and laser level ability.
- Tillers, scarifiers and aerators
- Topdressers and spreaders
- Utility vehicles
- Infield groomers
- Motorized plate compactors
- Experienced operators



On Sunday, January 20th, Scott and local sports field contractor Andy Hebrard, owner of Athletic Applications surveyed the infield and laid out the locations and elevations of the home plate, pitching rubber, bases, base lines, infield radius and overall grades of the infield.

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Infield Soils and Topdressings

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There is a simple way to get an estimate of the percentages of sand, silt, and clay that are in your base mix. This experiment provides a nice, cheap way of checking soils if you are looking around and can't afford to do a lot of testing.

Determining Soil Texture

- Step 1. Obtain a quart mason jar with a lid, like the ones used for canning. Fill it a little more than half way with the soil you wish to test. Fill the rest of the jar with water, and attach the lid tightly.
- Step 2. Shake the jar vigorously for a couple of minutes to fully separate and wet the soil. There should be absolutely no lumps of soil left when you're finished agitating it.
- Step 3. When you feel that the soil is fully dispersed in the solution, set the jar down and begin timing. After 45 seconds, mark a line on the side of the jar with a grease pencil or White-Out where the top of the layer of sand has settled out in the jar. Next, put a mark at the top of the next layer after three hours have passed; this is your silt layer. After 24 hours, your clay will have settled out as well.
- Step 4. Measure the total depth of soil in the mason jar. Then measure the thickness of each of the three layers using your marks on the jar.
- Step 5. Calculate the percent of sand, silt, and clay in your soil sample with the following procedure:
 1. Divide the thickness of the sand layer by the total depth of the soil in the jar.
 2. Follow the same instructions for both the silt and clay layers.
 3. Multiply each of the three figures by 100, and you will have the percentages of sand, silt, and clay in your sample.
- Step 6. You can now check the soil texture triangle to see where the intersection of the three values places you on the triangle. Remember that this is an estimate. If you need a more precise test, it is worth your while to have a professional test done by a private lab or a county extension office.

Soil testing labs use a couple of different quantitative methods to determine relative amounts of soil separates. Once the relative amount of sand, silt, and clay are known, you can determine the soil's textural class using the soil texture triangle provided. Each side of the triangle represents the relative content or percent of one of the three soil particle size classes.

General Guidelines: Remember that soils differ greatly around the country and they react differently to many things. The following gives generalizations as a guide for base mixes. Soils in your area might not always fall into these guidelines.

You want to keep the sand fraction of your base soil between 50% and 75% (normal base mix). Soils with higher sand content normally become too loose and mobile. The soil becomes loose with play and is transported to other areas of the skin by the dragging process or by play.

You may think you'll gain drainage if your base mix has high sand content. In fact, it creates more maintenance headaches.

The mobile soil rapidly develops high and low spots in the skin, and lips at the skin/turf interface. Those low spots and high lips interfere with the surface flow of rainwater draining off the skin, and large puddles develop.

In base mixes with higher sand content (>75%), there is not enough binder (clay and silt) to hold the soil firmly together. As a game progresses, the skin becomes more loose in the high-traffic areas. This reduces traction and increases risk of injury to feet, ankles, and hamstrings.

Soil texture affects many properties of soil. Compactability, porosity, bulk density, water-holding capacity, and drainage are all affected by the makeup of the soil.

Soils high in sand normally hold very little water and drain rapidly. Soils high in clay normally hold large amounts of water and can drain variably, depending on structure.

Soil texture refers to the percentage of sand, silt, and clay particles in a soil. These particles are defined by their size.

To tighten up a high-sand base mix, till in a nice clay loam soil. Add several tons at a time, till it, work it, let it settle, and pack and see how it reacts before you add more.

High-clay and high-silt soils create a different problem: compaction and hardness. Generally speaking, the combination of these two materials should not exceed 40% to 50% of your soil mix. Too much of either of them can inhibit intake of water into the skin due to lack of pore space from compaction.

The result is a hard field that is unable to take up moisture to help soften it. The best solution is tilling in calcined clay to help reduce compaction and increase pore space. But be careful not to blend in too much material.

Again, add your calcined clay by a couple of tons at a time. Till it, work it, let it settle, and pack and see how it reacts before you add more. The alternative is to replace the base mix with a new mix.

Rocks and pebbles in an infield base mix can be a major problem. Your base soil should be able to pass through a 1/4-inch screen, or at the very least a 3/8-inch screen, to eliminate any rocks or pebbles.

For Oriole Park at Camden Yards, I use a 60% sand, 20% silt, 20% clay base mix. This translates to a borderline sandy loam and sandy clay loam. I've used it since the day we moved here. It's a very stable soil with little mobility. Low spots on my infield are rarely a problem, but that is also partially due to the management of the skin.

The lesson to be learned here is don't just pick any old soil for your base mix. Know what you are getting by asking for a soil particle size analysis.

And whatever you do, don't purchase a mix just because some salesman says that he has "x" ballclub and "y" ballpark using it. Most of those people have zero knowledge of what kind of soil creates the best infield skin.

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Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey:

Field of the Year - 2018

By Scott Bills, CSFM

The Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey received only one application for 2018 Field of the Year.

The entrant was no stranger to the Field of the Year process.

Dave Kuczynski, grounds supervisor for the Somerset County Park Commission at the Torpey Athletic Complex once again applied for the softball 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 enthusiasm, knowledge and hard work provide softball teams, lucky enough to play on the field with a safe, playable surface. The infield skin surface, pitching area and home plate batter's/catchers' boxes are of professional quality. The turf areas in the outfield are even and uniform. 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 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 areas are repaired 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 added 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.

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

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PHOTO RE-CAP

2019 STMA Conference and Exhibition CONVENTION

January 22-25, 2019 - Phoenix, Arizona

Photos by Debbie Savard



Jeff McMannus speaking at the Womens Forum



Paula Sliefert and Fred Castenschiold



Mariachis at STMA Welcome Reception



SFMANJ's Scott Bills, Debbie Savard, Fred Castenschiold and Don Savard at STMA Annual Meeting



Craig Ericson, Dick Ericson and Don Savard



SFMANJ's Don Savard, Scott Bills, Debbie Savard, Brad Park. (Front) Fred Castenschiold and Emily Braithwaite, past SFMANJ Scholarship Recipient at STMA Awards Banquet



Sara Martin presents STMA Soccer Field of the Year Award to Neal Sitzman, Zack Holm and Dylan Martin of the NY Red Bulls



SFMANJ's Fred Castenschiold, Debbie Savard, Brad Park, at STMA Trade Show



Thanks Sara Martin for taking this selfie.

Bye-Bye for this year!

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Volunteers Hit A Home Run At The STMA National Conference

Continued from page 6



While shooting the grades they realized the skinned infield was essentially a bowl. Years of grooming the old infield from the inside out pushed 2-3 inches of infield mix to the perimeter. As a result, home plate needed to be raised nearly 4 inches and the pitcher's mound 16 inches to get

water to shed of the infield.

Early Monday morning, Scott and several volunteer sports field contractors began loosening the hardened infield mix and doing the heavy re-grading before the volunteers from STMA and dignitaries were scheduled to show up at 1pm.

By the end of the day, over 100 tons of material had been moved, a new regulation pitcher's mound constructed, batter's boxes built, 36 new irrigation heads installed, 5,000 Square Feet of Bermuda sod laid, hundreds of pounds of grass seed, fertilizer and soil amendments applied.

Project Contributors included:

- Athletic Applications
- Barenbrug
- Cool Planet
- Ecologel Solutions
- Ewing Irrigation
- Hunter Industries
- John Deere
- Mar-CO Solutions
- Mariposa Landscape
- Mountain View Seeds
- Pioneer Athletics
- Power Turf Renovation
- Profile Products
- Simpson Norton Corporation
- Spring Valley
- Sports Field Solutions
- Stabilizer Solutions
- Stotz Equipment Co.
- Turf Equipment Source
- West Coast Turf
- World Class Paints



Total Value of Materials, Equipment and Services donated exceeded \$50,000.00.

Lindo Park Renovation Story – 'Swing for the Fences, Kids'

The health of an inner-city community can be measured in many ways, but one of the most telling is to look at a shared community space: a city park. If you stop for a moment to look more closely, a city park can tell the story of the grit and tenacity of a community. Upon occasion, public spaces are worthy of much more attention and recognition than they receive.

Project EverGreen, the nonprofit that revitalizes community recreational spaces to help create a greener, healthier, cooler Earth while supporting more connected, safer and more prosperous neighborhoods recently put the spotlight on the nearly half-a-century old Lindo Park in South Phoenix, Arizona and give the 22-acre park something it has always wanted: a real ballpark.

But Project EverGreen and its partners' efforts were not just about a new ball field. It was about recognizing people who have dedicated themselves to reclaiming a shared space that can represent opportunity rather than despair. It was about demonstrating that people notice and care, and that the kids who play there have a future worth working hard for.

"Neighborhoods deserve a healthy park or community green space that they can call their own," says Cindy Code, executive director of Project EverGreen. "Thriving parks create a community hub for neighbors – young and old – to gather and helps to instill pride in their community and confidence in area residents."

A huge field of fresh green turf, a state-of-the-art sprinkler system, repainted bleachers and an official MLB home plate have a way of saying "we want you to swing for the fences" kids.

To make it happen, Project EverGreen along with partner the Sports Turf Managers Association; the nonprofit, professional association for the men and women who manage outdoor sports fields across the United States, successfully teamed their resources.

"We were thrilled to be a part of this important project and bring a well-managed and playable ballpark to a deserving community," says Kim Heck, CAE, CEO of the STMA. "To use our professional expertise and know-how and bring a plan like this to life is a win-win for everyone."

It took a long time to get to this point. Just ask community leader Muriel Smith (72) who has lived in the community surrounding Lindo Park for four decades. She has raised three children, 13 grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren; many of whom grew up playing in Lindo Park, until one frightening day in 2009.

"There was a gang-related shooting in the neighborhood, and everything changed after that. Overnight, the park became a place to be wary of and kids stopped playing there," says Muriel. Then gangs started "tagging" the park, claiming it as their own.

But Muriel wouldn't have it, she got involved. She began to work with a young community activist named Adolpho Maldonado who had started a Block Watch group. Together they increased capacity with the city of Phoenix Neighborhood Services and Parks and Recreation Department, the South Mountain Police Department and District 7's Councilperson Michael Nowakosk who eventually passed the torch to Councilwoman Kate Gallego.

"This is an exciting project for the community," said Councilwoman Felicita Mendoza, who represents District 8 in which the park is located. "We're grateful that Lindo Park was selected by Project EverGreen and for the volunteer service and financial support of STMA and local businesses to make it possible. The new ballpark will enhance the recreation center and other amenity upgrades made to the park in recent years."

Continued from page 15

Infield Soils and Topdressings

Continued from page 7

Infield topdressings

In general, there are four types of topdressings on the market today. Calcined clay is probably the most widely known.

Calcined Clays: Quality calcined clays are usually made from the montmorillonite family of clays. They are fired to about 1200 degrees, a point where the clay particles become stable. Stable particles will not become soft or melt into a slimy clay when wet. Instead, they maintain their original shape and hardness. The firing process evaporates the moisture in the micro pores of the clay particles, making them extremely absorbent. Particles will release absorbed moisture, but at a slower rate. Calcined clays work exceptionally well as a topdressing for high-sand infield mixes. The firing process gives the clay particles a light bulk density. This prevents too much clay from sinking into the sandy soil. It also helps hold moisture at the surface. Normally, large pore spaces in high-sand base mixes allow gravity to pull moisture out.

Calcined clay also works on normal infield mixes, but at times it can hamper field preparations after a rain. Particles that are on the field when rain comes absorb the water to their field capacity. When you're trying to dry out the skin, the particles continue to release moisture. You have to add more calcined clay to the field to dry it up, and suddenly you have too much topdressing on the skin.

Vitrified Clay: Vitrified clay topdressing is made from the montmorillonite and illite clay families. These clays are fired to 2000 degrees, causing the particles to expand. The process creates macropores and reduces the amount of micropores. Thus, the vitrified clays absorb much less water than a calcined clay. If you're looking for absorption, the finer grades will work a little better than the coarse grades.

Vitrified clay topdressings are not to be used on infield base mixes with high sand content. Vitrified clays have a heavier bulk density than calcined clays, and the topdressing will sink fairly quickly as it is agitated by play and regular maintenance.

However, vitrified clays work tremendously well on normal or high-clay/silt infield base mixes. They can be used straight, but they work even better when mixed with a calcined clay in approximately a 60:40 or 70:30 vitrified to calcined ratio.

Vitrified clay in these base mixes creates a buffer zone between players' cleats and the infield base mix. This allows you to wait a little longer before you cover the field for a light to moderate rain. Vitrified clay sheds water as it gets wet. It allows the water to roll through to the base mix until it has absorbed all that it can handle. Any excess water will run off if the grade on your infield is correct. A small amount of calcined clay in your mix will help increase your water holding capacity a little.

Unlike calcined clay, vitrified clay won't absorb water to field capacity and extend your drying time by releasing the moisture.

Because of its lack of moisture-absorbing micropores, vitrified clay products will not work as a drying agent during a game. Also, it's not highly recommended as a soil amendment for tilling into your base mix.

Crushed Aggregates: The third type of topdressing material, crushed aggregates, combines various crushed stone products with crushed brick. These materials absorb minimal amounts of water, and they have a heavy bulk density.

Again, because of the bulk density, crushed aggregates should not be used on any high-sand base mixes due to rapid migration down into the mix. They can be used on normal infield mixes, and even high-clay/silt mixes, but only as a topdressing.

These topdressings perform better when enhanced with some calcined clay. Don't till these materials into your mix, or you may eventually wind up with something similar to concrete.

Diatomaceous Earth: The fourth and final topdressing material is diatomaceous earth. It's made of sedimentary rock composed of fossilized skeletal remains of diatoms (microscopic, single-celled plants). The material is very high in silica (between 86% and 94%). During processing, it is crushed, dried, and calcined to remove any organic contaminants. It becomes a very porous product that can absorb large amounts of moisture.

Diatomaceous earth works well for drying a field after rains, but it's very expensive and creates several major problems. First, it has a very light bulk density. This allows it to easily blow off your field in the wind, causing major problems with lips where your skin meets the turf edge. Also, when incorporated into the soil, diatomaceous earth tends to float back to the surface in time. It breaks down very rapidly from friction wear (dragging the infield). And finally, due to the high content of silica, it has a funny color and has shown some problems with glare on sunny days. For Oriole Park at Camden Yards, we currently use a mixture of 80% vitrified clay and 20% calcined clay as a topdressing for our infield. We maintain approximately a 1/4-inch layer of topdressing on our skin areas.

Continued on page 15

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Professional Relationships: A Key to Success

Continued from page 4

Don't be afraid to hold your vendors accountable. If your organization is not getting the service you need, communicate that to the vendor. Certainly give them the chance to rectify the situation, however in the case that it can't be, or in the case of repeated problems, don't be afraid to cut the cord and move on. A good vendor or supplier should be an asset, not an obstacle to your success. Always remember that you are the customer. Utilize SFMANJ and groups like it. Vendors that are involved and attend the events are demonstrating that they are engaged in the industry and are likely there because they want your business.

Lastly, take care of the vendors that take care of you. When you have a good supplier that is serving your operation it is important to work fairly with them as well. Small things like being available to accept delivery, carrying a purchase order over by hand, and submitting invoices for payment in a timely manner can all help in furthering your relationship.

Administrative Relationships

A healthy cooperative working relationship with those above you in your organization is imperative for success. Like it or not, these are the people that make the decisions that will impact you from day to day. From the supplies you need, the equipment you use, the staff assigned to you and the responsibilities you incur; these folks control it all.

Take every opportunity to educate those above you about your profession. Whether it be a Mayor, Township Administrator, School Board, Board of Directors or Organizational Owner, chances are these individuals have never been a sports field manager. Take the time to engage with them and communicate your needs. If you want a piece of equipment, be prepared to tell them why. Have reasons as to how it will benefit your facility and the advantages it will provide. If you need an improvement made, do your research. Be prepared to answer the where, why and how much questions that are sure to follow. An administrator will always feel more comfortable signing off on that major project or purchase if they can justify it to the community they serve. It is up to you to provide the knowledge and insight they need to do so.

Sometimes we must engage with our superiors over something negative. Perhaps a deficiency is perceived, an injury occurred, or a complaint was lodged. If you know the issue ahead of time, seek to determine the cause of the problem. Have these causes to bring to your superiors, but never excuses. Excuses have no place in any type of professional relationship and will serve only to undermine your professionalism. Additionally, come up with one or more viable solutions to the problem. This is also where having a record keeping system in place becomes extremely valuable. Having identified the cause, having a plan to solve the problem already, and some records to back you up at the time you meet with your superiors about it will serve you well. "I'm sorry that this has occurred. It seems to have been due to this. Here is what we can do to ensure that it does not happen again."

Continued on page 16

2019 Calendar of Events



2019 SFMANJ Spring Field Day
Rutgers Athletics Facilities
April 17, 2019
Rutgers Campus
Piscataway, NJ
856.514.3179
www.sfmanj.org

Rutgers Turf Research Golf Classic
May 6, 2019
Fiddler's Elbow Country Club
Bedminster, NJ
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www.njturfgrass.org



Rutgers Turfgrass Research Field Days
Golf & Fine Turf
July 30, 2019
Rutgers Hort Farm No. 2
North Brunswick, NJ
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Equipment Demonstrations
July 31, 2019
Rutgers Adelpia Research Farm
Freehold, NJ
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New Jersey Green Expo
December 10-12, 2019
The Borgata
Atlantic City, NJ
973.812.6467
www.njturfgrass.org



2020 STMA Conference and Exhibition
January 13-16, 2020
West Palm Beach, FL
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Volunteers Hit A Home Run...

Continued from page 12

It was a huge community-wide undertaking to take the park back. They held monthly community meetings and invited speakers to talk about different aspects of what was happening in the community, from drug-dealing to juvenile delinquency.

Muriel patrolled the community on foot every day with a friend from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. to see if there were neighborhood kids skipping school. She worked with local high schools and hosted graffiti clean-ups on the weekends and slowly but surely, things started to turn around and the park became a place to gather again.

Since then, a brand-new community center named after Muriel Smith has been built in Lindo Park along with a huge ramada with picnic tables for gatherings outside. Now, neighborhood groups hold meetings, host tree plantings, put on special events and kids even read and study there.

"People can be a product of their environment," says Juan Rodriguez, City of Phoenix Manager of Parks and Recreation. "This park and the new ballpark will be something that people can be proud of, a respite for the community. The park is no longer something that you just drive by – it's a place that you stop and enjoy- it's a destination."

In 2018, Juan and his supervisor Esther Avila, deputy director for parks and recreation, nominated Lindo Park for the ballpark renovation from Project EverGreen and the Sports Turf Managers Association. They selected the parks in the city that needed the most attention. "We were thrilled when we were selected, and we met with Cindy and Scott. They match the passion we have for what we do and bring unique expertise and a love of what they do."

Councilwoman Felicita Mendoza, who represents District 8 in which the park is located said the project was an exciting development for the community.

"We're grateful that Lindo Park was selected by Project EverGreen and for the volunteer service and financial support of STMA and local businesses to make it possible," said Mendoza. "The new ballpark will enhance the recreation center and other amenity upgrades made to the park in recent years."

Project EverGreen's Code said the project was not the work of one person or group but a collaborative effort.

"No one can do it alone. Project EverGreen brings neighbors, local businesses and groups interested in making a difference together to invest in the future of the community," Code says. "The passion, energy and effort garnered through this collaboration are transformative for both the environment and the neighborhood residents."

Muriel was elated to see the finished ball field. "The neighborhood kids and adults just love baseball and they are so excited about the idea of having a real ballpark to play in. It's a vote of confidence for them, someone telling them, 'there's more out there for you and you can do it.'"

Scott Bills, CSFM, is a Certified Sports Field Manager. SFMANJ Board Secretary and Public Relations Committee Chairman

**Don't Forget . . .
SFMANJ Spring Field Day
Wednesday, April 17, 2019**

Infield Soils and Topdressings

Continued from page 13

Maintenance issues

Base Mix: Here, the key is moisture, moisture, moisture.

Moisture is what will give your base mix the corky feel that the players desire. Try to keep your infield skin as moist as possible. Soak the skin deep in the evening after the last game has been played. It then has all night to perk as deep as it can into your mix without evaporation stealing too much away from it.

During the daytime, add water as time and weather dictate. I can't stress enough how important it is to keep your field moist as long as possible. When it dries out, it takes a long time to reestablish a good moist base again.

If your base mix is getting too tight or hard, you might decide that you want to open it up to introduce some pore space into it. You want to till it; I prefer to save rototilling for when I'm adding an amendment to the soil mix and I want to mix it really well. Otherwise, I think a rototiller adds too much air to the base mix at one time. You have to spend too much time with a roller trying to firm the base mix back up.

I like to use a greens aerator to open up my infield mix. It increases pore space while maintaining most of the integrity (firmness) of the base mix. Unless you want to use it to amend the base mix, scrape off your infield topdressing or pull it to the side before you start.

I might go over it once or twice, depending on how much pore space I want to create. Always soak the infield the night before or do this procedure after a rain so the skin base mix is not hard and dry. Moisture

Continued on page 16

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Professional Relationships: A Key to Success

Continued on page 14

Share your success. A victory for you is also a victory for your superiors. If you are to receive some recognition or an award, invite them to see you accept it. If you get a letter of thanks from those who utilize your facility, send a copy to them. If you have some great photos of your facility at its finest, send some copies over. Gestures such as these can help your superiors to feel the same pride in your fields that you do. Remember administrators and officials are often involved with much more than facility maintenance. Sharing the success you have can keep your operation on their minds and can help re-enforce the fact that the community appreciates and depends on the work that you do.

Subordinate Relationships

As sports field managers we must also engage with our subordinates on a daily basis. It is important to foster a positive working environment with good moral while at the same time extracting maximum results. I find that empowering the workforce goes a long way in accomplishing this.

Find something that a particular employee is good at or interested in and assign them that part of the operation. For example, skinned infield maintenance. Show the employee what you want, communicate your expectations and let him manage that for a while. I find that the "pride of ownership" for the individual that comes as a result of such a move can increase quality of work and foster a desire to succeed and to do more.

Even while empowering subordinates it is important to run a tight ship. Don't be afraid to communicate your expectations. If something is not up to par let the employee know and give them the opportunity to correct it. It is their work but as the manager it must be up to your standards. Effectively conveying standard operating procedures, setting rules and regulations and making expectations clear can greatly help with this. An employee cannot be successful if they are not certain of what is expected of them.

Occasionally, we all end up with a staff member that just doesn't work out despite our best efforts. When this occurs, the situation must be corrected through training, discipline, dismissal or other applicable means as quickly as possible. If not, a problem employee can quickly and easily infect an entire crew with negativity, destroying moral and interfering with your ability to operate effectively.

Share your successes with your staff as well. Your achievements are theirs as well and must be shared. If they are responsible for the work, then they are entitled to the rewards as well. If you are to receive a commendation of some sort, arrange to have them with you. Mention them by name and what they are doing well when you are speaking with superiors. Even small things like making a habit of using the word "we" instead of "I" can go a long way.

As sports field managers we cannot do the job by ourselves. Communication and positive relationships with those around us are the glue that holds our operations together. We must conduct ourselves as part of a team every bit as much as the sports teams that take to our fields on a daily basis.

Virgil Caputo is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP); Sports Field Manager, Monroe Township, NJ; and SFMANJ Member.

Infield Soils and Topdressings

Continued from page 15

will determine this method's success. Of course, you still re-roll the skin once you've dragged the infield after this operation.

One caution: never till or aerate your skin with the intention of leaving it open to help moisture soak deep. I have seen too many people end up with a quagmire because of this. Always roll your base first before adding water. There will still be plenty of pore space left.

When I open the skin with an aerifier, I usually re-level my infield skin mix at the same time. When you are re-leveling your skin, you are basically rechecking the grade of the base mix from front to back to ensure that it's a smooth grade with no high or low spots.

When doing this, it's important to have your topdressing removed to allow the soil you add to properly adhere to the existing infield base soil. A nice, deep spiking of the skin works well to loosen the top inch or so to make it easy to cut down high areas. It also allows any soil you add to low areas to mix and bind better with the existing base mix.

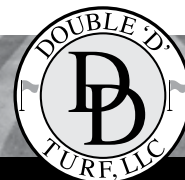
You should re-level your infield at least once a year, and twice if it receives year-round play. At Oriole Park, we level our base mix three to four times per season. Frequency should be based on how mobile a base mix you have, the level of activity the field receives, and your manpower and time availability.

Re-level your skin periodically to prevent drainage problems caused by high and low spots.

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Infield Soils and Topdressings

Continued from page 16

Re-leveling allows you to cut down any high spots and fill any low areas. These areas can develop for two reasons: high concentrations of play (around bases and players positions) and dragging/grooming patterns you use on the field.

We check our grade by running a tight string line from the turf edge at the front of the infield to the turf edge at the back of the infield. It's important to remove any lips at the turf's edge before you run your string lines, since they can seriously throw off your grade reading. Roll and soak the base once you've completed the re-leveling project.

Topdressing: When you initially put your topdressing over your base mix, it should be spiked into the top 1/2 to one inch of the base mix. Once you're finished working this in, drag it and water it. Adjust your topdressing application so that you have about 1/4 to 1/2 inch of loose topdressing on top and maintain that throughout the season by replenishing when necessary.

Spike your infield on a regular basis to smooth out cleat marks and other imperfections. You shouldn't have to cut deeper than 1/2 inch. Follow-up by dragging and watering the skin. Again, keep that skin moist as much as possible during the season.

Special pure clays are used in the batter's boxes, catcher's box and the pitcher's landing area. Topdressing these areas takes a little more care. This clay is chewed-up by cleats and eventually spread around into the topdressing, so it's a good idea to sweep off and replace this topdressing on a regular basis.

When that clay mixes with the topdressing, it inhibits the flow of moisture and makes the topdressing very sticky. This makes it hard for deep watering of the mound and home plate skin areas. At Oriole Park, we usually replace ours after every third game.

If you use dry line chalk to mark your foul lines and batter's boxes, it's a good idea to scoop up what's left of the lines after the day's games. This will prevent the chalk from becoming part of your skin mix, which can cause discoloration, a change in your soil texture over time, and a decrease in the flow of moisture into the base mix.

Finally, as you head into winter, when the field will be unused for several months, either scrape the topdressing off the field and remove it or create a catch basin an inch or so deep in the skin wherever the skin meets the turf. This prevents large amounts of topdressing from blowing into the turf edge and creating large lips during the windy months of winter. Here at Oriole Park, we do both as a good preventative maintenance practice for lips.

Remember, these are just guidelines to help you make better decisions when building, renovating, or maintaining an infield skin. There are many variables, especially when it comes to soils.

It's the responsibility of each groundskeeper to know what makes an ideal skin and to apply that knowledge. Use the resources available to you. You may not have the time or dollars to create the perfect skin infield, but you can't improve what you have unless you know what you're working towards.

*Paul Zwaska, is Director of Education and Strategic Initiatives,
Beacon Athletics, Middleton, WI.*

Continued from page 3

New and Renewed SFMANJ Members

Scott Geier	Borough of Hawthorne
Kenneth Gentile	Executive Turf Products
Tim Gerzabek	Helena Agri Enterprises LLC
Brian Gjelsvik	Seeton Turf
Ken Griepentrog	Jersey Seed
Kj Griepentrog	Jersey Seed
Bill Griffith	Piscataway Twp Board of Ed
Sal Guzzo	Central Regional School Dist
Erik Hammerdahl	Morris-Union Jointure Commission
Hank Hampton	Cherry Valley Tractor Sales
Randy Heller	Billy Goat
Tom Hennessy	Colts Neck Twp
Steve Hesser	Lawn And Golf Supply Co.
Kevin Hoban	Storr Tractor Co
Blake Hoerr	New York Jets
Bruce Hoffman	Martin Stone Quarries Inc.
Zachary Holm, CSFM	New York Red Bulls
Ronald S. Holt	Palmyra BOE
John Hughes	Old Bridge Township
Scott Johnson	Retired
Jeff Johnson	Gill St Bernard's School
Harold Jones	Palmyra BOE
Rich Kalish, CTP	Farmside Landscape & Design, Inc.

Continued on page 18

SFMANJ Spring Field Day

Rutgers University Athletic Facilities

Wednesday, April 17, 2019

7:00 am to 2:30 pm

TENTATIVE AGENDA

7:00 – 7:30 am	Vendor Registration/Set-Up
7:30 – 8:45 am	Attendee Registration, Trade Show Open
8:45 – 9:00 am	Pass the Mic
9:00 – 9:30 am	Reconstruction of the Rutgers Football Practice Fields <i>Dr. Jim Murphy, Rutgers University</i>
9:30 – 10:00 am	NJ School IPM Law Update <i>Pat Hastings, Rutgers University</i>
10:00 – 10:30 am	Cultural Management of Turfgrass Weeds on School & Municipal Grounds <i>Dr. Matt Elmore, Rutgers University</i>
10:30 – 11:30 am	Tour of Rutgers Football Practice Fields <i>Matt Henn, Rutgers University Athletics</i>
11:30 – 12:15 pm	Equipment Demonstrations
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 – 2:30 pm	Tour of Rutgers Highpoint Stadium and Yurcak Field <i>Matt Henn Rutgers University Athletics</i>

**Please call the office at 856-514-3179
for more information and/or registration**

SFMANJ: Field of the Year-2019

Continued from page 8

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 two years 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.

Once again, the Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey congratulates Dave Kuczynski and The Somerset County Park Commission for winning the 2018 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 2019 Field of the Year are due by the end of October 2019 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, CSFM, is a Certified Sports Field Manager. SFMANJ Board Secretary and Public Relations Committee Chairman

SFMANJ Scholarship Award



SFMANJ President, Berenard Luongo, presents one of our scholarship awards to FFA's Jamie Specca



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Continued from page 17

New and Renewed SFMANJ Members

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| David Karl | Borough of Fair Haven |
| Bob Kaufman | Storr Tractor Company |
| John Kavanaugh | Caldwell/West Caldwell BOE |
| Mark Kellet | Old Bridge Twp |
| Reese Parker Kerlin | New York Red Bulls |
| Richard K. Kerr, Jr. | Evesham Twp. |
| Scott Klein | Rancocas Valley Reg. H.S. |
| Hugh Knowlton | Bergen Community College |
| Lee Kozsey | Syngenta |
| Dave Kuczynski | Somerset County Park Commission |
| Peter Kusion | Ocean County Utilities |
| Judson Lalonde | Millburn Short Hills Youth Baseball |
| Frank Lasasso | Hammonton Board of Ed |
| Thomas Lepore | Tenafly Board of Education |
| Barry Levitt | Levitt's LLC |
| John Lewless | Hopewell Valley Reg. School Dist. |
| Adam Lieb | Springfield |
| Mike Linkewich | Seeton Turf |
| Frank Locke | North Brunswick Twp |
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| Bernard Luongo | Northern Burlington County Reg. School Dist. |
| Kevin Malone, CSFM | The Landtek Group Inc. |
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| Michael Massi | Palmyra BOE |
| William Mateyka | Old Bridge Township |
| Larry Mauriello | Laurel Equipment |
| Michael Mccann | Caldwell/West Caldwell BOE |
| Jason Miller | Monroe Twp. BOE |
| Gregory S. Moore | US Pitchcare |
| Michael Morvay | Lakewood Blueclaws |
| Sean Muirhead | Old Bridge Twp. |
| Brian H. Myers | TLC Landscape Co. |
| Alec Nappa | County College of Morris |
| Matthew Olivi | Piscataway Twp Board of Ed |
| Carl Olivi | Piscataway Twp Board of Ed |
| Paul Parascondolo | Old Tappan Golf Course |
| Bradley S. Park | Rutgers University |
| Tony Pavelec | Jersey Soil Blending, LLC |
| Tanael Pena | Morris Hills Regional District |
| Sam Pepe, CEFM, Ipm Co-Ord | Central Regional School District |
| A. Charles Perkins III | South Jersey Turf Consultants |
| Chuck Pfluger | Berlin Twp. BOE |
| Matthew Pinkerton | Byram |
| Marie Pompei | F.M. Brown's Sons, Inc. |
| Robert Pritchard | Caldwell/West Caldwell BOE |
| Daniel Purner | Somerset Patriots |
| Tyler Randt | Twp. of Burlington-Rec Dept |
| Gerard Redmond | Metuchen School District |
| Ross Reed | Borough of Fair Haven |
| Keith Reilly | Jonathan Green |
| Mike Reissner | E Brunswick Parks and Rec |
| Andrew Remm | North Brunswick Twp Parks |
| Ed Roessler | Ramapo College |

Due to the abundance of content this spring, this list of new and renewed members will be continued in the summer issue of Update

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