

UPDATE

ISSN 2158-124X

Winter 2024
Vol. 24, No. 4

Sports Field
Managers Association of New Jersey



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

SFMANJ

Spring Field Day

Wednesday, April 23, 2025 at the beautiful

Goffle Brook Park

Passaic County Parks & Recreation
Hawthorne, NJ



See Inside For:

Photo Recaps of Latest Events

Winterizing Tips

Tournament Preparation

Food For Thought From a CSFM

Turf Blankets

The Grounds We Keep



LOCAL SUPPORT THAT IS SECOND TO NONE.

Built on a foundation of trusted relationships, count on The Toro Company, Storr Tractor Company, and Turf Equipment and Supply Company for exceptional products, services, and support to keep your operations and equipment running smoothly.

STORR TRACTOR COMPANY
www.storrtractor.com
908-722-9830



TURF EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLY
www.turf-equipment.com
800-827-3711

Welcome! New and Renewed SFMANJ Members for 2024 & 2025

We have 242 new & renewed members for 2024. Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey has generated invoices for 2025 membership dues to all current members. If you did not receive an invoice, please contact us at 856.514.3179 or download the membership form available at www.sfmanj.org. Mail membership dues direct to SFMANJ, PO Box 205, Pennsville, NJ 08070.

Joseph Anderson.....	Mantua Township
Bill Apsley.....	Branchburg Township DPW
Christopher Basillio.....	Passaic County Parks Dept
Eric Baumgartner.....	WoodbridgeTwp. Parks Dept.
James Betts.....	Tuckahoe Turf
Timothy Birch.....	Princeton University
Jason Bittner.....	Somerset County Parks Commission
Luke Cochrane.....	Passaic County Parks Dept.
Christopher Michael Comtess.....	Metuchen Board of Education
David Daniel.....	Somerset County Parks Commission
Robert Daniels.....	Someraet County Park Commission
Wilmer Des Santos.....	Hillsborough Twp
Justin Eicher.....	Somerset County Parks Commission
David Everett.....	Branchburg Township DPW
Minas Frangos.....	Woodbridge Twp DPW
Ernesto Gonzales.....	Hillsborough Twp
Shannon Hidey.....	Finch Turf
Eric Hill.....	Readington DPW
Dustin Holaday.....	Somerset County Parks Commission
David Horincewich.....	Metuchen BOE
Scott Klein.....	Rancocas Valley Reg. High School
Anthony Madeano.....	Readington DPW
Joseph Maturin.....	Hillsborough Twp
Donna Mcglaughlin.....	Woodbridge Township Parks Department
Patrick Murphy.....	Somerset County Parks Commission
Brian Pichalski.....	Woodbridge Twp. Parks Dept.
Daniel Pierson.....	Somerset County Park Commission
Nick Piscitelli.....	Somerset County Park Commission
Mark Rogow.....	Passiac County Parks dept.
Frank Russo.....	North Brunswick Twp.
Nick Smith.....	Wiidbridge Twp. Parks Dept.
Vincent Spano.....	Passiac County Parks Dept.
Brian Staak.....	Hillsborough Twp
Tom Suk.....	Raritan Twp. Public Works
Oliver Vargas.....	Passaic County Parks Dept.
James Waggener.....	Toms River Regional Schools
Jay Winters.....	Hillsborough Twp
Anthony Zaliwski.....	Hillsborough Twp

NEW MEMBERS FOR 2025

Dennis deSanctis	Double 'D' Turf, LLC
Brian Manning	Terre Company
Joshua Marden	Profile Products LLC
Michael Rasile	Individual Member
Jeff Weld	Envu

2025 SFMANJ BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

President, Zachary Holm, CSFM..... Central Park Conservancy
Vice President, Rich Watson Laurel Lawnmower
Secretary, Scott Bills, CSFM Sports Field Solutions
Treasurer, Jessica Phillips..... The Turf Trade

SFMANJ BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Virgil Caputo Monroe Twp. Parks Department
Joe Guanill..... Storr Tractor Company
Tim Hamfeldt..... Township of Morris
Dave Junkerman..... Winslow Township Board of Education
Matt Olivi..... Dunellen Board of Education
Brad Park Rutgers University
Craig Tolley County College of Morris
Chris Vance..... Princeton University

ADVISORS:

Fred CastenschioldSFMANJ
Dr. James Murphy Rutgers University

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Debbie SavardSFMANJ

MISSION STATEMENT

Committed to enhancing the professionalism of athletic field managers by improving the safety, playability and appearance of athletic fields at all levels through seminars, field days, publications and networking with those in the sports turf industry.

PO Box 205 • Pennsville, NJ 08070

Web site: www.sfmanj.org • Email: mail@sfmanj.org
Phone: 856-514-3179 / Fax: 856-514-2542

National Organization

Sports Turf Managers Association
www.stma.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

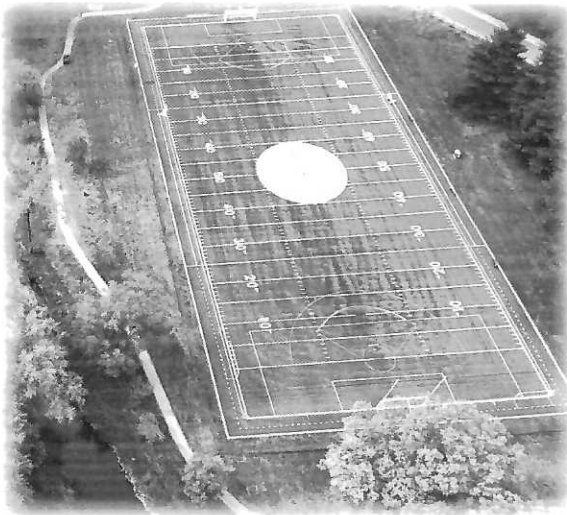
New and Renewed Members.....	3
2025 Board of Directors	3
Red Bulls Rewind	5
The Grounds We Keep.....	7
Winter Sports Field Tips.....	8
Photo Recap: SFMANJ Fall Field Day	9
Tournament Time – A Groundskeeper's Account of Preparation for a Baseball Tournament	13
Photo Recap: New Jersey Green Expo Turf & Landscape Conference ..	15
Food for thought from a Certified Sports Field Manager	17
Calendar of Events	17
Turf and a Blanket.....	18

*This newsletter is the official quarterly publication of the
Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey.*

For information regarding this newsletter, contact:
SFMANJ at (856) 514-3179 or Brad Park at (848) 932-6327
Editor: Brad Park, Rutgers University, email: bradley.s.park@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.

BE SURE TO MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE
SFMANJ SPRING FIELD DAY



Wednesday, April 23, 2025 at the beautiful
GOFFLE BROOK PARK
Passaic County Parks & Recreation
Hawthorne, NJ



If you have questions,
please call the office:

856-514-3179

High Quality
Bluegrass & Tall Fescue

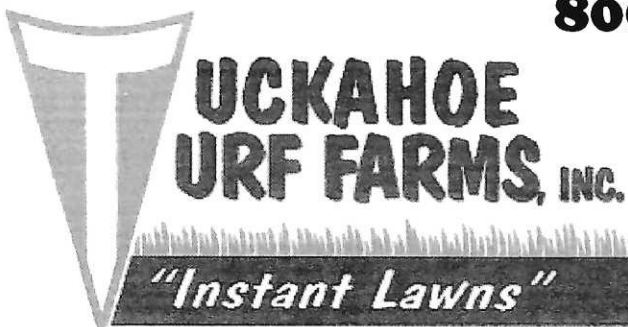
Sand Sod grown on Hammonton sandy, loam-type soil designed for
today's specialized modern athletic fields

Visit us on our web site: **www.ttfarms.com**

*Our completely irrigated 700-acre farm allows production and deliveries to parts of
Pennsylvania, Delaware, New York and all of New Jersey.*

Labor Saving Big Rolls, please call for custom installation prices:

800-222-0591



609-561-7184
Fax 609-561-0296
401 Myrtle Ave. • P.O. Box 148
Hammonton, NJ 08037

SPARQ  www.t



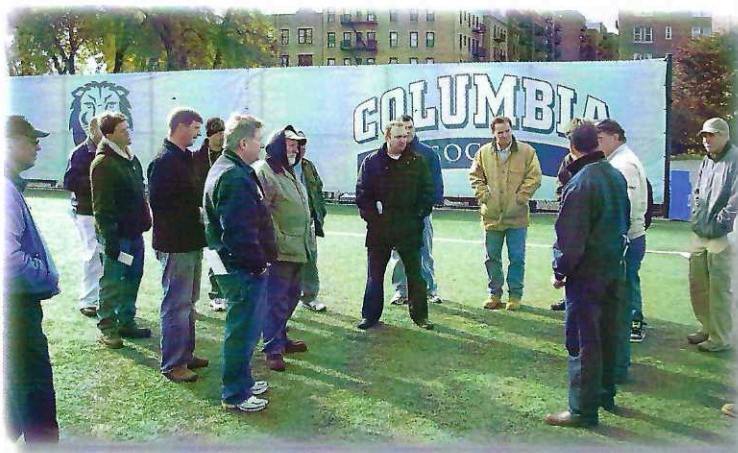
Tuckahoe Turf Farms

SFMANJ Bus Stops at Columbia University and Red Bulls Stadium

Editor's Note: This article first appeared in the Winter 2010 issue of SFMANJ Update

By Brad Park

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ) sponsored a unique tour of the sports fields at Baker Athletics Complex, Columbia University, New York, NY and Red Bulls Arena, home of the Major League Soccer (MLS) New York Red Bulls, in



Harrison, NJ on Wednesday, November 10, 2010. A chartered bus was arranged and departed Rutgers Hort. Farm II, North Brunswick, NJ in the morning and arrived back at the Central Jersey turf research facility that afternoon after touring the two locations in New York City and Northern New Jersey.

Baker Athletics Complex at Columbia University, overseen by Kevin Malone, CSFM and member, SFMANJ, is very unique in that all sports field surfaces at this complex consist of synthetic turf. There are numerous synthetic turf surfaces present. Field hockey is played on surface called Astroturf 12 - a short pile carpet reminiscent to the surfaces present at facilities such as Giants Stadium, Veterans Stadium, and Three Rivers Stadium in the 1980's.



Soccer is played on FieldTurf Duo - a sand and crumb rubber infilled monofilament synthetic surface. The fibers on this surface have a horizontal orientation to limit the kick-up of sand and rubber during play.

Attendees toured a newly installed softball field. The outfield (FieldTurf Duraspine) consisted of a sand and rubber infilled monofilament with a more rigid, upright orientation compared to the soccer field. The infield and warning track were constructed with soil and crushed rock materials that are conventionally installed at softball facilities.

The baseball field at Baker Athletics Complex is predominantly a sand and rubber infilled synthetic turf system (FieldTurf Duo). The home plate area is also synthetic turf. The only non-synthetic turf locations on the field are the pitcher's mound (dirt) and the outfield warning track and outfield foul territory warning track (crushed rock-type material). The foul territory warning track behind the home plate area and outside the 1st and 3rd baselines is synthetic turf.



Robert K. Kraft Field, home of the football and lacrosse teams consists of a fibrillating slit-film fiber infilled with crumb rubber and sand (FieldTurf) installed in 2005. The field is in good condition and is the oldest synthetic field at Baker Athletics Complex.

Lunch was held in the press box above Robert K. Kraft Field and provided great views of the surrounding hillsides, Harlem River, and Hudson River.

The bus trip left Northern Manhattan, crossed the George Washington Bridge back to New Jersey for a tour of Red Bulls Arena. The sports field is managed by SFMANJ member Dan Shemesh, Director of Grounds for the New York Red Bulls.

Attendees got a behind-the-scenes look at the turf equipment used to maintain the soccer surface and a SubAir system that can manipulate



air flow through the rootzone. A major challenge faced by Shemesh and his crew is the absence of direct sunlight on the Kentucky bluegrass and perennial ryegrass overseeded playing surface. Stadium design and

roof materials appear limit the quantity of sunlight hours received by the New Jersey-grown sod. Artificial lighting is being explored.

Thanks go out to Kevin Malone, CSFM and Dan Shemesh for their hospitality and willingness to host SFMANJ on a tour of their great facilities!

Brad Park is Research and Outreach Agronomist, Rutgers Univ.; SFMANJ Board member; and Editor, SFMANJ Update.



NJ SPORTS FIELDS

BASEBALL, SOFTBALL, SOCCER, FOOTBALL



www.njsportsfields.com



732-287-1116



FULL FIELD RENOVATIONS, REBUILDS, & SERVICING



**SETTING THE STANDARD FOR PLAYABLE SPORTS
FIELDS**



JOHN@NJSPO RTSFIELDS.COM

The Grounds We Keep

By Miguel Dejesus

Alright, listen up—
I know it isn't glamorous,
Isn't the kind of job they write poems about,
But we're the backbone of this place,
The ones who get up before the sun,
Before the first whistle blows,
Before the crowd even thinks about sitting down.
Yeah, it's just grass to some,
Just a stretch of dirt and chalk,
But to us?
It's a canvas.
We paint with blades of green,
We carve with rakes and shovels,
And when it's done right—
Man, it's art.
But don't get it twisted—
It's not easy.
It's blisters on your hands,
Sweat running into your eyes,
Summer sun baking you alive,
Or winter rain, drenching every layer you got on,
And we're still out there,
Every damn day.
There's always something.
Drought? Gotta coax life from the dirt.
Floods? Gotta drain the field before it drowns.
And don't even get me started
On the divots, the ruts,
The cleats that rip through our work
Like they've never seen a smooth surface in their life.
And we patch it all back up
Like surgeons on overtime,
Stitching turf, coaxing it back to life
Before game day comes around again.
And here's the thing—
No one's gonna cheer for us.
No one's chanting our names in the stands.
Hell, they don't even know we exist.
But we know.

We know that without us,
There's no perfect bounce,
No clean slide into home,
No beautiful arc of a ball
That lands just right.
We build the stage for glory
And we're ghosts behind the scenes.
But I tell you what—
Every time that field gleams under the lights,
Every time the players run out there,
Unaware of the hours we put in—
That's the reward.
That's the win for us.
And when they walk off that field,
Spattered with mud,
Covered in sweat,
Not even thinking about the ground beneath them—
That's the best part,
Because that means we did our job.
We gave them a stage so smooth, so solid,
They never had to think about it.
So yeah, it's not a job for the spotlight.
But it's a job of pride,
A job where every blade of grass,
Every line we chalk,
Is a testament to what we can do together.
Remember this—
We may not be in the game,
But without us, there's no game at all.
So when you step out there tomorrow,
Smell the fresh-cut grass,
Feel the dirt under your boots,
Know that what we're doing matters,
In ways no one else might ever see.
But we see it.
We know.
And that?
That's why we keep the grounds.

*Miguel Dejesus is Supervising Greenskeeper, County of Passaic –
Department of Parks and Recreation*

Winter Sports Field Tips

James A. Murphy, Ph.D.

Clean-up. Leaves, sticks, and other debris that accumulate on the grass over the winter should be raked up when weather permits. Debris lying on the turf too long can smother the grass and create bare spots. Bare spots will probably transform into weeds later in the season.

Mowing. Winter is a good time to clean, lubricate and repair your mowing equipment. You do not want to find out that your mowers do not work properly at first use in the spring. Because of the chance for wet weather and rapid shoot growth any delay in mowing at the start of the season (spring) can turn into a "behind the eight-ball" scenario very quickly.

Fertilization. Plan for your fertilization needs by testing your soil to determine whether liming is necessary to adjust soil pH (6.0 to 6.7 recommended) as well which nutrients are needed and how much. If you applied a thorough late season (autumn) fertilization, your turf probably will not need as much fertilization in early spring (March - April). Without a fall fertilization program, the turf may require some rather aggressive fertilization to encourage recovery from play or winter damage or to enhance spring green-up. Fertilization with phosphates or potash should be based on soil test results.

Winter Seeding. Winter seeding is a risky practice; the probability of the seed washing away and being eaten by birds

is very high. Work the seed into the soil if you choose to seed during winter and realize that is likely to you will need to re-seed when warmer weather returns. Seeding when air temperature consistently exceeds 50 degrees Fahrenheit provides a better chance for success.

Drainage Assessment. Winter is good time to assess your fields for areas of poor drainage. Identifying and mapping out these areas now will give you a record of where you need to treat with your aerifier this spring. If aeration is not enough, maps of the poorly drained areas will provide documentation that you can use to show facility administrators where improvements such as slit drainage are needed.

Cover Skinned Infield Areas. Wet winter weather can lead to considerable erosion of skinned areas on baseball/softball infields. Consider covering these areas during the winter to eliminate much of the skin restoration headaches this spring. Type "baseball field covers" in any of the popular internet search engines to see examples of numerous companies that can supply covers in various sizes and shapes.

* James A. Murphy, Ph.D. is Extension Specialist in Turfgrass Management, Rutgers University; and SFMANJ Advisor

THE STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE FOR BASEBALL & SPORTS SURFACES & SUPPLIES



WE'VE SUPPLIED PRODUCTS TO EVERY MLB TEAM,
MOST MINOR LEAGUE & COLLEGE TEAMS,
AND THOUSANDS OF TOWNS
& SCHOOLS WORLDWIDE!

800-247-BEAM

Fax: 908-637-8421 • 908-637-4191

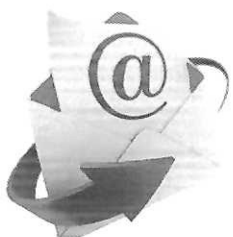
www.BEAMCLAY.com

email: sales@beamclay.com

THE INFILDE MIX AT
YANKEE STADIUM!

INFILDE MIXES, MOUND CLAYS, RED WARNING TRACKS
HUNDREDS OF INFILDE & SPORTS FACILITY PRODUCTS
"FROM BASES TO WINDSCREEN"

Partac Peat Corporation • One Kelsey Park, Great Meadows, NJ 07838



**Do we have your
e-mail address?**

E-mail to
mail@sfmanj.org
to make sure we have it
or to make a change.

**Or go in line to update your
member profile!**

GEORGIA GOLF CONSTRUCTION, INC

golf and sports fields



Infield laser grading
Native soil athletic field construction
Synthetic field base construction
Design, build and consult
Pitchers mound building
Sodding and seeding
Aerification
Infield mix, amendments, mound clay, bricks
Vibra-Sandmaster adding surface drainage

Georgia Golf Construction, Inc.

1441 Route 50, Woodbine, NJ 08270

<http://georgiagolfconstruction.us/> • cell 404-216-4445

Photo Recap

SFMANJ Fall Field Day

Mountain View Park, Hillsborough, NJ • October 23, 2024

Photos by Debbie Savard



*See you at the
2025 Spring
Field Day!*

Covers That Make the Difference

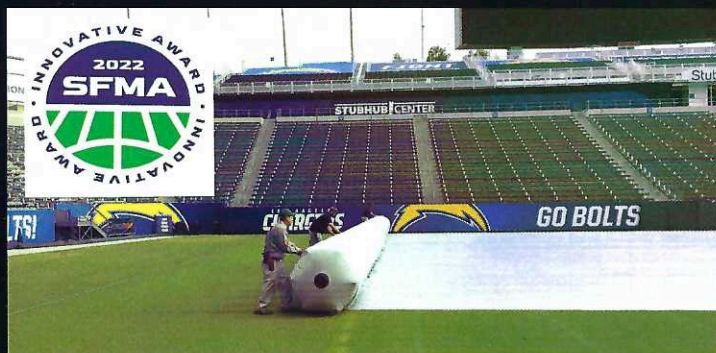
Our lightweight EVERGREEN™ Turf Covers produce a greenhouse type effect that allows your turf to breathe and retain the right amount of heat and moisture.



RAINCOVERS, from our supreme lightweight ones right to the classic vinyl types, there are models and accessories to meet your specific needs.



FOOTBALL FIELD COVERS are made of superior strength material, providing protection from rain or snow.



TARPMATE™ AIR roller is a revolutionary storage and handling system for field covers. 2-3 people can roll out or roll up a 100' wide cover.



An INFLATABLE FIELD COVER allows for ongoing field maintenance during inclement and extreme cold weather.



100 Westmore Dr., 11D, Rexdale, ON M9V 5C3
3909 Witmer Rd., Niagara Falls, NY 14305

1-800-387-5808

Tel: +1-416-745-1811 • Fax: +1-416-742-6837
www.covermaster.com • info@covermaster.com

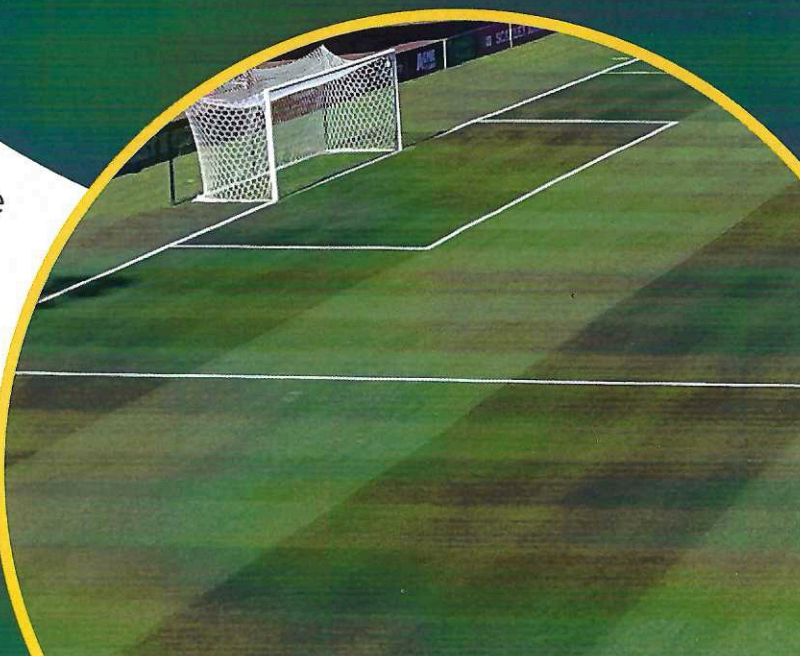


Experience The Difference[®]

Plant Food Company is
a New Jersey Manufacturer
of premium fertilizer for turfgrass.

Our exclusive line of products promote
optimum playability, wear & stress
resilience, and turf that recovers
more quickly after each game.

(800) 562-1291 | Local (609) 448-0935
www.plantfoodco.com | X @plantfoodco



Jersey Soil Blending —

Engineered Custom Soils with
independent testing by USGA
certified labs

- USGA Damp Green Topdressing
- Fairway Topdressing
- USGA Construction Blends
- 70-20-10 Drainage Blend
- Divot Mixes 70-30 with Canadian Sphagnum is our most popular
- Bio-soil - Certified by NJPE



Jersey Soil Blending

PO BOX 525 | Nutley, NJ 07110 | 973-320-2730

www.njsoil.com

The Viersma Companies

908-852-0552

www.viersma.com

mail@viersma.com

It's Time to Get Back to It!

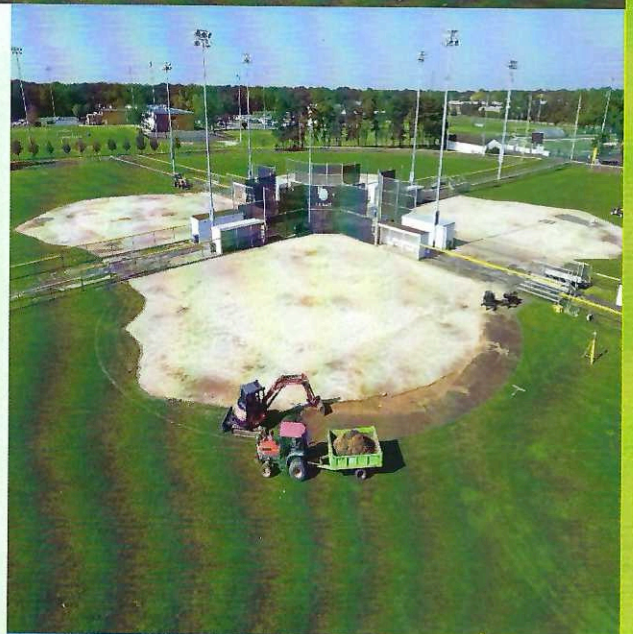
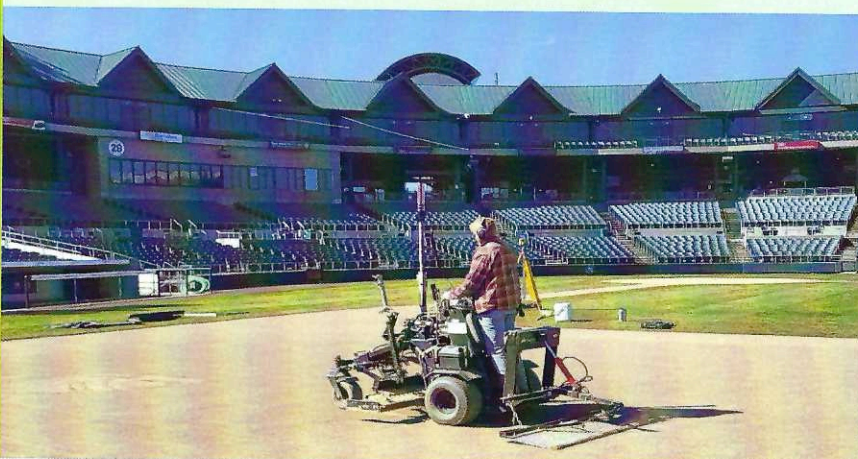
Athletic field services from simple tune-ups to full field reconstruction.

Including:

- Amending existing topsoil
- Installing drainage
- Removing built-up lips
- Laser grading
- Installing infield mix
- Sodding renovation
- Installing entire athletic fields

As we look forward to a great 2024 season, let us know if we can assist you in any way.

Give Us a Call!



TOURNAMENT TIME -

A GROUNDSKEEPER'S ACCOUNT OF PREPARATION FOR A BASEBALL TOURNAMENT

by Rich Watson

Editor's Note: The author was Sports Field Manager, Pine Hill Public Schools, Pine Hill, NJ at the time of authorship.

Hosting a tournament is a lot of work, however it is a good opportunity to showcase your facility. There will be people seeing your field for the first time, so make them remember it for the right reasons. We were informed this year that we would be one of three sites hosting the 33rd Annual Joe Hartman Diamond Classic. The tournament brings together the top 16 baseball teams in South Jersey. On May 13, 2006 Overbrook High School hosted two games, but the preparation started weeks earlier.

The call informing us about the tournament came in mid-April, so we had a good amount of time to prepare. First, we checked our baseball team's schedule for possible conflicts. Next was to check our field maintenance program. As luck would have it, a fertilizer application was scheduled the week before the tournament. Timing is everything.

With two weeks to go, we started cutting-in our pattern for the games. We cut the outfield in three directions at 2 inches every other day. The infield was cut in two directions at 1½-inch every other day. We use a Zero Turn mower (with a striping kit) to cut our outfield and a walk-behind mower for the infield. Sharp blades are very important, so we change them at least once a week.

The week of the tournament was very challenging. We had two games of our own in addition to the final prep for the big games. The day before the tournament is very important. We tried to do as many things as possible to make game day a little easier. Bullpen mounds were repaired, extra bleachers were moved, trash cans emptied, the infield was edged, and a sound check was done on the sound system. We made final cuts on the infield and outfield because there is no time the day of the games. Our mound and

home plate areas are constructed using mound clay. Both areas were repaired and covered. The infield was scarified, graded smooth, and then lightly rolled. The automatic irrigation system was used to wet down the infield at night, setting the stage for game day.

When the day of the tournament finally arrives, it's payday for all of the hard work. The day started with a light dragging of the infield, followed by another good soaking of the skinned areas. Next, foul lines and batters boxes were painted and chalked. At the last minute we decided to stencil the name of the tournament and the team names on the grass behind home plate. This was a nice touch that the teams and fans really seemed to appreciate. Finally, we painted the bases, pitching rubber, and home plate. It was game time.

The tournament was a great success. In between games we repaired the mound and plate, smoothed the infield with stiff drags, and touched up the chalk and paint. We wanted to make sure the second game played the same as the first. The coaches, players, and fans were very complimentary about our facility. That makes all the hard work worth it.

Putting together the maintenance end of a baseball tournament takes a lot of planning and hard work from a lot of people. My crew was outstanding. Their professionalism and hard work really showed in the playing condition of the field.

Tournament time is an opportunity to show off your field, while giving the teams a fair, competitive surface to play on. If you get the chance, step up to the plate and be remembered for the right reasons.

Rich Watson is Sales Representative, Laurel Equipment, Blackwood, NJ; and SFMANJ Vice-President

Laurel
EQUIPMENT
WWW.LAURELLAWN.COM

eXmark

Distributors of

WESTERN

Rich Watson

1850 Chews Landing Road
Chews Landing, NJ 08012

rich@laurellawn.com

**Installation,
Service
Parts**

**Snow Plows
Salt Spreaders**

Phone: (856) 228-2670

(856) 228-2770

Fax: (856) 228-9470

**Turf
Trade**
Your #1 Turf Supplier

517 Franklinville Road • Mullica Hill, NJ 08062
Fertilizers/Seed 856-478-6704

**Plant-Protectants
Soils/Sands**

Alan Phillips 609-226-9303

Jessica Phillips 609-226-0408

www.theturftrade.com

RENEW YOUR DUES!

Renewal invoices have been mailed out.
If you did not receive one, please call the office at

856-514-3179

Mail or email your invoice to SFMANJ
to renew your membership.

You can also renew on line at sfmanj.org

Please update your information on the invoice for the on-line directory

Thank You!

JERSEY SEED

PROFESSIONAL TURF PRODUCTS

Specializing in Quality Grass Seed
to Meet All Your
Turf Performance Standards

Call for a Catalog

800-828-5856

Carrying a full line of quality mixtures
especially formulated for:

SPORTS AND ATHLETIC FIELDS

LOW MAINTENANCE AREAS

GENERAL GROUNDS

GOLF, LAWN AND RECLAMATION

Technical Agronomic Support and
Custom Blending Available

**CORE AERATION
DEEP TINE
VERTI-QUAKE
VERTI-CUTTING
TOPDRESSING
SEEDING**

Services for Athletic Fields



DoubleDTurf.com

Dennis DeSanctis, Sr. 732-241-7378

Dennis DeSanctis, Jr. 732-580-5516

Photo Recap

New Jersey Green Expo

Borgata Hotel and Casino, Atlantic City, NJ • Dec 10-12, 2024

Photos by Debbie Savard



SFMANJ 2024 Field of the Year Winner Keith Fisher

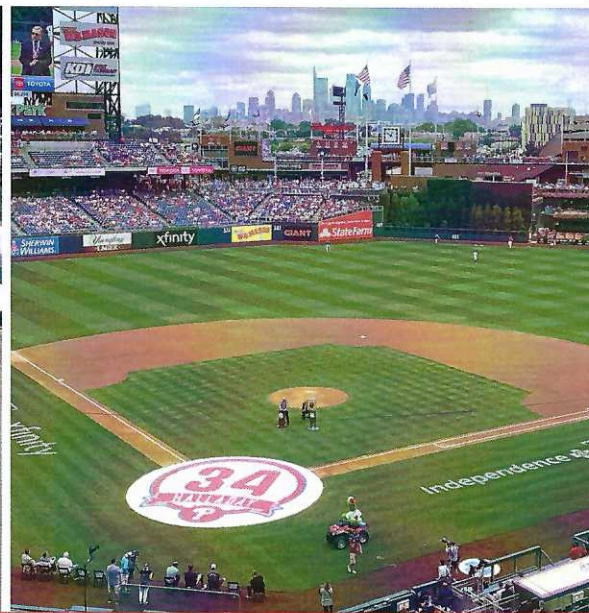
for Central Regional, Kunzman Baseball Field
at Al Leiter Ballpark

Indyk Award Winner Scott Bills, CSFM

for his years of service and dedication to the
Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey



See you
next year



Promote your team's brand on any athletic surface
with our TuffPrint printing process. Inspire your team and fans.

800.445.6680 / sales@coversports.com / coversports.com

COVER
SPORTS 1874

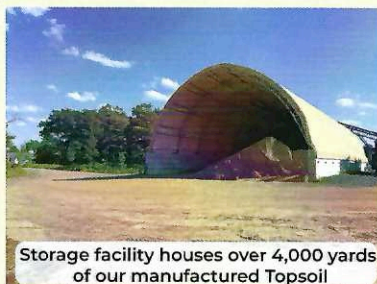
A DIVISION OF HUMPHRYS

Support our Advertisers!



HIT A HOME RUN on and off the field

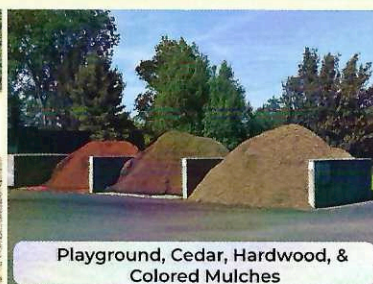
Get top quality materials along with
the quality service you expect



Storage facility houses over 4,000 yards
of our manufactured Topsoil



Triple Play Infield Mix



Playground, Cedar, Hardwood, &
Colored Mulches



Red Warning Track



Landscape Materials, Inc.
311 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844 (908)252-1550
PICK-UP AND DELIVERY IS AVAILABLE



Food for thought from a Certified Sports Field Manager

By Joe Warner, CSFM

Editor's note: This article first appeared in the Spring 2010 issue of SFMANJ Update

As you read these words, you're not going to find anything that you have not read before. Just about everything we know about turfgrass has already been written. Hopefully, after you finish, you'll realize that all the words written are a matter of interpretation. Not interpretation as to right or wrong, but as to how you can apply it to your personal situation.

Even though years of study and research have gone into compiling the information that we have right now, there are many successful field managers who cannot relate to a solution as presented, and instead, take bits and pieces and put it all together, in their own particular application, and form a very efficient operation. The important thing that educators are trying to get across is that with a good mix of education and practical experience you can be quite successful.

Success is not measured by methods; success is measured by results. Have you ever had a problem, or attempted a project, and you knew that what you read, or were told by someone wouldn't get you the results you wanted? Well, don't get discouraged and don't be too quick to criticize the suggestion. Your circumstances may be totally different from the case you read about or were told about. The thing you have to remember is: Did any part of the suggestion work? If it did, how can you build from it and expand it? Maybe all it would take is a little imagination and some thought on your part to solve your problem.

How many times have you sat-in on a class or a lecture and thought to yourself, "Yeah, this guy works in a lab or in some research field or in an office, how does he/she know the problems I'm faced with?" Well, they may not know your situation exactly, but you can bet they know that with the information that they are trying to relay to you, you can put together a workable plan.

Never be afraid to ask a question if you cannot relate to a topic that is being presented. That instructor would feel more satisfied in spending the entire time making sure you understand, than making his or her entire presentation and not be understood. The next time you're sitting in on a lecture stay focused on how you can apply that bit of information to your situation.

Never give-up on trying to learn all you can about a topic. Participate in Chapter workshops and field days; read publications and newsletters. Remember, the more information you can gather will give you a much better chance of solving your particular problems.

Joe Warner was a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) at the time he authored this article.

Calendar of Events

2025 Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) Conference & Exhibition

January 13 – 16, 2025

Palm Springs, CA

800.323.3875

www.sportsfieldmanagement.org

2025 Rutgers-NJAES OCPE Courses (VIRTUAL) Two-Day Athletic Field Maintenance

February 12-13, 2025

½-Day Baseball & Softball Skin Surface Selection &
Management

February 19, 2025

848-932-9271

www.cpe.rutgers.edu

SFMANJ Spring Field Day - 2025

April 23, 2025

Goffle Brook Park, Hawthorne, NJ

Host: Passaic County Parks

www.sfmanj.org

Rutgers Turf Research Golf Classic

May 5, 2025

Fiddler's Elbow Country Club

Bedminster, NJ

973.812.6467

www.njturfgrass.org

Rutgers Turfgrass Research Field Days

Golf & Fine Turf

July 29, 2025

Rutgers Hort Farm No. 2

North Brunswick, NJ

Lawn, Landscape, and Sports Turf

**Includes SFMANJ-sponsored Trade Show & Equipment
Demonstrations**

July 30, 2025

Rutgers Adelpia Research Farm

Freehold, NJ

TURF AND A BLANKET



By Bernard Luongo

Turf in a Blanket sounds like a meal, "Pigs in a Blanket". "Grubs in a Blanket".

When I first started in this business I knew absolutely nothing. I watched as fields we tried to take care of get utterly destroyed. What do I do now? I thought to myself, "Look at this mess".

So I attended classes at Rutgers and read how other turf managers managed their fields. In addition, I also attended Field Day events, while there I picked-up some great tips from vendors, contractors and turf managers. I was instructed how to aerate and fertilize.

So what about all those worn spots your fields have? I learned to overseed and when the best time to do so.

What about late season sports? For example, football that sometimes extends into early December and can really destroy a field. Growing grass in the northeast in the extreme winter months without help was truly impossible. I tried for two years without any success. Although, the birds that were still around relished in it. In the spring the grass that was there grew but the bare spots were overtaken by clover and weeds; another sub-par year for our football field.

Five years ago I attended the Green Expo in Atlantic City and found my magic cure, "Growth Blankets". I asked the Rep many questions and got the answers to which I was looking. I felt awesome on the drive back home - but that was the easy part. I was convinced that it would work but I now had to sell it to "The Powers to be," to invest the money. This took another year!

Finally after another sub-par football field season and many field visits by the "Powers to be", they finally were willing to give it a shot. Not the whole field mind you, just between the hash marks (considerably less costly this way). Since it was an experiment, they were not going to invest a lot of money. But no pun intended, "the seed was planted,".... I got my turf blanket. I was excited!

We core aerated that football field, tore-it-up some more, laid the seed down, covered it with the blanket and secured it with the

sod staples that came with the blanket. We were all very proud of ourselves that we were going to grow grass in the winter. However, the following week I was on the phone with the factory to order the heavy duty stakes, since, we had to gently pull one of the blankets out of the bleachers and one out of the woods. Hey, it was our first year with them, still experimenting....what did we know? Also, we didn't know that we would have to deal with snowmobiles which damaged a section of one of the blankets. So FYI, for your first purchase order the heavy duty stakes, another learning experience.

So, through the winter we would take a peek under the blankets and it was amazing, it felt like we were beating nature, it just grew and grew. During this time, we did take the blanket off once to mow it put the blanket back on and it grew even more. We left the blanket on until late March at which time we brought the facilities director and business administrator to view the results, it sold itself, solid turf.

After that it was easy. Now we have two full football fields covered, a third field covered between the hash marks, and on a fourth field we have certain areas targeted. Yes, we have four football fields all being utilized. Also, we purchased smaller blankets for our goal mouths for soccer, lacrosse and field hockey. It's great, it takes the pressure off seeding during that small window of opportunity that you have to seed. Also, depending upon the seeder you have, it sometimes disrupts the playing surface and it can look a little messy with Coaches, kids, parents, and even geese complaining.

Ultimately, you can see that I am a huge fan of Turf Growth Blankets, they really work and it takes a lot of pressure off your grounds crew. Let's face it, we are all very busy between August and October. These blankets buy you an awful lot of time and a jump start on a healthy and safe athletic field. We are now into our fourth year of purchases, implementation and successes. Again, it all started with a trip to Green Expo. Till next time.....Keep Your Turf Warm.

Bernard Luongo is a retired sports turf manager, past-President, SFMANJ, current member of the SFMANJ Board of Directors, and 2021 recipient of the SFMANJ Henry Indyk Award.

Mark Your Calendar!

SFMANJ Spring Field Day
Wednesday, April 23, 2025 • Goffle Brook Park, Hawthorne, NJ

Info will be made available when finalized

In the meantime, please mark your calendars!
Watch the SFMANJ website at "sfmanj.org"
or call the office at 856-514-3179

Sports Field
Managers Association of New Jersey
P.O. Box 205
Pennsville, NJ 08070



Or Current Occupant



SPORTS FIELD
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION



TURF
EQUIPMENT
AND SUPPLY COMPANY

***One Team,
Many Solutions***

**Your full line vendor
for Commercial
Mowing Equipment
and Irrigation.**



www.turf-equipment.com
800.827.3711

TORO

Count on it.