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# Welcome New & Renewed SFMANJ Members

Currently we have 298 paid members. If you have not seen your name in this newsletter please call (908)730-7770 or email us at [hq@sfmanj.org](mailto:hq@sfmanj.org). Take advantage of the August Trade Show and Equipment Demonstration Field Day discount by renewing today. ♦

Tom Barton	Berkeley Heights, Township of
Alan Bodine	Branchburg Township
Dan Callahan	Bernards Township Parks & Rec.
James Campbell	New Brunswick, City of
Bob Grieb	Spring Lake Heights Borough
Robert Hansen	Battery Park City Parks Conservancy
Art Herner	Spring Lake Heights Borough
George Lynch	Red Bank Borough
Dennis Mann	Union Township Board of Education
Tom Mantz	Branchburg Township
Larry Morgan	Tuckahoe Turf Farms Inc.
Dr. James Murphy	Rutgers University
Benito Peta	Professional Aerification Serv. Inc.

(cont'd)

# 2004

## SFMANJ Board of Directors

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George McCarthy - Spring Irrigation Co., Inc.

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Advisor.....Dr. Henry Indyk  
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## Mission Statement

Committed to enhancing the professionalism of athletic field managers in New Jersey 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.

## Contact us at:

P.O. Box 370  
Annandale, NJ 08801  
Web Site - [www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org)  
E-mail - [hq@sfmanj.org](mailto:hq@sfmanj.org)  
Ph/Fax - 908-730-7770

National Organization  
Sports Turf Managers Association

[www.sportsturfmanager.com](http://www.sportsturfmanager.com)  
e-mail: [SportsTMgr@aol.com](mailto:SportsTMgr@aol.com)  
Phone: 1-800-323-3875

## SFMANJ Annual Membership Registration Form

\* receive update information by email

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\*E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Individual ..... \$35

Associate ..... \$35

Organization/Institution ..... \$35

Additional member from facility ..... \$20

Commercial/Contractor/Vendor/Supplier ..... \$85

Additional member from company ..... \$25

Student ..... \$10

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## New & Renewed Members (cont'd)

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Paul Phillips

Daniel Purner

Randy Rider

Jeff VanAcker

Jack Warner

Professional Aerification Serv. Inc.

Union Township Board of Education

Student

Fisher & Son Co., Inc.

Hardyston DPW

Freehold Township Parks & Rec.



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## Calendar of Events

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### Rutgers Turfgrass Research field Days

**July 28, Wed.**-Lawn & Landscape Section - Adelphia Research Farm. Reg. 8am \$35 reg. includes lunch at 12. – Tour 9am-3pm. Note: First 50 registrants receive a free cap.

**July 29, Thurs.** - Golf & Fine Turf Research Section – Hort. Farm II-Ryder's Lane, North Brunswick. . 8:30am \$35 reg. includes lunch at 12:30. – Tour 9:30am-3pm  
Pesticide Recertification Credits Offered On Both Days.  
FOR INFORMATION CALL: Dick Caton (856) 853-5973 or Marlene Karasik (732)932-9400 Ext. 339

### 14<sup>th</sup> Annual IANJ Golf Tournament

**August 16, Mon.** at Royce Brook Golf Club, Somerville. Reg. 10:30am, lunch 11am -1pm, start 1pm, Dinner/awards 7pm. Cost: \$175 per person, \$75 non-golfer. Deadline Aug. 2. Call (973)379-1100

### SFMANJ Third Annual Outdoor Fall Field Day/Trade Show/Equipment Demonstration Day

**August 17, Tues.** – Plainsboro Twps. Community Park. Reg. \$40 members, \$50 non-members Reg. 7:30am, begins 8am-4-m, includes BBQ lunch See front page for details.  
FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL (908)730-7770.  
Participating organizations are NJTA, NJLCA, IANJ.

### New Jersey Recreation & Parks Assoc. Playground Safety Course

For more information call Bill Foelsch (732)568-1270 ♦

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## Letter from the President

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I am very excited to say that our 2003/2004 Membership Recourse Directories have been mailed out. The main person from each organization or company should have received a copy. Because of the high cost in producing the directory, we limited it to the first paying member. If you want more copies we would be happy to send you one for a fee of \$12.00. If you need a replacement binder there will be an extra charge of \$4.00.

Please use this directory to find the products and equipment you need. I encourage you to support our member vendors. Look for fellow sports field managers and professionals to reach out to with your turf problems and product searching. This book is a one-stop shop.

If you did not see your name in the directory, it may be because you did not become a member or renewed your membership in time for this printing. We will send everyone an update in October with any errors and new members. If you are not sure, please call the office or e-mail us at [hq@sfmanj.org](mailto:hq@sfmanj.org) or (908)730-7770.

Also, I hope you take advantage of the Fall Demo/Trade Show/Education field day on Aug. 17<sup>th</sup>. Check out the information in this newsletter, sign up now or call if you have questions. This will be our biggest field day ever with the inclusion of NJTA, NJLCA AND IANJ. There will be something for everyone. ♦

*Eleanora Murfitt-Hermann*

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## “Rutgers Corner”

### Soil pH and Use of Lime

---

**\*by Brad Park, Rutgers  
[Universitypark@aesop.rutgers.edu](mailto:Universitypark@aesop.rutgers.edu)**

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Unfortunately, lime is often applied annually to sports fields for no other reason than, “We’ve always done it that way.” Conversely, some sports field managers are reluctant to apply lime or skeptical of the benefits of applying lime because turfgrass will not show an immediate response to a lime application, in contrast to the rapid growth associated with the application of a soluble nitrogen fertilizer. The purpose of this edition of *Rutgers Corner* is to discuss the concept of soil pH and describe how to utilize liming materials to correct low pH soils.

#### The basics of soil pH

All soils can be classified as acidic, neutral, or alkaline. Acidity and alkalinity are defined in terms of the hydrogen ion (H<sup>+</sup>) concentration found in pure water. If the soil solution contains more hydrogen ions than are found in pure water, the soil is considered acidic. In contrast, if the soil solution contains fewer hydrogen ions than are in pure water, the soil is considered alkaline. The degree of acidity or alkalinity can be described by a pH range from 0 to 14. Any value below 7.0 is considered acidic; a value of 7.0 is neutral; a value above 7.0 is considered alkaline.

In humid, high-rainfall regions such as New Jersey, soils become acidic through natural processes and human activities. Rainfall will leach elements from the soil such as calcium and magnesium deep into the soil profile and replace them with hydrogen ions from the water. Additionally, use of ammonium-based fertilizers and acid rain contribute to the creation of acidic soils.

Soil pH affects turfgrass health by influencing the availability of plant nutrients as well as elements that can be detrimental to turfgrass vigor. Soil pH can also affect the susceptibility of turfgrasses to certain diseases. Strongly acidic soils (pH ≤ 5.5) may lead to deficiencies in calcium, magnesium, or phosphorous and increase the availability of elements such as aluminum to levels that are toxic to turfgrasses.

In strongly alkaline soils (pH ≥ 8.5), phosphorous can be unavailable to the plant. Interestingly, research has shown that soil pH values above 6.5 appear to enhance summer patch disease development. Kentucky bluegrass is a widely used cool season turfgrass for sports fields in New Jersey and many varieties are susceptible to summer patch. Annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*), while generally considered a weed, is often a species found on sports fields and is also susceptible to summer patch. Repeated annual liming can potentially predispose Kentucky bluegrass (and annual bluegrass) sports fields to summer patch, which can devastate a turfgrass playing surface.

**To lime or not to lime ...**

To determine whether or not to apply lime to a sports field a soil test must be performed. Soil testing kits may be purchased from a Rutgers Cooperative Extension county office. Each kit includes an information sheet, a questionnaire, and a mailing bag or envelope. The information sheet provided with the soil testing kit describes proper sampling procedures. Additionally, the January/February 2004 issue of SFMANJ Update contains a fine article authored by Clare Liptak detailing the procedures for collecting a soil sample and other rationales for conducting a soil test.

In a standard soil test, the plant nutrients boron, calcium, copper, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, potassium, and zinc are quantified to determine their availability to a crop, in this case turfgrass. Fertilizer and lime requirements recommended by the Rutgers Soil Testing Laboratory are based on soil nutrient levels, pH, and in some cases, crop management and site

conditions.

Optimally, lime should be applied as part of the turfgrass establishment process, prior to finish grading and turfgrass seeding. Lime should be tilled to a 6-inch depth based on soil test recommendations. In the case of established turfgrass, lime should not be applied in excess of 100 pounds per 1000 square feet.

Very simply, if the results of soil testing determine that a lime application is needed - apply a liming material. If no lime is required - don't apply lime.

**Choosing a liming material**

When a lime material is applied to soil, it has the effect of neutralizing soil acidity. Calcitic limestone is often referred to as "regular" limestone and is nearly pure calcite or calcium carbonate (CaCO<sub>3</sub>). Dolomitic limestone is a mixture of calcium carbonate and magnesium carbonate and can be used when pH is determined to be low and deficient levels of magnesium exist.

Ground agricultural limestone can be used to correct soil pH in turfgrass areas. Depending on the fineness of the material, it may be difficult to spread ground agricultural limestone using a drop spreader because finely ground particles may bridge over the application holes in the spreader. Spinner-type spreaders can be used to apply ground agricultural limestone, however bridging problems may also occur if the hopper is not properly agitated. Because of application problems, pelletized limestone is often applied to turfgrass. Pelletized lime is calcitic or dolomitic ground agricultural limestone that has been aggregated into larger particles to allow for easier spreading through conventional drop and spinner-type spreaders.

Note that the particle size of a liming material will strongly influence the rate in which the material neutralizes soil acidity. While all liming materials are relatively insoluble, materials with finer particle sizes (greater surface area) have an increased dissolution rate in *continued on page 12*

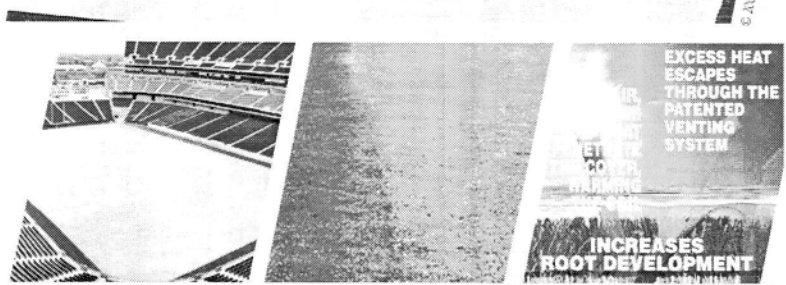
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## Field Day Trade Show

### Exhibitors/Equipment Demonstrations

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See equipment operate under existing field conditions. Discuss your problem fields with contractors who undoubtedly deal with the same problems day in and day out and network with others in attendance. Visit with product suppliers in the trade show area to develop your maintenance strategy for the upcoming season. Equipment, product and service providers will be on hand to display and or demonstrate their merchandise. A review of our preliminary list of exhibitors will confirm; if you're in the market for a type of equipment, service or product, this field day will prove to be a productive and informative day. Please call, email or fax the SFMANJ office if you have an equipment or product request.

Below are exhibitors whose applications we received in time for this publication. See more on our website [www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org) as time nears.

- **TERRE COMPANY OF NEW JERSEY** Wholesale Suppliers of Turf Products for Sports Fields. "Committed to keeping your sports field's SAFE and looking great all season long".
- **LEVITT'S LLC** Supplier of turface, grass seed, fertilizers, herbicides, field marking lime and paint, lime, hydromulch, hand-tools and related landscape supplies.
- **WILFRED MAC DONALD** For all of your Sports Turf needs, products such as Jacobsen, Smithco, Turfco, National, Kubota and Signature Irrigation Control Systems. Starting back in 1928 Wilfred MacDonald Inc. has worked diligently to identify and provide solutions to the Turf Equipment needs of you, our most valuable customers.
  - **Demonstrating:** Turfcat, Super Rake and Top Dresser
- **HOLMES & MCDOWELL INC.** Insurance Providers for the Green Industry.
- **NATIONAL SEED** Professional Turf Products specializing in quality grass seed to meet all your turf performance standards, carrying a full line of quality mixtures especially formulated for Sports & Athletic Fields, low maintenance areas, general grounds, golf, lawn and reclamation. Technical agronomic support and custom blending available.
- **TURF SPECIALITIES INC.,** Thatch Masters are used from coast to coast by many municipalities, golf courses and professional sports fields. Some users are the Broncos, Steelers, Bengals, U of Texas, U of California and the Padres.
  - **Demonstrating:** Thatch Master TM72 verti-cut.
- **E & M GOLF SUPPLY** Local dealer/contractor for the water Wick Turf Drainage System. The Water Wick gravel injection system dramatically improves drainage without disturbing the playing surface.
  - **Demonstrating:** Water Wick and STH36 36 inch RotaDairon attached to a mini-skid steer
- **DVH ATHLETIC TURF...**"Building Turf is our game!" *Renovation & Construction Services:* Design/layout, top-soiling, soil amendments, laser-guided grading, in-field mix, sod/seed, pitcher's mound & batter's box construction. *Turf Management Services:* Fertilization programs (also Organic), core aeration, slice-seeding, insect & disease monitoring, IPM, organic treatments.
  - **Demonstrating:** Lazer Guided Grader
- **BEN SHAFFER & ASSOCIATE** Represents nationally known manufacturers of sports goals and nets, equipment boxes, bases, home-plates and pitching rubbers, water fountains, players benches & bleachers, park playground and streetscape solutions.
- **FISHER & SON CO., INC.** The "Green Industry Supplier" Superior products for the Sports Turf Manager and Horticultural Professional. EarthWorks natural organic products, Grigg Bros. "Simply put, this fertilizer has no equal."
- **LYONS & LYONS SALES CO., INC.** Bannerman Sports Field Equipment. Groomers-Topdressers-Seeders-Aerifiers.
  - **Demonstrating:** Bannerman Diamond Master-Ball Diamond Groomer

- **AER-CORE, INC.** Athletic Field Aeration Specialists; Deep-Time, Drill & Fill, Slice & Fill SandMaster, Topdressing, Re-Grassing. Also, sales of deep-tine aerators, topdressers and Blec products.
  - **Demonstrating:** SandMaster Slice & Fill Machine and Deep-Tine Aerator
- **HUSTLER TURF EQUIPMENT** Zero Turn Mowers from 44" to 72" cut; Mini "2", Hustler "2", Super "2" 15 mph ZERO TURN Mower
- **KOONZ SPRINKLER SUPPLY INC.** Supplier of irrigation and Turfgrass products. "Rain Bird"
- **PRIDE LANDSCAPE SUPPLY CO.** Big or small Dingo does it all, trenching, augering, moving of material to excavation.
  - **Demonstrating:** TX 425 / Vibatory Plow, Auger attachment and trencher attachment.
- **PROFESSIONAL AERIFICATION SVCS. INC.** New aerification choice in the sports field industry. We can provide the following services - Deep-tine vertidrain, aerovator and seed, bulk spread topdressing or fertilizer. Pro-Aer will also offer core pulverizers & core cleanup. All work completed by previous 16 year Golf Course Superintendent Benny Peta.
- **MILLCREEK MFG.,** The Turf Tiger from Millcreek is unlike any other topdressing equipment on the market. The large 7500lb. capacity handles 2.5 cubic yards or more depending on material. With the Sabre Tooth attachment you can spread many kinds of material wet or dry.
  - **Demonstrating:** Millcreek Turf Tiger (Top Dresser)
- **SEKELY INDUSTRIES, INC.,** Don't miss VersaGrader, the perfect infield groomer. An exclusive patent-pending balance equalizer system maintains desired leveling angle even when the pulling vehicle goes over a bump. Unique double-V leveling system cuts through high spots as it levels and redistributes soil to a finish grade. Choose from 3 models.
  - **Demonstrating:** VersaGrader
- **STORR TRACTOR COMPANY** will demonstrate the difference between cam type and oscillating tine aerators and also show the newest Irrigation Equipment available.
  - **Demonstrating:** Toro Groundsmaster 3500 mower, McCormick GX50 tractor/Toro Procore 660 and Aeravator AE60 tine aerator.
- **THE GARDEN STATE BOBCAT GROUP** New Jersey's leader in compact equipment. Our Bobcat product line consists of mini-excavators, skid-steers, compact track loaders, backhoes, and the "New" Toolcat. Our Ingersoll-Rand product line consists of air compressors, concrete equipment, generators, reach-fork lifts, light towers and compaction equipment
  - **Demonstrating:** T300-Track Loader/ Dozer Blade, Toolcat /Soil Conditioner
- **JOHN DEERE** A manufacturer of Agricultural, Construction and Commercial and Consumer Equipment. Equipment at the field event will include Compact Utility Tractors, Commercial Mowing and Utility Vehicles. A wide variety of implements will be on display with the equipment present.
- **KPM EXCEPTIONAL DISTRIBUTORS INC.** SCAG Commercial Mowers & Exmark Mfg. Co. Mowers available at FORDS Lawnmower (Local Dealer)

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## Backhoe-Operating Contest

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"Test your skill" against other equipment operators. Who will walk off with the trophy and prize money? A ten-dollar entry fee will give you the opportunity to operate the backhoe entry of your choice and see how your skill measures up. As a timed event, you will

use your abilities as an operator to scoop up and deposit a number of plastic balls in a basket utilizing the 1' dipper bucket on the rear of the backhoe. The fastest time wins. The winner will receive a trophy and a minimum of \$100 in prize money. You may enter as many times

as you like. All proceeds for the backhoe-operating contest will support the SFMANJ scholarship program. Contest rules and entry form will be available the day of the contest at the trade show registration table in the trade show area. ♦



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## Field Day Educational Sessions

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### 1. Laser Grading; the Technology, the Equipment, the Application

Laser grading is fast becoming the standard for accuracy in all grading applications. Whether you are involved in grading the skinned infield area of a baseball field to maintain positive surface drainage or site development for a new corporate headquarters, laser-grading technology is being specified and requested more and more. Both speed and accuracy are the products of this system. Learn basic concepts to practical application in this informative class taught by Keystone Precision Instruments.

### 2. Mid Size Equipment Operation and Safety

Whether you operate a skid steer loader in the landscaping and construction industry or a mid size tractor in the implementation of your athletic field maintenance program, proper maintenance and safe equipment operation is universal. Every year more and more injuries occur due to unnecessary accidents. Learn national standards of safety and maintenance as required by the Certified Landscape Technician Exam.

### 3. Intermediate Walk Behind and Riding Mower Operation & Safety

Your turf maintenance crew spends more man-hours either on or behind a mower than at any other task. As we strive for quality and efficiency in the day-to-day operation of our turf maintenance program, we sometimes fail to think about the basics of both safety and maintenance of our mowing equipment. As a refresher for crew leaders or as an introduction for new employees, this class is highly recommended. This class will review mower maintenance and safe operation based on national standards set forth by The Certified Landscape Technician Test Committee.

### 4. Playground Safety

Learn from a Certified Playground Inspector how to limit your liability and provide a safe atmosphere for the children and parents in your community. Become skilled at noticing potential hazards as Keith Sacks of Game Time-Marturano Recreation Company evaluates the Plainsboro Community Park playground and brings to light the potential dangers involved in improper installation and maintenance of playgrounds.

### 5. Five Points in a Quality Irrigation Installation

The planning is done. Approval has been secured. The bid has been awarded and construction has begun; this seminar will give you the knowledge to insure you are getting a quality installation of your new irrigation system. It is always easier to get it done right than to correct mistakes at a later date. Bill Wise of Rain Bird Irrigation Company will cover 5 points you can keep your eye on as your irrigation system goes in the ground to insure good performance and long life for this important investment. ♦

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## One on One Demonstrations

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Last but not least there will be time allotted for spectators to spend time with the equipment dealers and operate any of the equipment being demonstrated.

Come show your support to the industry. Registration information can be downloaded from [www.SFMANJ.org](http://www.SFMANJ.org) on the web or see page 17. ♦



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# Mowing Management, Maintaining Your Turf at the Height of Quality

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\*by Jim Hermann, CSFM  
hq@sfmanj.org

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"Don't ask me, I just mow the lawn". Although thought of by many as a menial task best left to persons whose desire for professional accomplishment falls short of those who have walked the halls of our fine institutions of higher education, proper mowing management is an art form imbedded in science yet perfected through experience and wisdom.

It's easy, right, a no brainer. Just follow a few simple rules and you've got a well manicured, properly maintained complex.

The following is a mowing specification I received for maintenance of a commercial office complex:

1. Lawn shall be maintained at a mowed height of two (2) inches
2. Mowing shall be accomplished on a once per week schedule
3. No more than 1/3 the leaf blade shall be removed at any one time.

What's wrong with this picture? You can't specify the height of cut, the mowing frequency and the portion of cut. You can specify any two but not all three

Knowing that the person who wrote these specs was a bean counter sitting in a cubical in Kansas and being fairly certain no one would be walking the lawn with a ruler, I bid the job for weekly mowing. After being awarded the contract, I threw away the specs and mowed the lawn at the height necessary to maintain a quality appearance and a once per week mowing frequency.

Please understand I am in no way condoning disregard for specifications but I do believe the contracting party, as always has a responsibility to provide potential service providers with effective, doable specifications.

The preceding specifications are just one example of the simplistic thinking and lack of understanding maintained by many people associated with proper mowing management.

Mowing management remains the most important aspect in developing the level of quality achieved on your athletic turf. Improper mowing will diminish the

results of an otherwise effective overall management strategy.

Here's much of what science has to say about proper mowing technique:

1. Never remove more than 1/3 the leaf blade at any one time
2. Always mow when the grass is dry
3. Always mow with sharp mower blades

Here's an approach to applying these 3 little rules:

Never remove more than 1/3 the leaf blade at any one time. Most cool season turf prefers a mowing height between 1.5" and 3". Perennial rye can be maintained comfortably on the low side of this range. Blue grass falls in the middle and tall fescue prefers to be maintained on the higher side of this range. That's only half the equation. What are your capabilities? How often can you mow? Maintaining turf at 1.5" under average fertility conditions would require mowing every other day in order to even come close to following the 1/3 rule. You would only be removing 1/2" or so per cut. If you attempt to maintain turf at a lower height of cut than would be dictated by the frequency, you only serve to stress the turf by removing too much green leaf and also cause an excessive buildup of clippings. Fertilizing to improve the quality and density of turf, which is stressed due to improper mowing management, only compounds the problem. Mowing must come first.

In my opinion, in order to maintain an acceptable degree of turf density and playability, recreational athletic turf must be mowed twice per week or once every 3 to 4 days. In my experience this mowing schedule has limited turf to a mowed height of approximately 2.5". Maintaining a mowed height much higher than 2.5", the leagues become upset and the turf loses density. At a lower height I accumulate clipping. A couple options available in dealing with clipping accumulation caused by improper mowing frequency are clipping removal and double cutting or mowing twice on the same day. In either case

you are attempting to put a band-aid on the most limiting long-term problem you are causing which is turf stress. This turf stress is due to removal of too much green leaf. By collecting and removing clippings you are adding insult to injury by eliminating the recycling of nutrients held within the clippings.

Always mow when the grass is dry. Yea right. Sounds good from where I sit. Realistically, always mowing when the grass is dry can't be done with any degree of consistency. When confronted with this dilemma and given the option, I try to mow common ground when it's wet and attempt to allow the playing areas to dry out. If I have to mow playing areas when they are wet I try to alternate areas so that the same areas are not always mowed wet. Every area takes its turn.

The following comments are in reference to rotary mowers although much of the same can be said for reel type mowers.

Always mow with sharp mower blades. Again, this would seem a logical observation. The sharper you maintain your mower blades, the better the quality of cut. Dull mower blades tend to rip and shred the grass blade as apposed to cutting it clean. In addition to increasing the potential for fungus in damp conditions, shredding of the blade tips also becomes a consideration as the weather becomes more hot and dry into the summer months. Under certain conditions turf mowed with dull blades tends to acquire a whitish cast or hay like appearance due to desiccation and drying out of the shredded blade tips. Transpiration or loss of moisture through the leaf is increased as the exposed surface area of leaf tissue is increased due to shredding. The clean cut provided by sharp mower blades reduces this moisture loss thus aiding in drought tolerance of the turf.

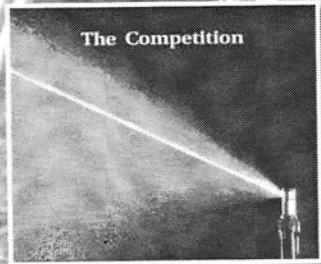
Along with the agronomic benefits of maintaining sharp mower blades, a faster mowing speed may be maintained while still providing a quality cut.

A grinder designed for the task of sharpening blades is highly recommended as apposed to a typical bench grinder or hand held grinder. Blade sharpening grinders typically have a table designed to help stabilize the blade during the sharpening process thus providing a truer grind and more consistent bevel. They also have a larger diameter grinding wheel with a courser texture that rotates at a slower RPM when compared to a typical bench





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**Division Manager, Joe Warner:**

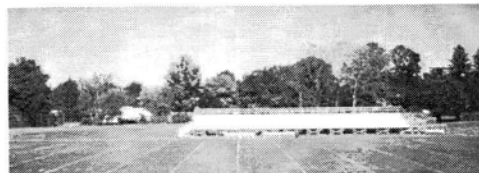
Joe Warner came to DVH in 2000 after 20 years of running his own business, bringing with him a level of expertise which has enabled our company to provide affordable solutions to athletic fields.

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*Supplies: In-field conditioners, drying agents, mound/batter's clay, bricks & marking lime.*



**Turf Management Services:**

**Division Manager, Greg Winfree:**

Greg's hands-on approach to Athletic Turf Management solutions is providing our customers with a level of comfort knowing their athletes will get the best turf possible. Email: [gwinfree@thedvhgroup.com](mailto:gwinfree@thedvhgroup.com)

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