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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.

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This newsletter is the official bi-monthly publication of the Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey.

**For information regarding this newsletter, contact:
 SFMANJ at (908) 730-7770 or Brad Park at (732) 932-9711, x127**

Editor: Brad Park, Rutgers University
 Email: park@aesop.rutgers.edu

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

The 32nd Annual Turf & Landscape Conference 2007

(continued from front page)

Kevin Trotta, North Rockland School District and recipient of STMA's President's Award for Leadership will be speaking Wednesday afternoon on Environmental Turfcraft for Sports Fields.

A morning sports field managers networking session has again been scheduled for this year's Expo beginning at 7:00 am on Thursday, December 6. Education on synthetic fields will be presented on Thursday afternoon by Ken Mathis, Brick Township on Selecting a Synthetic Infill System and Kevin Malone, CSFM, Columbia University, on Management of Synthetic Infill Systems.

The entire Sports Field Managers Program is shown on Page 4 of this issue of SFMANJ Update.

Trade Show

The NJ Green Expo Trade Show is one of the largest Green Industry events in the tri-state area. With over two hundred projected exhibitors, you will have an opportunity see new products and services to help you make purchasing decisions and to develop important relationships in the Green Industry.

Make your plans now to come to Expo 2007!

*Brad Park is Sports Turf Res. and Ed. Coord.,
Rutgers Univ.; SFMANJ Board Member;
and Editor, SFMANJ Update Newsletter*

DID YOU KNOW?

A dicot is a plant having two cotyledons in the seed, as in broadleaf species.

New Jersey Turf & Landscape Conference and Expo 2007: Sports Field Managers Program December 4-6, 2007 Trump Taj Mahal Casino-Resort, Atlantic City, NJ

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2007

- 1:00-1:30 SFMANJ Business Meeting
1:30-2:15 Management strategies for high traffic fields
Dr. Dr. Mike Goatley, Virginia Tech
2:15-2:45 A cost-based approach to assess task management
Don Savard, CSFM, CGM, Salesianum School
2:45-3:30 Environmental turfcraft for Sports Fields
Kevin Trotta, North Rockland School District

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2007 THURSDAY PM

- 7:00-8:00 Early bird Sports Field Managers
Networking roundtable
8:00-8:30 Elements of Sports Field Construction
Dr. Mike Goatley, Virginia Tech
8:30-9:00 Renovation of a little league infield
Jim Hermann, CSFM, Total Control, Inc.
9:00-9:30 Grant writing: What you need to know
Beth Richmond, Bedford Recreation
9:30-10:00 Low-impact pesticides for turf
Brad Park, Rutgers University

THURSDAY PM

- 12:00-12:30 Bermudagrass use for Sports Fields in the Mid-Atlantic
Mike Kelley, Poly Tech High School, Delaware
12:30-1:00 Selecting a synthetic infill system
Ken Mathis, Brick Township Parks
1:00-1:30 IPM at a NJ high school: Myth vs. reality
Rich Watson, Pine Hill School District
1:30-2:00 Management of synthetic infill systems
Kevin Malone, CSFM, Columbia University



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A Look Back at the SFMANJ District 4 Synthetic Infill Maintenance Field Day

By Don Savard, CSFM, CGM

It was a beautiful, sunny day on September 19, 2007, a perfect day for the SFMANJ District 4 Synthetic Infill Maintenance Field Day at Recchino Field in Haddon Township, N.J. Over 70 members and guests participated in a discussion of real world synthetic infill sports field maintenance issues, problems and solutions hosted by **Haddon Township Head Groundsman Joel Taylor and his capable crew consisting of Geoffrey Taylor and Tom Springer Jr.** We were given a glimpse of the day-to-day challenges of a typical sports field management operation that includes a synthetic infill sports field. These guys also maintain natural grass sports fields in other locations town-wide as well as perform maintenance chores for the Board of Education that includes furniture moves and assisting the building custodians when necessary. It takes quite a bit of hustle, dedication and know-how to keep-up with their customer service demands and this group takes it all in stride, competently, and with a good attitude.

Although the program got off to a late start because of some traffic delays it gave the attendees an opportunity to visit, and enjoy refreshments sponsored by **Lawn and Golf Supply** as well as meet and greet our other sponsors, **Philadelphia Turf**, and the **Jim Gates and Co., Inc.** After the opening comments, Joel Taylor explained the reasons why Haddon Township chose to build a synthetic field, the installation of the underground storm water retention and storage and how the sub-base of the field was constructed. Joel went on to discuss the importance of the customer's representative personally overseeing the construction process to ensure that the work is done correctly.

Often, when a purchaser is considering a synthetic infill sports field system, the synthetic field salesman will promote the concept of "maintenance free" or "easy to maintain." We saw how acorns, leaves, trash, broken glass, weeds and sun flower seeds present ongoing maintenance problems. Normal field use contributes to rubber crumb migration and uneven distribution causing high and low spots. From this sports field manager's perspective, it seems that keeping up a synthetic sports field surface requires a different but equally time consuming maintenance protocol to maintain similar quality standards as on a natural grass

sports field. A very good question and answer period followed.

Brad Park, Rutgers University Sports Turf Research & Education Coordinator led a discussion of synthetic sports field safety and hardness testing. All sports field surfaces, whether natural grass or synthetic develop surface hardness over a period of time. Impact testing (commonly referred to as G-max testing) is used to measure the shock-absorbing properties of sports surfaces. The higher the G-max value, the lower the shock-absorbing properties of the surface. G-max testing involves measuring the shock absorbing properties of a playing surface *in situ*, and comparing the results against a standard. The most commonly used standard is the one established by ASTM International. If the standard isn't met, the field is considered unsafe and remediation is required. Brad demonstrated a Clegg Impact Tester and measured surface hardness before and after field grooming.

We watched a demonstration of different synthetic field maintenance procedures and equipment. There were sweepers for trash and debris, a machine that loosened the infill material, topdressers for spreading the infill material and brushes to move the infill material into place and groom the field. It was an opportunity to see what works best in a particular situation.

The program concluded with lunch and an additional opportunity to meet the sponsors and further demonstrate the products shown. Our thanks go out to **Philadelphia Turf** for their generosity as our lunch sponsor.

*Don Savard is a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM);
Certified Grounds Manager (CGM);
Director, Athletic Facilities and Grounds,
Salesianum School, Wilmington, DE;
member of the SFMANJ Board of Directors;
and much-appreciated frequent contributor to
SFMANJ Update Newsletter*



**Dr. Henry W. Indyk
Graduate Fellowship
in Turfgrass Science**

As many of you know, the turfgrass industry lost a dear friend and colleague in September 2005. We will all miss Henry very much and would like to insure that his legacy lives on. The Indyk family would like to establish a memorial fellowship to support graduate students interested in applied turfgrass science. This fellowship is being created to help assure that tomorrow's graduate students have the financial resources to get an advanced degree in turfgrass science at Rutgers University. To fund a full graduate assistantship each year in Henry's name, we will need to raise a total of \$400,000. Your generous support at this time will bring us closer to reaching this goal.

To make a tax-deductible contribution today, please send a check payable to the Rutgers University Foundation, 7 College Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. Be sure to indicate "Indyk Fellowship, Turfgrass" in the memo portion of your check. If you desire, you may provide a donation in the form of a pledge payable over several years.

For information on other ways to support this fellowship, please contact Dr. Bruce B. Clarke, Director - Rutgers Center for Turfgrass Science (732-932-9400, ext. 331; or clarke@aesop.rutgers.edu) or John Pearson, Director of Leadership Gifts at the Foundation, by calling (732) 932-7899 or email: pearson@winants.rutgers.edu

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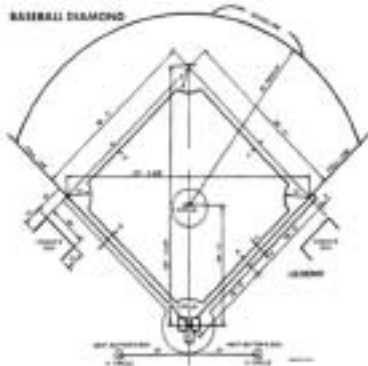
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Bermudagrass Athletic Fields

By Sean Connell

Bermudagrass is being used and considered for use in the mid-Atlantic region more and more for athletic fields. The idea of bermudagrass in this region is not new. Golf courses have tried utilizing bermudagrass for fairways and tees only to discover that harsh winters resulting in winterkill, slow recovery and poor transitions in the spring made bermudagrass more trouble than benefit. New varieties of bermudagrass are giving turf managers new choices. Some considerations need to be made before making the decision to utilize bermudagrass for athletic fields. Of the new varieties, 'Patriot' is the most popular; 'Celebration' and 'TifSport' are still close rivals. All the new grasses are evaluated on www.ntep.org (National Turfgrass Evaluation Program) - which is a great resource to view trials on turfgrasses.

The benefits of bermudagrass are many: heat and wear tolerance, recovery and overall playing surface are unparalleled with proper maintenance and sustained soil temperature. The reasons for consideration are well justified. After a stand of bermudagrass has developed a thatch layer, other than winterkill or physical damage, killing it is nearly impossible. The maintenance on bermudagrass is reduced by seasons; in the winter there is really no maintenance after a fall preemergence herbicide and fertilizer is applied. It overwinters nicely whether or not it has been overseeded. In the summer, bermudagrass is unstoppable under lots of heat, water and fertilizer. It reproduces/spreads with above and below ground runners. An existing stand can be thatched and sprigged into bare spots for the cost of labor. Simply cutting-in sprigs with a sprig cutter (flat solid discs pushing sprigs straight into loose soil) or even burying with loose soil, the sprigs will propagate growth with proper maintenance. You will have an acceptable stand of turf in 6 to 8 weeks. In the south, sodding is always the second choice. Considering '419' bermudagrass is \$0.09 per square foot without freight or \$3900 an acre without freight; 419 sprigs are \$0.60 per bushel and the recommended rate is 1000 bushels per acre; \$600 per acre to sprig is very paltry by any standards. Installation rates are not included in these figures. The price alone is the temptation. Of course the bermudagrass that is being marketed here is being priced at about double the rates quoted considering most bluegrass and fescue are cheaper. It can be a hard choice.

Regarding the chance of winterkill or slow transition in the spring, the question is: Is it worth the trouble of transition? It is only going to be a mat for overseeding. The primary issue specific to the mid-Atlantic is: Will it survive the winters? Time

will tell the truth on that issue. I did not notice any trials at www.ntep.org specific to the mid-Atlantic or northeast. Even in Atlanta, 600 miles south of Philadelphia, they have winterkill on bermudagrass on a large basis in 5 to 7 years cycles. Big Arctic blasts from Canada with zero temperatures are rare but still happen in the south and can lead to winterkill. When conditions are perfect for winterkill, it is droughty in the fall which weakens the grass stand, there is not enough irrigation water to supplement, and the grass turns dormant in the heat further stressing the plant. Fertilizing and applying a preemergence herbicide to dormant bermudagrass with no water does not seem reasonable or beneficial to the turf or the turf manager.

By definition, bermudagrass is a warm-season turfgrass and its optimum growing temperature is 85-degrees and above. One inch (1.0") of water is a minimum per week to keep green turf. The nitrogen requirement for the growing season is around 5 lbs to 7 lbs per 1000 square feet; this is probably a smaller amount in the mid-Atlantic region because of the shorter growing season. As with all turf, aerification is a must. The more air, water and nutrients you supply to the plant the healthier the plant is. Topdressing is not mandatory but it smoothes out the surface very well and helps draw higher soil temperatures which increases lateral growth. Mowing can be 3 or 4x per week job in the summer and is usually dependent on preference of mowing height and fertility. Bermudagrass is a sun-loving plant and can only survive in well drained surfaces. This plant typically does not grow at all in shade.

Being a construction contractor, I usually shy away from recommendations that involve choosing between warm-season and cool-season turfgrasses. I have planted one field in Philadelphia this year with Patriot bermudagrass as specified by the owner. I am interested in the outcome and hope my customer the best; but like a lot of others, I want to see how it goes before I tell my customers or potential customers to use warm season grasses. In my opinion, soil temperatures appear to be the biggest hurdle for bermudagrass to survive in the mid-Atlantic region.

*Sean Connell is Owner and Primary Project Manager,
Georgia Golf Construction, Woodbine, NJ;
and a member of the SFMANJ Board of Directors*

DID YOU KNOW?

A monocot is a plant having one cotyledon in the seed; grasses are an example.

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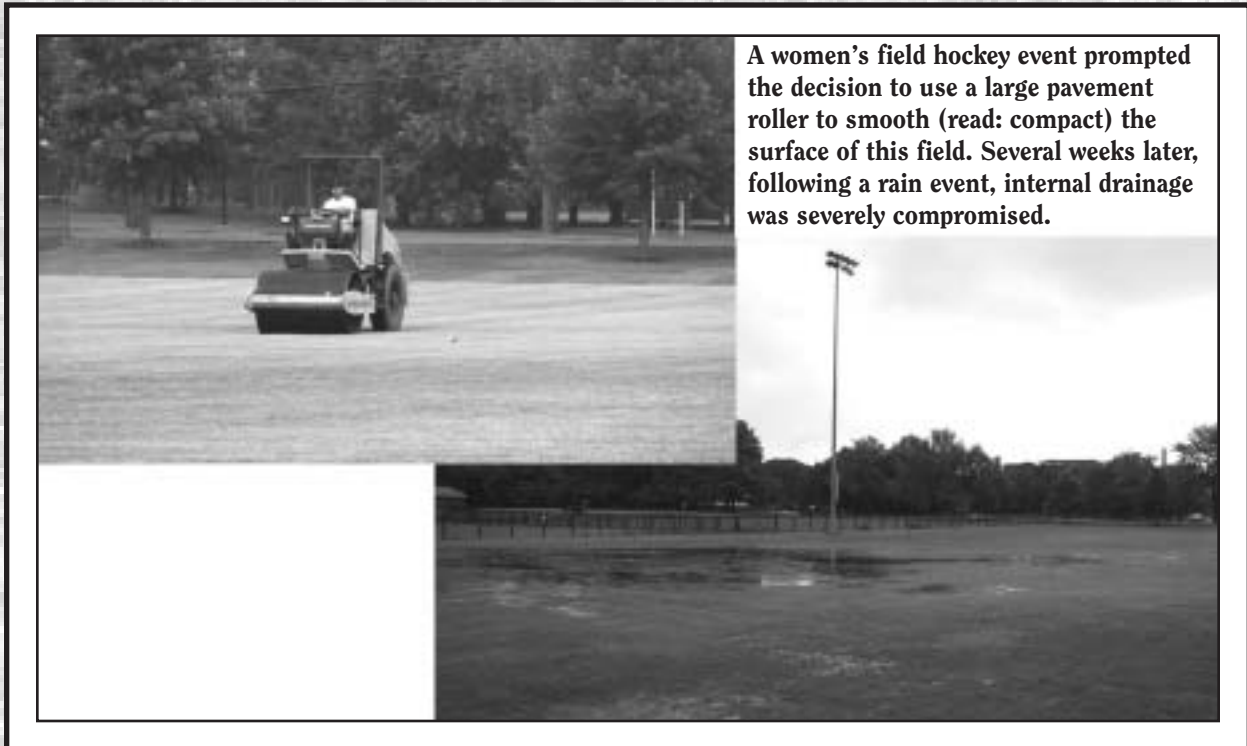
~Year in Re

Pictorially captured by Brad Park, Rutgers Uni



Meticulously maintained natural turfgrass in-front of The Alamo, San Antonio, TX. San Antonio was the site of the 2007 Sports Turf Managers Conference.

The Rutgers Turfgrass Club was given a tour of the Shea Stadium playing surface by Head Groundskeeper Bill Deacon in April 2007. Don't pout Mets fans, the Yanks didn't win the World Series in 2007 either. . .



A women's field hockey event prompted the decision to use a large pavement roller to smooth (read: compact) the surface of this field. Several weeks later, following a rain event, internal drainage was severely compromised.