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Currently we have 283 new & renewed members. In December 2007, SFMANJ mailed invoices for 2008 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.

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Greg McCarty	Moorestown Twp. Board of Education
Thomas Poole	Moorestown Twp. Board of Education
Mark Kellet	Twp. of Old Bridge

SFMANJ Annual Membership Registration Form

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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.

Contact us at:

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Web site: www.sfmanj.org

Email: hq@sfmanj.org

Ph/fax: 856-514-3179

National Organization
 Sports Turf Managers Association

www.stma.org

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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 (856) 514-3179 or Brad Park at (732) 932-9711, x127**

Editor: Brad Park, Rutgers University
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SFMANJ does not necessarily support the opinions of those reflected in the following articles.

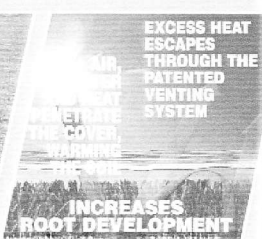
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One Last LOOK!!!

The Rutgers Tuf Club Tours Yankee Stadium on May 2, 2008

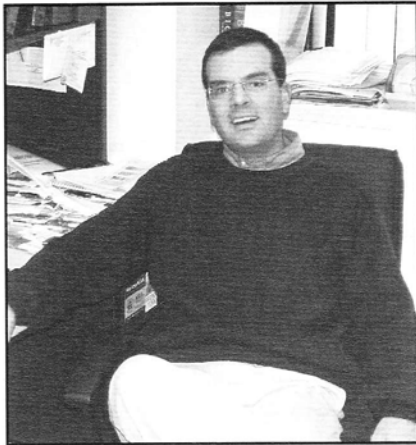
Photos by: Dr. James Murphy, Rutgers University



From the Editor:

An "Update" on SFMANJ Update

By: Brad Park



Changes to *Update* for 2009

Beginning in 2009, SFMANJ *Update* newsletter will be published four times per year. The dates for publication in 2009 will be March (Spring), June (Summer), September (Fall), and December (Winter).

For our advertisers, we have kept advertising rates in *Update* constant since 2005 despite increased mailing and administrative costs. For our SFMANJ vendor members who purchase advertising for the year (4 issues) in 2009, the total annual cost of advertising in SFMANJ *Update* will remain unchanged in 2009. In an effort to encourage advertisers who are not currently vendor members to join SFMANJ, advertising rates for non-SFMANJ vendor members will be increased.

If you are a vendor interested in advertise opportunities in SFMANJ *Update*, please contact our Executive Secretary, Debbie Savard, at 856-514-3179.

It is my goal that we continue to provide the best (in my humble opinion) newsletter among Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA)-affiliated Chapters. Practical sports field tips and research-based information from both the practitioner and academic communities will continue to be provided in *Update* as well as coverage of recent SFMANJ events and notifications of future field days and activities.

Back issues of *Update*

We have made significant gains in acquiring back issues of *Update* newsletter – including the very first issue published in July 2001. The two-page

newsletter (front-and-back) reported on the Chapter's first Field Day, hosted by Commerce Bank Park, Bridgewater and Head Groundskeeper Ray Cipperly. The issue also ran a Calendar of Events (including an STMA Conference in Las Vegas and several Floyd Perry Workshops), Monthly Field Tips, and Question & Answer section on mowing height.

I would personally like to thank **Brad Pastrick**, North Brunswick Parks; **Eugene "Spooner" Peer**, Montville Township; and **Eleanora Hermann**, SFMANJ Past-President for donating their personal copies of *Update*.

I hope to see you all at an upcoming SFMANJ event. Best of luck in 2009!

-Brad



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WHAT DO LACROSSE PARENTS THINK ABOUT SPORTS FIELDS?

(continued from page 1)

smooth surface, followed by rock picking. Final seedbed preparation was completed using a roller harrow. A Brillion Seeder was calibrated to deliver 350 lbs of seed per acre and following natural rainfall, seedling emergence was evident 13 days after seeding. Equipment, supply and labor costs were documented throughout the project.

Although in many cases necessary, sports fields are often constructed on sites that require extensive earthmoving. The result is costly engineering designs and extensive topsoil disturbance. In these cases, heavy road construction equipment is often used during construction and ultimately over compacts the soil compromising turfgrass establishment and future management.

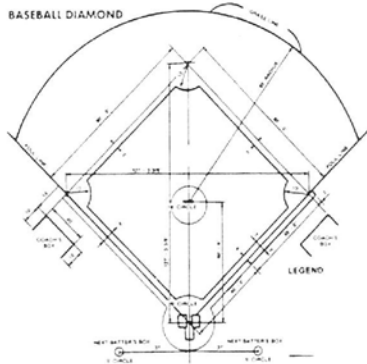
After the successful establishment of the fields, the Rutgers Snyder Research & Extension Farm hosted a lacrosse event in July 2008 to showcase the new fields to the public as well as demonstrate field development and construction using the farming principles described above. The event brought several hundred

lacrosse parents and players to Hunterdon County, NJ and players were able to use the fields for practices and scrimmages. The parents and coaches, as stakeholder groups, were presented information regarding project details.

A survey issued to the parents of players revealed their various opinions regarding sports fields – and the high bar they have set for field conditions. When parents (sixty-three responding) were asked what playing surface conditions they deemed to be minimally acceptable, 69% indicated either uniform turfgrass cover throughout the field with no bare soil or voids in the turf OR good turf cover throughout the field and thin turfgrass cover in front of goals. Only 25% thought that moderate turf cover throughout the field and bare soil in front of goal mouths and penalty kick areas was acceptable. These conditions are very common on Board of Education and Municipal fields in New Jersey. Interestingly, of the 69% of parents that found thin turf cover in front of goal mouths OR no voids in the turf minimally acceptable, 28% of those parents would not support the use of a herbicide on the sports field where

(continued on page 7)

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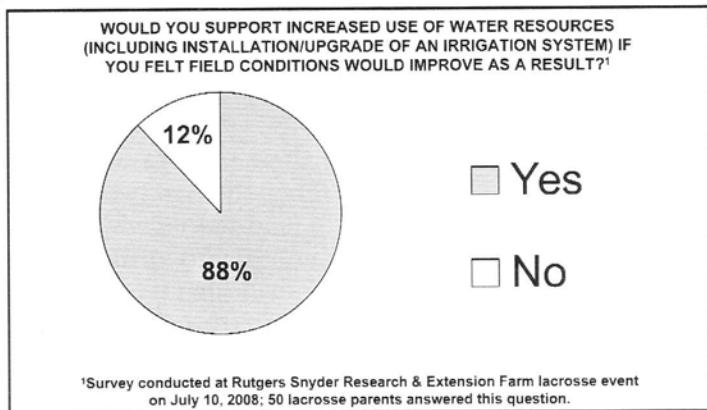
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WHAT DO LACROSSE PARENTS THINK ABOUT SPORTS FIELDS?

(continued from page 6)

their child plays – even if the application resulted in fewer bare areas resulting from dead annual weeds.



The importance of water resources to sports field performance was recognized by lacrosse parent stakeholders who answered a survey at a summer 2008 lacrosse event sponsored by the Rutgers Snyder Research & Extension Farm.

Parents did express a high level of support for increased expenditures for improvement of natural turf fields. When asked whether they would support increased budgeting for seed, equipment, and personnel if it meant field conditions could improve with fewer pesticide inputs, 75% of fifty-one parents responding answered "Yes." Similarly, 88% of parents (50 responding) supported increased use of water resources (including the installation /upgrade of an irrigation system) if field conditions would improve as a result.

In the midst of significant media attention towards human health and synthetic infill sports fields in summer 2008, parents were asked about their opinion of synthetic infill fields. Question 9 of the survey stated, "What is your general feeling regarding synthetic infill surfaces (i.e. tire rubber or tire rubber + sand-filled playing surfaces)?" Forty-five parents responded to this question and 35% answered, "Synthetics provide an all-weather, uniform playing surface compared to natural surfaces and are a worthwhile expenditure." Thirty-eight percent (38%) chose, "Although costly and human health questions remain, synthetics provide a benefit to youth athletics program." The

remaining 27% of those responding voiced concern over synthetic installations by selecting, "The human health questions and costs outweigh any potential benefits of synthetic turf fields."

When the question was posed, "Would you prefer to see your child play on a synthetic or natural turf playing surface?" 81% of the forty-seven parents answering chose natural surfaces over synthetic.

These results provide a look into the minds of parents whose children play on the surfaces overseen by sports field managers. While there still appears to be a strong preference for natural grass, the expectation for playing surface quality is high.

The authors would like to thank JoAnn Stevely and the Rutgers Snyder Research & Extension Farm staff for their hard work in administering the survey.

Brad Park is Sports Turf Res. and Ed. Coord., Rutgers Univ.; SFMANJ Board member; and Editor, SFMANJ Update; Dr. John Grande is Director, Rutgers Snyder Research & Extension Farm

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THE POLITICS OF SPORTS FIELD MANAGEMENT

Part I of a Series

By Don Savard, CSFM, CGM

I am a sports field manager at a high school in Wilmington, Delaware. I have been managing high school sports fields for the past 18 years. I have come to the following conclusion, that is, managing a sports field is easy, but people make it complicated. How great would it be if we could go to work every day and grow the very best sports fields without anyone bothering us? Like it or not, we need people so that we can do what we do. We serve with a variety of people from our co-workers to the people who use the fields, to the people who own the fields and pay the bills. If we consider these people as our customers, are we not customer service specialists first and field managers second?

Many of us and our crews are support staff. We work for organizations whose primary business is something other than grass and dirt. Something like education, or government. From a financial point of view our operation is viewed as overhead.

We compete with other departments within our organization for money, resources, positions, recognition, programs, and approvals. Nothing comes easy. To survive and for peace of mind, we need to get along with our customers. Our stakeholders or customers have diverse interests and agendas. Some of these agendas serve the common good; some serve someone's individual self interest. To fully understand the politics of the organization, you must become well acquainted with all of the stakeholders and their agendas. And within each organization, some stakeholder's agendas have more legitimacy than others, including yours and mine.

Let's look at our stakeholders or customers both within and external to our organization:

1. First and foremost are the athletes who use and play on our fields. That is why we are here. We try to maintain safe and playable fields for them. The players want fields that play well and do not impede their performance. Players, particularly at the youth level take the athletic facilities for granted. Usually if they do not seem to notice the field, we are doing an adequate job. At many levels, the players seem to be the easiest customers to satisfy.
2. Coaches exist to develop their players and guide the teams to victories. At times the coaches seem to be at odds with the sports field managers, considering the ways their practices and drills use or abuse their fields. Coaches will also let you know when they think there is something wrong with your field.
3. Athletic Directors are responsible for the management and quality of their athletic programs. That includes everything from hiring coaches, arranging team schedules, renting buses and letting someone know that a shower head in the locker room is leaking. Athletic Directors have a very large sphere of influence. They also hear everything from everybody. An Athletic Director on your side is an important ally.
4. There are the owners. They are the people who give you money. Or withhold it. The owner of the facility can be a Board of Education, a School Administration or a Board of Trustees, a government department or some other entity. Frequently this entity has a hierarchy of management in which you have a boss and your boss has a boss and so on. In organizations, the chain of command is important and must be respected. Breaking the chain of command in organizations probably won't get you a court martial, but it may cause you some pain in a variety of ways depending on the organization and the personalities involved. Respect the food chain.
5. There are usually support people within this hierarchy. These include administrative assistants, accounting specialists, and others who are the wheels of the organization. Be careful you don't get caught under the wheels.

(continued on page 12)

2008 Calendar of Events

STMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2009

January 13-17, 2009
Sports Turf Managers Association
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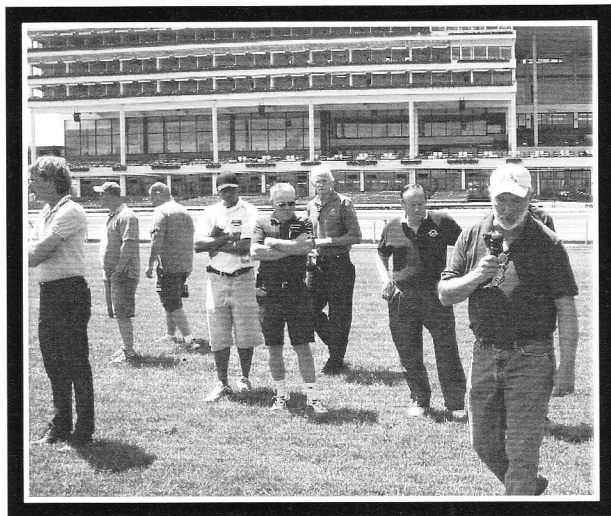
Photos By: Brad Park, Rutgers Uni



Don Savard, CSFM and CGM and SFMANJ Board Member describes irrigation auditing at the Spring Field Day at Shore Regional High School on May 7, 2008.



Cricket anyone? Dr. Jim Murphy, Rutgers University and SFMANJ Advisor investigates a make-shift cricket pitch in Weequahic Park, Newark, NJ.



Steve Fischer, Turf Track Superintendent, Monmouth Park Racetrack describes his turf management practices at the Spring Field Day in Oceanport, NJ on May 7, 2008.



A trade show sponsored by SFMANJ offered attendees at the Rutgers Lawn, Landscape and Sports Field Day on July 30, 2008 at Adelphia an opportunity to view the latest products offered by vendors.