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April 2, 2013



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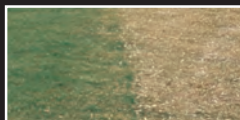
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Often I am asked how much or how often should I groom a field. There is no true, exact answer, but from my experience I recommend that the field be groomed every 300 to 350 hours of use. There are articles on the web that will say 400 to 500 or more hours and much depends on the manpower available. At minimum it should be groomed several times during the highest use periods and less during the down times (if there is such a thing).

Trash and debris removal is another constant nuisance and needs to be done whenever it exists. Timely removal is important to keep the trash and debris from becoming ground into the infill material, which causes problems later on. Sunflower seeds, chewing gum, candy wrappers, cigarette butts, wire ties from nets, and broken sand bags or stone bags used for weighting down goals are some of the typical items we see when deep-cleaning a field. Water, Gatorade, juice, and soda bottles are unsightly and need to be removed when present.

Removal of chewing gum is largely overlooked and needs to be addressed as soon as possible; most chewing gums today never harden and with the intense heat in the field it becomes goeey and eventually spreads across the turf surface. To remove use either ice cubes or a freezing spray agent to harden the gum, chip it off and remove it.

Weeds can exist and thrive in synthetic turf. Be prepared if your synthetic fields is surrounded by bermudagrass or any other creeping stolon-producing grass! These grasses tend to seek their way into and under the synthetic turf and since temperatures on these fields reach optimal growing peaks before the surrounding turf, once they start spreading beneath they will find the drainage holes and send their shoots upwards for the sun light. These plants become very hard to remove due to their sewing machine effect and in many cases will need to be treated chemically (as approved by the turf manufacturer) to control. It is best to prevent these grasses from growing under from the beginning. Look for it and act quickly when discovered.

Pay attention to heavy wear areas. These fields wear just like natural turf with the exception that you can't grow it back in once it is gone; so, don't let it wear out. Common sports specific high wear areas include Football: center of the field between the hash marks; Soccer: penalty kick area, corner kick, goal crease; Field Hockey: goal crease, penalty arc; Lacrosse: goal crease areas, center of the field where face offs take place. Men's or Women's Lacrosse has the ability to destroy a goal crease in as little as one year if not maintained. The infill material gets kicked or shuffled out. The fibers take a beating and break-off quickly without the support of the infill material.



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Before you know it you have a big black area that is the backing of the turf and now it's time to patch it or replace the area with either the pieces you saved from installation or maybe cut it out from outside the playing area so that it matches in color and type. Even after one year it won't be a perfect match (even if left on a roof top to sun burn like the turf on the field) because the surrounding fibers in the field will have seen use and started to mat out or break down and if you are patching it must have worn out. Contact the manufacturer or a reputable service company to save you the pains of having to deal with the patch. There are special materials that you will need and the local or big box hardware store does not carry them. Do not use a Gorilla glue-type product, liquid nails, styrene bonding agents, and/or drywall screws or framing nails for repairs. These are not designed for synthetic turf and may become a liability nightmare later down the road.

Painting may or may not have to be performed on these fields depending on whether or not everything was inlaid during installation. If you have to paint use only paint that is approved for synthetic turf field. It seems that every year some company announces that they have synthetic turf paint. Do your homework and look at a company history and get recommendations. If you need to remove the paint ask the supplier if it can be performed, and if so, how it is done and what will it cost and how long will it take. Will you need special equipment and chemicals? Have their products been endorsed by any manufacturers and is your turf manufacturer one of them? If you have to paint try to do it at times other than the heat of the day. If you are removing lines it works much better to do this at night or early in the morning when the turf is the coolest. Chemicals used during the heat of the day will evaporate long before they start to work and this will only cost you more time and materials.

Dust, dirt, pollen, body skin cells, screws, nails, track spikes, bobby pins and human hair, just to name a few, do not break down in these fields. They remain for much of the life of the field and it is truly amazing how much exists. Special equipment with hepa-filter

vacuums will be able to clear this out and remove it from within the turf. Rain, snow sleet and hosing do not help.

Static is common and can increase with humidity and sometimes age. If you need to combat static, you can use several household products. Liquid Tide washing machine soap and/or the use of a softener (Snuggles) both work well when sprayed on the turf.

Eventually someone will ask if these fields need to be disinfected. My suggestion is to review Dr. Andrew McNitt's research pages to obtain the best answer (<http://cropsoil.psu.edu/ssrc/sportsturf-scoop>). Information can also be found by visiting the website of the Synthetic Turf Council (<http://syntheticturfcouncil.org/>)

Lastly, unlike natural turf, we can't see what is going on with these fields beneath their surface. ASTM has recommended that these fields be tested annually to determine their hardness ( $G_{max}$ ). There are those who do not believe this is necessary; but I can tell you that it is an important tool, much like soil testing. If you do not perform testing for one, two, four or six years then you have no history data to determine what has been happening to surface hardness. I have tested two-year fields and eleven-year-old fields with less than 3/4-inch of fibers remaining and almost no infill and yet the newer one tests harder than the older. Does this mean we are no longer testing the turf and we are now testing the stone base beneath? Good question. Since we do not have eleven years of historic  $G_{max}$  testing, we can only imagine we are now testing the  $G_{max}$  of the stone base.

Hopefully I haven't scared you and you haven't run away from your synthetic field. These fields are a great tool and if properly maintained will provide years of play for all users. What you have just read is only the tip of the iceberg and there is much to learn about these fields. Don't be afraid to ask your peers or contactor if you don't know; it may prevent you from making a huge mistake.

*Jim Cornelius is a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM); and Services Manager, Pro. Services Division, Fisher & Son Co., Inc.*

## Did you know . . .

### How to Find the Equipment Cost per Hour

*Don Savard, CSFM, CGM*

#### Example: Compact Tractor

Purchase Price \$35,000 + Interest \$ 3,000 – Salvage Value \$5,000 = \$6.66  
 Life Expectancy 5,000 hours (500 hrs per year for 10 years)

Lifetime Maintenance Cost: \$20,000.00 = \$4.00  
 Life Expectancy 5,000 hours

Fuel Price \$4.00 per gallon = \$2.66  
 Fuel Used per hour : 1.5 gallons

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**Equipment Cost per Hour = \$13.32**

# What the Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey is All About

By Debbie Savard

Founded in 2000, Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ) is the New Jersey Chapter of the national organization Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA). Over the years SFMANJ has grown its membership, not only from New Jersey, but also from Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York and Ontario, Canada.

SFMANJ was formally recognized at the STMA National Conference and Exhibition in Daytona Beach, Florida in January 2013 for the work that we perform for sports field managers in New Jersey and recent additions to our educational outreach efforts. Our Mission Statement reads "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." This is exactly our endeavor. We are also well connected with many of the leading universities and professionals involved with turfgrass and sports field research including Rutgers University. Answers to questions regarding sports field management can be handled readily.

Topics addressed by SFMANJ include: Turfgrass species selection, plant/soil fertility, pesticide use and diagnostics, root zone

amendments, baseball infield amendments, pitcher's mound and batter's box repair, turfgrass mowing, drainage, irrigation, turfgrass cultivation, topdressing, equipment demonstration, sports field construction, field layout, management, budgets, school IPM, legislative affairs and various other management techniques which improve the safety, playability and appearance of athletic fields.

Each year we hold at least two field days, in the spring and fall, offering education through lectures as well as visual demonstrations. Pesticide credits are awarded to those who attend. The field days also include a trade show, a free continental breakfast and a hot lunch. Most are free to those who wish to attend and some offer free membership.

Our Association also promotes a trade show in co-operation with New Jersey Turfgrass Association and Rutgers University at the Rutgers Lawn, Landscape and Sports Turf Field Day each summer. Hope to see you at this year's event on Wednesday, July 31, 2013 at Rutgers Hort Farm 2, North Brunswick, NJ.

SFMANJ also handles a portion of the educational sessions at the New Jersey Green Expo Turf and Landscape Conference held in

*Continued on page 17*



## 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  
(848) 932-6295, ext. 331; or [clarke@aesop.rutgers.edu](mailto:clarke@aesop.rutgers.edu) or*

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# Business is



# Picking-Up . . .

By Don Savard, CSFM, CGM

*Editor's Note: This article first appeared in the November/December 2005 issue of SFMANJ Update*

For years I had been providing trashcans around my sports fields with the expectation that the players and spectators would use them. I would end up with full or half empty trashcans that needed to be emptied. There was always litter and trash in the vicinity of the cans and elsewhere that needed to be picked up. We put out more trashcans and even signs politely asking people to use the cans. Still more trash and litter.

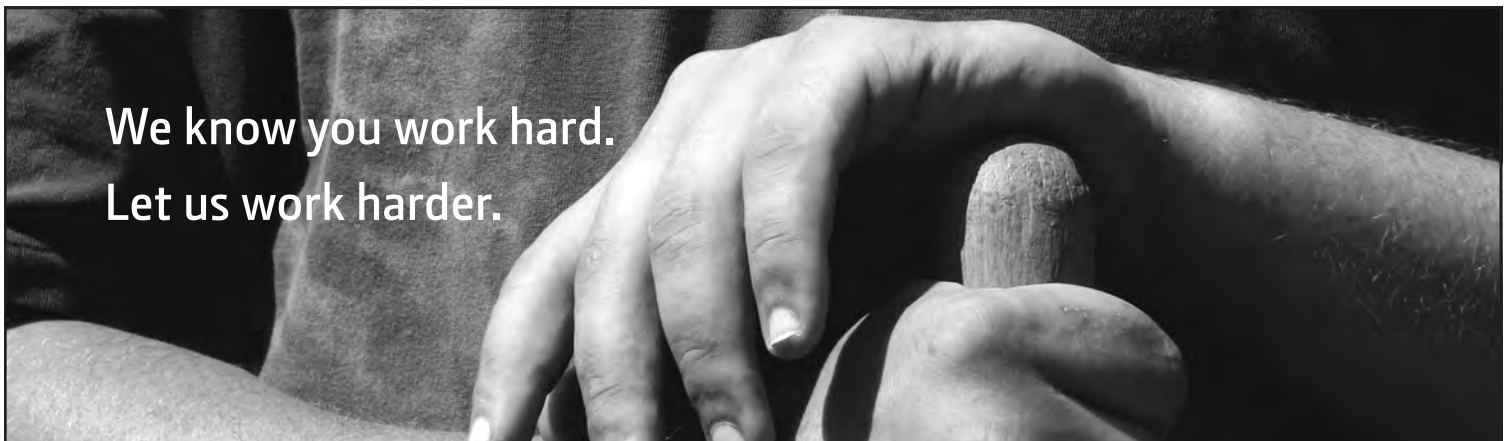
Across the road from our School there is a State Park. I rarely notice a trash problem there. It is a "Carry in-Carry out" park, which means they do not provide trashcans. They have signs to the effect and even provide bags if you need them. And the program seems to be effective. Hmm, I thought.

This past spring, I tried an "experiment". I didn't put out trashcans. I said nothing to the coaches. Baseball and Lacrosse teams played games and practiced daily. No trash problem, very little litter. Summer camps used the field's last summer, same results no trash, almost no litter. I told the Athletic Director. He seemed skeptical. This fall - football and soccer. Big programs, many kids. Lots of paper cups. We provided the Athletic Trainers with plastic bags to accompany the big orange water containers. We convinced the teams that it was their responsibility to pick-up and haul away the trash bags when they return the orange jugs to the equipment room after practice. While the football teams throw the cups at the bag trying to toss them in and the soccer players still throw the

cups on the ground during practice, they do pick up their litter before they leave and do a pretty good job most of the time. The Athletic Director was impressed.

We still find some litter in the spectator areas after events. Nothing is perfect I guess! But our campus is staying cleaner, and we spend fewer man-hours picking litter, hauling trash and washing trashcans. Best of all, nobody has said anything about our "experiment".

*Don Savard is a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) and Certified Grounds Manager (CGM); Director, Athletic Facilities and Grounds, Salesianum School; and a member of the SFMANJ Board of Directors.*



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# Rutgers Turf Club Tour of Citi Field

Hosted by Bill Deacon,  
Head Groundskeeper, NY Mets  
April 19, 2013

by Brad Park



# What the Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey Is All About

Continued from page 14

Atlantic City, NJ in December each year. Speakers from around the country deliver education to our sports field professionals with the latest information and technology. Pesticide credits, including Category 13 School IPM, are awarded for completion of the sessions.

In addition to our regular field days, SFMANJ holds other events throughout the year such as clinics for local little leagues and district meetings. Anyone interested in hosting such an event can call the office at 856-514-3179.

Our newsletter, Update, is published quarterly and is full of timely and informative articles and advertising. Each issue is mailed out but can also be viewed on our website ([www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org)) or accessed through Michigan State University Libraries (<http://archive.lib.msu.edu/tic/updat>). Here you can also find all past issues dating back to July 2001. Anyone interested in advertising in Update should call the office at 856-514-3179 or download a form from our web site.

Our website also contains links to many documents that may be of help with your fields, photos from recent events as well as a calendar of upcoming events that may be of interest to you. There is also a vendor directory with active links for your convenience. Membership registration forms are available for download if you are interested in joining our organization.

Recently, SFMANJ has embraced social media by creating a facebook page. Activity there is starting to pick-up. Also, we have initiated putting a QR code on mailers, newsletters, etc., so get your code reader ready.

With an SFMANJ membership, not only does one receive our quarterly newsletter, but also Sportsturf, the monthly publication of STMA. Each issue contains articles written for and by sports field professionals. You will also receive the annual SFMANJ Membership Resource Directory to help you contact other sports field managers or commercial members to discuss any issues you may have with your fields. Another benefit to membership is a 10% tuition discount on all Rutgers Office of Continuing Professional Education Athletic Field courses.

Any individual, organization, institution, or vendor/supplier who has interest in athletic field safety and playability would benefit by becoming a member of SFMANJ. We represent high school, college, and professional facilities, parks and recreation departments, educators, youth leagues, contractors, and commercial vendors.

SFMANJ members are always welcome to attend our board meetings, which are generally held on the first Wednesday of each month at Hort Farm 2, North Brunswick, NJ. We appreciate member input and thrive on new, fresh ideas from all areas of the sports field industry. We are here for our members and want to bring to them the things that interest and help them the most. Anyone interested in attending, should call us at 856-514-3179 to confirm time and location.

**If you would like more information on SFMANJ, please call 856-514-3179 or visit our web site and see what we're all about.**

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## More from the 2013 Spring Field Day



Continued from page 5

## Keeping Your Edge

to pack clay on the mound (actually an idea shared by Larry Divito of the Minnesota Twins). I learn some new techniques I would like to try when I get back to campus.

I like talking shop with other sports field managers. Nobody else really understands what we do, or what we have to deal with. We can cover many topics ranging from agronomics to equipment to which source of materials we like the best. Who better than another experienced sports field manager can give you insight about the soft skills of human relations with all of the people we serve. In conversation with other sports field managers I usually discover that (a) somebody else has already experienced what I am experiencing; (b) my situation is not as bad as I think it is; (c) I feel validated for the things that I am doing right.

I really enjoyed my visit with Rich, Bill and Carmelo. It was great working with an experienced crew. I recommend to anyone wanting to improve their skills, to spend a day with another sports field manager as a guest crew member. It is an amazing experience.

*Don Savard is a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) and Certified Grounds Manager (CGM); Director, Athletic Facilities and Grounds, Salesianum School; and a member of the SFMANJ Board of Directors.*



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## HAVE YOU CHECKED-OUT OUR WEB SITE LATELY?

- ✓ Check our Events page for upcoming events and pictures of past SFMANJ functions.
- ✓ Check our Resources page for past issues of our Newsletter Update, Minutes from past Board Meetings, links to useful information and job postings.
- ✓ Check our Contact Us page for direct links to all of the Board of Directors. Call us with any questions or comments.
- ✓ Check our Vendor page for interactive links to our advertising vendors' web sites and a complete list of all our vendors. Call them first! They are happy to answer any questions.

Visit our website for information on the  
**Rutgers Lawn, Landscape and  
Sports Turf Field Day**  
[www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org) - References Tab



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