

UPDATE

Sports Field

Managers Association of New Jersey



Winter 2009
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P.O. Box 205, Pennsville, NJ 08070 • www.sfmanj.org • e-mail: mail@sfmanj.org

A Recap of SFMANJ Fall Field Day 2009

By Matt Olivi

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ) held its annual Fall Field Day on September 23, 2009. The Association was fortunate enough to have its turf managers from Monroe Township host this year's event. Monroe was the recipient of the 2008 SFMANJ Field of the Year award and proved to be the perfect place for the membership to gather this fall. Those who attended this year's fall event had the opportunity to tour two of the town's many sports field complexes, take a look at some of the newest turf management equipment on the market, and even earn pesticide credits through an educational seminar provided by Rutgers University.

Located at Monroe Township's newly constructed soccer complex, this year's fall event began with a satisfying breakfast donated by Northern Nurseries and The Viersma Companies. This provided a great opportunity for attendees to network and catch-up with old friends in the turfgrass industry. After formal introductions, SFMANJ President Don Savard, CSFM, CGM kicked-off the educational portion of the program with a spreader calibration demonstration. The demo provided attendees with a chance to see how to properly and effectively calibrate a large spreader to achieve desired application results. In addition to the hands-on demonstration, Don took the time to explain to the audience some of the concepts of spreader calibration such as gauging proper ground speed during an application and calculating the appropriate amount of product to be used in such applications.

Once Don had completed his presentation, he began passing the microphone to the many vendors who sponsored this year's event and gave them an opportunity to share and even



Tom Torpey, Sports Field Manager, Monroe Township, NJ, describes the management practices he employs to maintain his 2008 SFMANJ Field of the Year – which also served as a location for the 2009 SFMANJ Fall Field Day.

demonstrate some of the quality turf products and equipment available to sports field managers. Attendees were able to listen to and interact with professionals from companies such as John Deer Landscapes, Northern Nurseries, and TurfTrade

who each had display booths showcasing their turf products and services. Storr Tractor Company began the vendor demonstrations by introducing Liam Philpott who explained the concepts of using lasers to mark sports field boundaries. After setting-up and calibrating his laser equipment, Liam constructed perfectly straight, professional stadium-grade sidelines and goal boxes on one of the nearby soccer fields. He then gave attendees the opportunity to



Don Savard, CSFM, CGM and SFMANJ President discusses spreader calibration at the 2009 SFMANJ Fall Field Day, September 23, 2009, Monroe Township, NJ.

Continued on page 5

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Currently we have 287 new & renewed members. In December 2008, SFMANJ mailed invoices for 2009 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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Annual KAFMO Cup Golf Outing



Members of the SFMANJ Board of Directors travelled to Pennsylvania in October 2009 to play in the Keystone Athletic Field Managers' (KAFMO) annual KAFMO Cup golf outing. KAFMO is the Pennsylvania Chapter of Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA). (l-r) Scott Bills, Northern Nurseries, SFMANJ Secretary; Brad Park, Rutgers University, Editor, SFMANJ Update Newsletter; Sean Connell, Georgia Golf Construction; Craig Tolley, County College of Morris, SFMANJ Past-President.

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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 (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.

Student Scholarship



Rutgers undergraduate student and SFMANJ Student Member, Will Reardon (left) is presented with a SFMANJ-sponsored student scholarship by SFMANJ President Don Savard, CSFM, CGM (right) at the Rutgers Turfgrass Awards banquet on November 7, 2009.

SFMANJ Annual Membership Registration Form

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A Recap of SFMANJ Fall Field Day 2009

Continued from page 1

demo the laser field marker themselves. Attendees seemed amazed at the ease of use of the machine and the quality of the field markings it produced. The microphone was then passed-on to Aer-Core and Dryject. Both companies showcased their equipment (Dryject: the Dryject machine; Aer-Core: drill-and-fill machine) that can be used to add necessary soil amendments to turf fields in order to improve drainage and aeration problems. Attendees then watched collaborative demonstrations from The Viersma Companies and Wilfred McDonald. The demo began with an overview of the Thatchmaster which quickly and effectively removed thatch and debris from the soil and brought it to the turf surface. Ready for collection, Wilfred McDonald fired up its Smithco Sweepstar 60 Turf Sweeper and quickly collected any debris left on the turf.

After the conclusion of the demonstrations, all of the attendees gathered for an informal, yet informative talk with Tom Torpey and Virgil Caputo who are turf and grounds managers in Monroe Township. Tom and Virgil shared some of the many challenges and obstacles faced by their grounds crew throughout the year and offered some tips for success. Attendees were able to interact with each other and ask Tom and Virgil questions. All parties seemed to benefit greatly from the discussion. The discussion continued after a short trip down the road to Monroe's softball complex and the 2008 field of the year. Once the attendees arrived and gathered on the field of the year, Tom gave everyone an overview of the maintenance program that his crew uses to achieve an award winning softball field. Once again, Tom shared with his audience the challenges faced by his crew and answered any questions that were raised.

After a quick lunch at the softball complex, tradeshow equipment demonstrations continued. Vendors such as Storr Tractor Company and Wilfred McDonald showcased the newest infield grooming and core aeration equipment. Also, Mike Viersma of The Viersma Companies demonstrated a large capacity topdresser by quickly spreading compost on the outfield of one of the softball fields. At the conclusion of the equipment demonstrations, attendees had the opportunity to ask questions and look over the equipment displays.

The SFMANJ Fall Field Day was wrapped-up with an opportunity for those needing pesticide Core credits. Brad Park, Sports Turf Research & Education Coordinator, Rutgers University, provided an IPM talk about Basic Pesticide Calculations. The talk covered concepts such as pesticide formulations, product mixture preparations, acreage calculations,

and much more. The pesticide talk peaked the interest of all who attended as many follow-up questions were asked stimulating further discussion.

All together, the SFMANJ Fall Field Day proved to be a great success. Attendees had opportunities to see some of the newest quality turf maintenance equipment, network with their peers in the turfgrass industry and come away with some excellent educational resources. Monroe Township proved to be a prime location for a fall field day. The 2008 Field of the Year at the softball complex was showcased perfectly by its hosts. Tom Torpey and his highly motivated, professional crew of sports field managers provided all in attendance with inspiration and insight for success.

Matt Olivi is Sports Turf Manager, Piscataway Board of Education; and a member of the SFMANJ Board of Directors

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The Sports Turf Manager as a Crisis Communicator

By Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) Editorial Staff

Perhaps you will never be faced with responding to a crisis. But, if you ever have an athlete get injured during play, an employee who gets hurt on the job, a disgruntled employee, a weather related disaster, or an environmental incident, you just might find yourself in the spotlight and under scrutiny.

As a manager of people, you may have to deal with an employee's death or illness, a sudden change in top management, or employee issues of sexual harassment. Each one of these can constitute a crisis. You must be prepared for that decisive moment when your response can lead the crisis to better or to worse. An initial negative perception is nearly impossible to reverse.

Crisis Communication Response Tips

- Respond within 24 hours.
- Don't point fingers.
- Always be available to the media.
- Be visible and on-site.
- Tell the absolute truth.
- Never say "no comment."

You are judged within the first 30 seconds of speaking if you and the information you are providing is trusted. Appearing empathetic and caring are the most important characteristics you can exhibit to show "trustworthiness". Your audience will also assess your competence, your honesty and your commitment. Your goal as a communicator is to demonstrate these attributes.

It is important to recognize that the media is usually more interested in covering opposing viewpoints and that bad news and conflict are more newsworthy. Most reporters are working under a tight deadline, have limited scientific and technical knowledge and can be a bit cynical. When preparing to talk with the media, address the principal underlying concern of the audience/questioner/listener keeping your responses short and concise.

In many crisis situations it is important to bring in a third party and to tell the media who you have contacted.

Crisis Communication Interviews

- Take control early by educating the reporter and correcting misunderstandings.
- Clarify the questions.
- Prepare two to three main messages.
- Give facts: who, what, when, where, but don't give how and why.
- Express your concern. Safety is always the top priority.
- Avoid jargon and do not use humor.
- Frame your answers in the positive.
- Tell how fast you responded, how much has been done and what you will do about it in the future.
- Thank or give appreciation to any assistance.
- Avoid words with negative connotations such as lethal, risky, deaths, maimed, toxic.
- Do not repeat the "charges" or any negatives words, such as no, not, never.
- Be conscious of your body language. Do not place your hands in a "fig leaf" in front or in back of you, but keep your hands/palms open and above the waist. Avoid touching your face, clasp or clenching your hands and pointing your fingers.

Remember these phrases.

You want to give a sense of more to come, which will help to establish your trustworthiness.

- "What I can tell you is ..."
- "So far, what we know is ..."
- "So far, what we have done is ..."
- "What we are planning to do next is ..."
- "We will be able to tell you more when ..."
- "I'll be glad to talk with you again after we conduct ..."

Source: Susan Santos, Ph.D., FOCUS GROUP, Medford, MA

Continued on page 17

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Question and Answer with Rutgers University

By Dr. James Murphy and Brad Park

Q: In the spring I manage fields used for baseball and lacrosse; field hockey and soccer in the fall. I have been under the impression that "quick dry" is an agent that should only be used on clay surfaces. I've been told that it is not good to use this product on turf because it renders the soil difficult to germinate new grass. The field hockey program practices and plays games in the outfield of the varsity baseball field. After a week of practices, the grass in front of the goal areas is reduced to dirt. I am reluctant to put "quick dry" in those areas when it rains for the aforementioned reason. Is my information on the use of "quick dry" products wrong?

A: You are correct to be cautious about applying "quick dry" products on turf areas. Extensive use of some quick dry products will eventually "seal" the soil in these areas ultimately making the problem worse. Moreover, you should include seed in any topdressing of these areas with drying agents, otherwise the bare areas will not fill-in (recover) with grass. I recommend that you apply (broadcast) 2 pounds of perennial ryegrass seed per goalmouth per week through the remainder of the season. You should observe some emergence within 10-14 days (possibly earlier) after a good rain or irrigation. Emerging plants will get trampled but it is a numbers issue - the more seed you apply the greater the chance some plants will survive and

ultimately fill-in the worn out areas. We see a number of facilities that are highly successful with this type of regular overseeding.

There are 2 types of granular materials that would be acceptable to apply to these goalmouths and function to "dry" these areas without adversely affecting soil properties: (1) sand or (2) high-temperature, kiln-fired, clay or diatomaceous earth products. Sand will be the least expensive option but will not "soak-up" as much water as the kiln-fired products. If you choose to use sand, order a medium-coarse or medium sand (size); do not use concrete or mason sands.

The kiln-fired products need to be fired at very high temperatures so that the granules will not slake (breakdown) and form a sticky, clayey mess over time. These granular products are very hard and are roughly sand sized (depending on product and size grade); thus, these materials will behave much like sand except that these materials will soak up more water than sand. The hardness of the granules prevents slaking (breakdown) allowing these materials to work into the soil much like sand and provide similar benefits over time - a coarser and less muddy surface.

If cost is problem, you could consider blending sand with kiln-fired-granular product.

Continued on page 18

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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
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SFMANJ's Fall Field Day

September 23, 2009, Monroe Township, NJ

By Brad Park





The Year In Review 2009

by Brad Park



Fall at Monmouth Park Racetrack



Differences among Kentucky bluegrass varieties, Hort. Farm II, Rutgers



Spring Field Day, Kingsway High School



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Fall Field Day, Monroe Township

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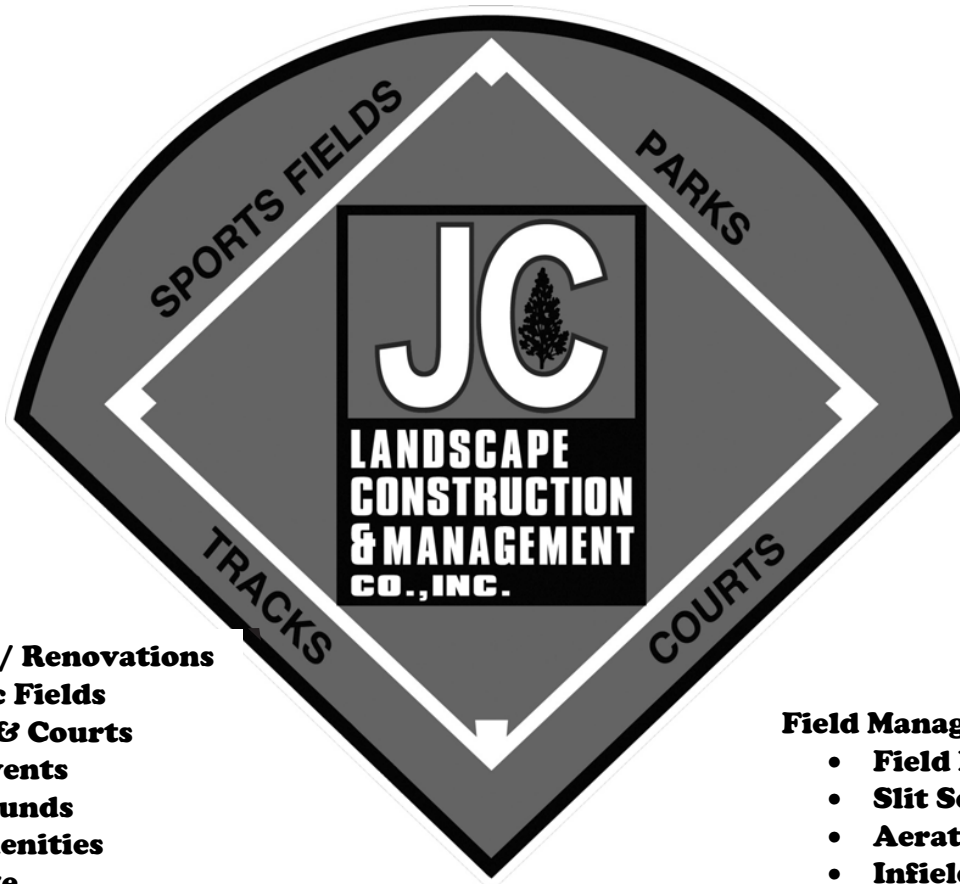
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Three-Day Athletic Field Construction & Maintenance

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SFMANJ Field of the Year Contest 2010

Lacey Township Soccer Field - SFMANJ's Field of the Year 2009

ELIGIBILITY:

- Must be a current member of SFMANJ
- Only school and parks/recreation fields are eligible
- Must be a natural grass field/fields

AWARD WILL BE BASED ON:

- Playability and appearance of the playing surfaces
- Description of your maintenance program and what you did to improve your field
- Description of your yearly budget for this field
- (Sports groups may be used in your photos)



Lacey Township Soccer Field - SFMANJ's Field of the Year 2009

AWARDS:

The winner will be honored with a plaque at the New Jersey Turfgrass and Landscape Conference & Expo in December, 2010 and will be featured in an article in SFMANJ's "Update" newsletter.

The winner will also receive a two-night stay at the Trump Taj Mahal, Atlantic City and three full days of education and trade show admission at Expo 2010.

SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRY:

- All entries are to be submitted by mail or e-mail and must be received by September 30, 2010.
- Entries are limited to 10 color photos. Please include the name, location and owner of the facility, along with your name, position, and contact number.

Mail Entries to:

SFMANJ 2009 F.O.Y. Contest
P.O. Box 205, Pennsville, NJ 08070

OR E-mail to:
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Call for more info:
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website: sfmanj.org / e-mail: mail@sfmanj.org

Photos will not be returned and may be used on SFMANJ website and promotional settings

Looking for success? Look no further than ... **YOUR STAFF!**

By, *Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) Editorial Staff*

Your staff has a significant impact on your success. The work that they do is a direct reflection on you, your ability to train, to motivate and to lead. Reaching the goals of your facility is only possible through good management of your people and their continued development. To make sure you are fully embracing the talents of your staff, use these simple techniques.

Top 10 Strategies to Engage Your Staff

1. Seek input and listen.

Your staff is a great resource for ideas and improvements. Asking for their opinions and solutions to problems, truly listening to them, and implementing as appropriate, strengthens their commitment to you and to their job. Involving your staff in decision making builds loyalty and improves retention.

2. Set expectations.

Clearly and consistently set expectations for each employee through jointly written performance objectives. Good performance can't happen if they do not understand what you expect. Reinforce your expectations verbally.

3. Provide continuous feedback.

Praise accomplishments, large and small, and for those projects that weren't as successful, use them as learning experiences to find out what could have been done differently. Don't wait until the end of the year at performance time to express dissatisfaction.

4. Show appreciation.

Just say "thank you!" When you reward and acknowledge good behaviors, you get more of the same. Publicly acknowledge your staff for doing a good job, and look for other ways to reward their efforts. According to a Harris Poll, the top three satisfaction drivers for employees are control over their work; the opportunity to use their talents and skills; and recognition and appreciation.

5. Be accessible.

By being visible and available, you send the message that you are part of the team and are ready to support their efforts to get the job done.

6. Train, Train, Train.

Training in the correct procedures and equipment use is critical to getting the job done right, but also for health and safety reasons. The continuous upgrading of skills also provides employees with the means for promotion. Consider training opportunities in areas outside of their core responsibilities, such as in writing skills, public speaking, customer service, business management, etc. You and your facility will reap many benefits from improving their "softer" skills.

7. Empower your staff.

Give them as much information as possible about what and why, and allow them to make decisions appropriate to their work.

8. Provide a safe and comfortable working environment.

Don't expect employees to use outdated or faulty equipment. With anxieties at an all time high regarding increased terrorist activity, make sure you have emergency procedures in place to protect the workforce in the event of an attack, and ensure that every employee is aware of these procedures.

9. Treat with respect.

Respect and accept each person as an important member of the team.

10. Inspire your staff.

Be a coach and a cheerleader. Be sure your boss knows about the good work they do. When you help them succeed, you succeed.

Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA), Lawrence, KS.

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The Sports Turf Manager as a Crisis Communicator

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Crisis Example and Response

Situation: You have a major event that is being hosted in your stadium the next day. As a set of temporary bleachers is being installed, they collapse and your assistant has been critically injured. A reporter is at the stadium asking what happened and why, and if the event is taking place.

Your first response must show concern for the worker and his family. "Our first concern is for Joe Smith and his family. Joe's safety and the safety of all of our workers is always our top priority. What we do know is that a temporary set of bleachers being installed here at King Stadium collapsed about an hour ago. Joe has been taken to Mercy Hospital."

So far, we have cordoned off the area to protect the public. A team of OSHA inspectors are on their way. We'll cooperate in any way to find out what happened. We have also called in a

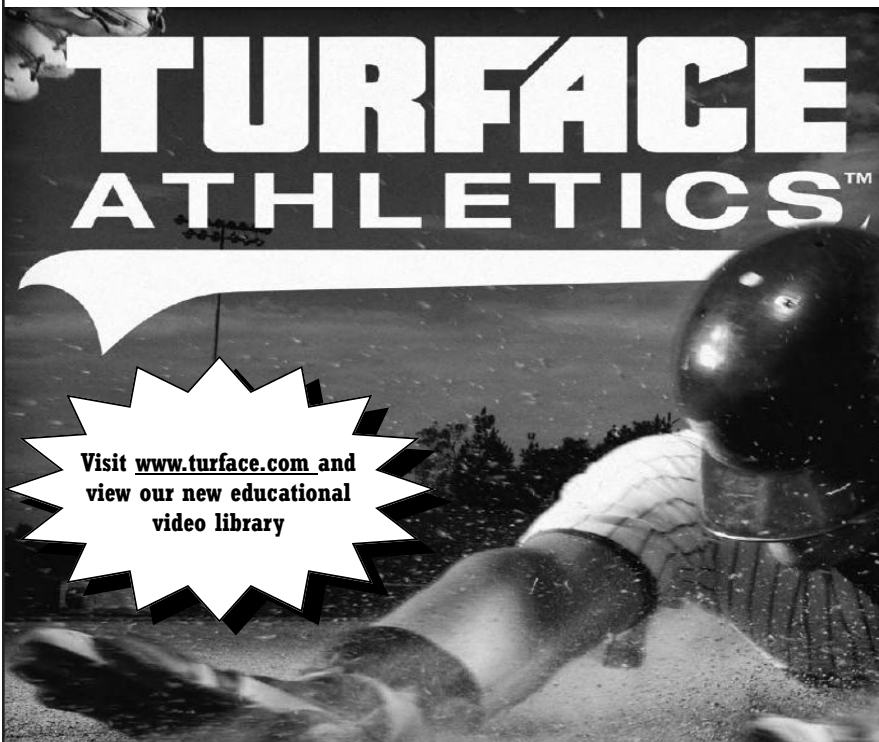
safety engineer to help. We will be able to tell you more about the accident after OSHA and our safety engineer has evaluated the situation.

Your response to whether or not the event will be held the next day depends upon your management teams' decision. If you are going ahead with it, you need to respond with how you are insuring fan safety: "We are going ahead with the concert tomorrow; however to insure the safety of our rock fans, we will be limiting the seating to the built-in seats in the stadium grandstands and offering on-the-floor seating in the end zone." If you are not going ahead, "We will not be holding the concert tomorrow. Fan safety is paramount and until we know why the bleachers collapsed, we will not be holding any events."

We appreciate the help of the city's emergency response team. I'll be glad to talk with you again when we know more.

Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA), Lawrence, KS

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Question and Answer with Rutgers University

(continued from page 8)

Q: I am having a problem with annual bluegrass on my main football field. We have always had it in a few spots but this year it just took over the field and it died off about a month ago. Naturally everyone is in a tizzy over it because our field always looks good. I've heard you speak on the subject a few times so that is why I am reaching out to you. If there is any advice or literature you have and can send to me I would really appreciate it. I really need some help.

A: Currently, there are no practical chemical options to address annual bluegrass on football fields, particularly given the need to continually apply seed to the heaviest trafficked sections of the field (i.e. between the hash marks). Keep an eye out for the registration of Tenacity Herbicide for sports fields. It's currently available for sod farms and golf courses and will provide preemergence control of annual bluegrass AND allows some seeding flexibility.

In the meantime, I suggest seeding the sections of the annual bluegrass-collapsed sections of the field with perennial ryegrass. A gray leaf spot resistant blend of three to five varieties would be appropriate. Don't simply buy a 'Sports Turf Mix' - buy a blend of 100% perennial ryegrass. It's important to get these areas established with perennial turfgrass cover (i.e. perennial ryegrass) before the annual bluegrass re-encroaches (either from seed or from existing plants which have collapsed, formed a void, and appear 'dead'). Any targeted core aeration, core re-incorporation, and slit seeding of perennial ryegrass will aid in the establishment of perennial ryegrass in these locations. Try to seed at 8.0 to 10.0 lbs seed per 1000 sq

ft. As the football season continues, use a rotary spreader to apply more perennial ryegrass seed and allow the athletes to cleat-in the seed. You may even want to seed at the conclusion of the season.

Q: We are interested in receiving advice regarding a baseball infield that has been neglected for years. It is a dirt infield and we would like to put down a grass infield. Any suggestions on where to start?

A: Although not as aesthetically pleasing as a turfgrass infield, dirt infields are generally easier to maintain and, in most cases, are the most appropriate for municipal/parks and recreation facilities. Turfgrass infields, while appropriate for higher-maintenance facilities, often develop lips rather quickly due to mismanagement, a lack of management, or both.

Generally, neglected skin surfaces most benefit from lip renovation/removal and a management program that involves the elimination of high and low spots through routine grooming (without moving infield mix into nearby turf areas), attention to the pitcher's mound and home plate areas, and the avoidance of adding infield mix on an annual basis - which gradually raises the infield elevation relative to the surrounding areas.

Dr. James Murphy is Extension Specialist in Turfgrass Management, Rutgers University; and SFMANJ Advisor. Brad Park is Sports Turf Res. & Ed. Coord., Rutgers University; and Editor, SFMANJ Update.

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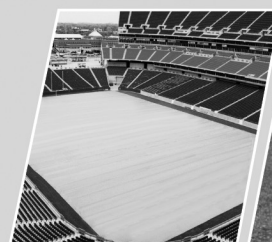
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