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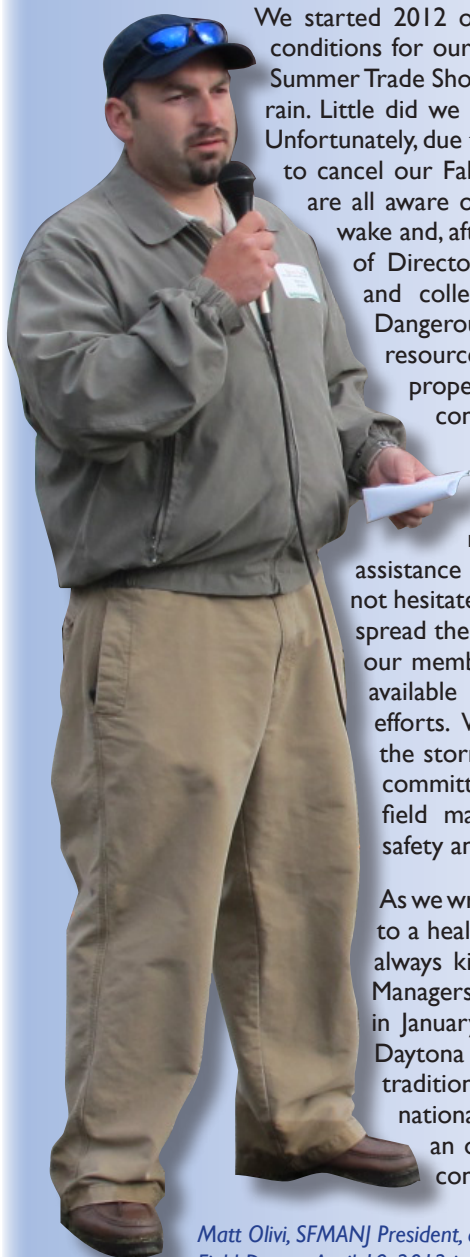
Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey

Winter 2012
Vol. 12, No. 4

P.O. Box 205, Pennsville, NJ 08070 • 856-514-3179 • www.sfmanj.org • e-mail: mail@sfmanj.org

A Message from The President

By Matt Olivi



We started 2012 off with great weather and perfect conditions for our Spring Field Day event. Then, our Summer Trade Show Event was cut short by torrential rain. Little did we know, the worst was yet to come. Unfortunately, due to Hurricane Sandy, we were forced to cancel our Fall Field Day event all together. We are all aware of the devastation Sandy left in her wake and, after considerable thought, the Board of Directors felt it best to let its members and colleagues focus on higher priorities. Dangerous travel conditions, limited fuel resources and recovery from severe property damage around the state all contributed to the decision to cancel the event. While some areas of New Jersey were severely damaged, others sustained very little. Field managers and organizations needing assistance rebuilding or repairing fields should not hesitate to contact SFMANJ so that we can spread the word to the membership. Many of our members and colleagues have resources available to help with ongoing recovery efforts. We realize that a full recovery from the storm will take a long time and we are committed to helping New Jersey sports field managers continue to maintain the safety and playability of their fields.

As we wrap-up another year, we look forward to a healthy start to 2013. Each new year is always kicked-off by the annual Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) conference in January. This year we will be traveling to Daytona Beach, Florida. SFMANJ has a proud tradition of being well represented at this national event. The conference provides an opportunity for us to compare and contrast what we are doing with other

Matt Olivi, SFMANJ President, addresses attendees at the 2012 Spring Field Day on April 19, 2012 in Morris Township, NJ.

STMA chapters throughout the country. Members of the Board of Directors in attendance will be introduced to new strategies that can be effectively implemented here in our New Jersey Chapter. We strongly encourage our local membership to attend the conference if possible. The educational event always proves to be extremely rewarding to all of those in attendance. The educational sessions focus on the latest turfgrass research and field maintenance practices. If you're interested in the latest equipment and tools of the trade, the STMA Conference hosts a two-day trade show that is second to none. We hope to see you there.

SFMANJ is always interested in supporting the next generation of field managers through our scholarship program. We are proud to award both Kyle Genova and Erik Taylor from Rutgers University with scholarships for academic excellence in 2012. Congratulations to Kyle and Erik. We are proud of your accomplishments. As the financial health of the chapter continues to strengthen, SFMANJ has budgeted to double the scholarship funds available to students for 2013 and hopes to continue to increase available funds to deserving students as we move forward.

Despite the challenges we've faced throughout 2012 the state of our New Jersey Chapter of Sports Field Managers is strong. Please continue to provide your Board of Directors with feedback as we move into the New Year. Let us know how the association can best serve its membership. We always accomplish more through collaboration and team work. Keep an eye out for advertisements as our events schedule for 2013 comes together. We look forward to seeing you at future meetings and events.

Matt Olivi is Sports Turf Manager, Piscataway Board of Education, Piscataway, NJ; and SFMANJ President

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Welcome! New and Renewed SFMANJ Members

Currently we have 291 new & renewed members. Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey mailed invoices for 2012 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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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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National Organization

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This newsletter is the official quarterly publication of the
Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey.

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

Atlantic City *Surf Stadium* in 2012

By Sean Connell



This year the City of Atlantic City had the old Surf Stadium resurfaced and made ready for play. This stadium was originally a minor league stadium for the Independent league team. Since the team bankrupted in 2008 the stadium had not been maintained. The box seats had to have new sheet rock. The roof had to be repaired with new shingles. The field had to be re-surfaced. I was the low-bid contractor on the field portion of this stadium.

The original bid had a basic premise of how to re-do the field by providing specifications for grading, sod, infield mix and warning track mix. This stadium was built like a large golf green: subsurface drains with a gravel layer serving as a water table and straight sand as a growing medium. The grading plan had one elevation of "11" at home plate and no other reference points. Of course, the bid instructions were to laser grade the field and nothing else. All other assumptions were up to the winning contractor to survey and make their own grading plan.

Well, that's what I did, just like most jobs I do. I shot the existing grades and gridded-out the elevations. From those grades, I calculated the slopes by making the least amount of cuts and fills, and made a grading plan. It is easy. I have been using laser technology since 1992 when I first saw it applied on a golf tee. You find the lowest elevation and work out from there. Of course with a field that is layered with a gravel blanket and sand capped, you have to check depths of material and make field adjustments. I quickly discerned that this field most likely had never been laser graded. It was flat but had some depth issues in some places from way too much material to way too shallow.

The amazing part of laser grading is the machine control aspect of it. I am still amazed after owning three laser tractors for all these years when the machine is telling me to cut and fill, but rest assured I trust the equipment. And it never lets me down. In this project, we had a deadline of 30 days to strip and remove the sod, rototill under the organic layer (which was still huge because the field had not been aerified in years), laser grade, then sod. Also: amend the infield and add material, re-grade the warning track and, as an added bonus, the irrigation which was supposed to 95% functional was really about 20% functional.


This part is where having tons of experience kicks-in in all facets of construction. We completed the striping, rototilling, grading and re-sodding in 6 days. - and had a quite a jump on the infield mix and warning track. Once the sod was down, the pressure was off somewhat. We could work from the warning track. The irrigation was of course repaired at same time I was doing these tasks by a company named Quality Cut, Inc. out of Farmingdale, NJ Doug and Jerry McGee brothers. I have used these guys before but not on such a big job. They exceeded my expectations and identified broken wires, leaks and heads improperly functioning. They had the system at 100% efficient in 2 days. They did a great job and I could not have met my time line without them.

The field was constructed with a rootzone consisting of straight sand with no organic material - which was great the day it rained after we tilled it. It rained inches overnight and all day. The next morning we graded and by the end of the day it was dusty, so I was pretty sure the drains worked. The following day we sodded the field using a track sod installer called a WMI Warner Manufacturing track machine. The sand dried out so quick and had no organic matter to it. A simple turn with any

Continued on page 18

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Problems facing sports field managers:



Refining cultural practices to better manage high traffic sports fields

Brad Park, Rutgers University

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article first appeared in Sports Turf Manager: Vol. 25, No. 3. Sports Turf Manager (ISSN 1201-3765) is the official publication of the Sports Turf Association, Inc., Guelph, Ontario, Canada

One of the most significant problems facing turf managers responsible for sports fields and grounds at schools and municipalities is maintaining adequate turf cover on high traffic sports fields. Maintaining dense cool-season turfgrass cover on sport fields has numerous benefits beyond aesthetic appeal including improving player safety, stabilizing soil, and reducing summer annual weed encroachment, particularly summer annual weeds like crabgrass, goosegrass and prostrate knotweed that ultimately revert to bare soil in fall.

There are numerous reasons why even highly competent sports field managers may have difficulty maintaining turf cover on highly used – or “abused” – fields. These reasons may extend beyond the sports field manager’s control including installation of field lights (i.e. day AND nighttime field use), not having the option to hold events on a synthetic field where natural turf field space is minimal, limited budget and labor resources, and user groups and management unwilling to take fields out-of-play when turf cover and/or weed encroachment justify renovation and time is required to allow new turf to fully establish.

Conversely, many schools and towns struggle with implementing primary turfgrass management cultural practices; the result is a more rapid decline in turf cover during periods of intense traffic. Primary cultural practices are mowing, fertilization, and irrigation (Turgeon, 1999). Cultivation (i.e. aerification) has traditionally been defined as supplementary cultural practice but can play a primary role in the management of high traffic sport fields. Regular overseeding of field centers and goal creases can often “make or break” the presence of turf cover in these locations; thus, the practice of overseeding is arguably an additional primary cultural practice for high traffic sports fields.

Mowing

Unfortunately, there are institutions mowing large, multi-acre sports fields and adjacent grounds locations with rotary mowers equipped with single 5-ft-wide mowing decks. During spring and early summer months when turf growth is most rapid, it can be extremely challenging to mow frequently enough with small mowers at a desired cutting height without scalping. Removing too much turfgrass leaf tissue in one mowing weakens the turf and results in excess clippings left on the surface, which if not physically removed (a labor-intensive process), can lead to severe turf thinning and weed encroachment. Turfgrass that lacks density and is infested with summer annual weeds tends to be less traffic tolerant.

Wide-area, multi-deck rotary mowers with cutting swaths ranging from 11 to 16-ft are available and can greatly improve the efficiency of mowing large expanses of turf. It is unfortunate to observe some institutions ready to invest in new equipment pass on acquiring larger mowing equipment for the reason that “the maintenance department already has a mower”, albeit a 5-ft-wide machine. Investment in wide-area mowers can reduce the labor time spent on mowing and allow these resources to be allocated to increasing the frequency of overseeding, fertilization, or other cultural practices.

Fertilization

School and municipal sports fields are commonly under-fertilized and subsequently exhibit limited growth and poor recuperative capacity, attributes that do not favor good turf cover under high traffic.

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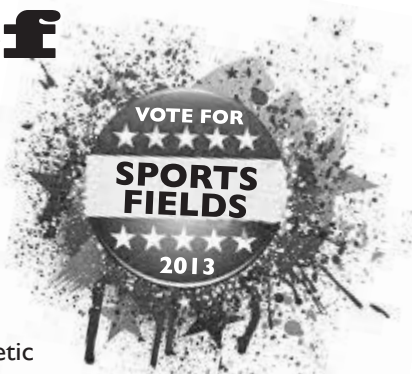
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The Politics of Sports Field Management

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 21 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:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

- Then 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.
- 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.
- Parents of players- Alaska Governor Sarah Palin expressed it perfectly in her Republican vice Presidential nominee acceptance speech- "What is the difference between a hockey mom and a pit bull? ... Lipstick!" 'Nuff said. Parents can be tough critics but they can also be staunch supporters. How they are treated usually makes the difference.
- The committees who run youth league sports- very dangerous territory. If you fall in that quick sand you might not be saved. Watch where you tread!
- The public and the press have a perception of you or your field that can be accurate or inaccurate. Like it or not, these external customers can influence your internal customers.
- Vendors, suppliers and contractors can help make you look good or let you wither on the vine. So can your coworkers and other sports field managers. Treat your network right.
- Family, and close friends because we need their love and support; without them life is a lonely place.
- And Nature, we are its stewards. We can never be successful if we work against it.

As customer service representatives, we're the "go to" guys and gals when it comes to our sports field facilities. Stakeholders at all levels come to us when they need something from us or want

Continued on page 12

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The Sports Turf Manager as a Crisis Communicator

Sports Turf Managers Association 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 importance 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.

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2013 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

STMA Annual Conference
January 15-19, 2013
Daytona Beach, FL
800.323.3875
www.stma.org

2013 Rutgers NJAES OCPE Courses
Organic Turfgrass Management
January 29, 2013

Reducing Pesticide Inputs & Exploring Organic Options for Sports Turf
February 12, 2013

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February 20, 2013

Two-Day Athletic Field Maintenance
February 21-22, 2013
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Berkely Heights BOE



Georgia Golf Construction, Inc.

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Submitted by Sean Connell

I started Georgia Golf Construction in March 1999 in Marietta, GA where I grew-up. After receiving an Associate Degree in Turf Agronomy from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in Tifton, GA in 1990, I worked as an assistant superintendent for several years and became a construction superintendent in 1995. I traveled and worked in 12 states building golf courses. I actually started building athletic fields in high school when I worked for a landscaper.

My company (Georgia Golf Construction) started building athletic fields in 2000 and every since then the percentage of athletic field work has increased every year; we barely do any golf course work. My company specializes in finish work consisting of design build, consulting, machine control laser grading, synthetic base grading, sod installation, infield grading, drainage, pitcher's mound construction, deep tine and core aeration, topdressing and de-thatching of turf. We use state-of-the-art equipment that we have purchased and have it built for a specific job like machine control laser grading.

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HAPPY NEW YEAR

FROM

SPORTS FIELD MANAGERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

SFMANJ IS ENDING A GREAT YEAR AND LOOKING FORWARD TO AN EVEN BETTER 2013.

Our membership renewal forms will come out in the next few weeks and we are asking you to please check them over and make any changes and/or additions that are applicable. If you would like to use your home address instead of your business address, please make a note of that.

To cut down on postage costs, we occasionally send out email blasts regarding important current activities or notices. Please be sure we have an email address for you. If you don't have one at work, please let us know how to contact you at home. We don't want anyone left out!



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New Jersey Green Expo: Turf and Landscape Conference 2012

December 4-6, 2012

Atlantic City, NJ

By Debbie Savard



The Politics of Sports Field Management

Continued from page 6

something done. From being the “tenth man” on the baseball team to the event coordinator for a non-sporting event, we are the hub of the wheel. It’s great when our customers are happy and it’s miserable when they’re not.

Remember that a problem is the difference between what somebody has and what they want. Our job is to solve problems; big and small. Unfortunately we face challenges such as resources, time, weather and the unexpected. Even when we do everything right or at least the best we can, somebody can be dissatisfied, usually over the small problems. They complain. We get defensive. Things escalate. We feel like we get no respect. They feel that we are not listening to them. Frustration sets in and breeds distrust. There is less cooperation. Communication stops, our effectiveness shrinks and nobody is happy. Sound familiar?

When discord strikes, both sides own the problem. Let’s look at the part we own.

When Sports Field Managers and their customers have disagreements resulting in communication breakdown, there are no winners. Let’s look further into the dynamics of Human Relations.

Good Human Relations skills begin with Respect. The American psychologist Abraham Maslow described human self esteem needs — the need for respect from others and the need for self-respect. Without the fulfillment of these needs, Maslow

suggests, an individual feels discouraged, weak and inferior. Self respect begins with honest self knowledge and self awareness. Respect from others often entails recognition, acceptance, and appreciation. Respect from others must be earned. Self respect, on the other hand, is an inside job.

Self respect begins with self care. Good self care results in good self control. Occasionally, we all find ourselves hungry, angry, lonely or tired. When we feel any of those ways, we are emotionally vulnerable and our self control can be compromised. It is good to take care of ourselves. If our needs are neglected, we are not at our best. And if we are not taking care of our interests, how can we take care of others?

Respect for others is based on self-respect and follows the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.” It is the value that makes the world a more decent and civilized place.

But this is where it starts to get sticky. The world is not always a more decent and civilized place. Things happen. People disagree. Conflicts occur.

Have you ever had this happen to you? You are in the middle of preparing your field for an event. A team comes out and starts using your field while you are working on it. You approach the coach and explain what you are doing. In spite of what you say, not only does the team stay, but they damage the field as well.

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Problems facing sports field managers:

Refining cultural practices to better manage high traffic sports fields

Public agencies often rely on contractors to apply fertilizers to sports fields. Following a public bidding process, landscape and sports field firms are awarded contracts to perform various tasks, including the application of a defined quantity of nitrogen (N) per unit area, typically over multiple applications. In some cases, fields scheduled to receive an ample supply of N display insufficient growth and have an off-color appearance, classic indicators of turfgrass in-need of N. While not all contractors will “short” the school or town on N quantities, many contractors apply N as liquid applications and it is difficult for school and town representatives to fully audit what is in the contractor’s spray tank.

Granular-formulated fertilizers can allow for better auditing of contractor-applied fertilizer applications as well as allow for more N to be applied per individual application with lower potential for turfgrass leaf tip burn compared to liquid fertilizers. For example, to apply 0.75 lbs N/1000 ft² to an 80000 ft² football field and surrounds using a fertilizer that is 25% N (e.g. 25-0-0), it will require 240 lbs of fertilizer (e.g. five 50-lb bags of 25-0-0). Bags can be counted following the application to ensure that the appropriate quantity of fertilizer has been applied and thus, high traffic sports fields are better able to recuperative from damage.

Irrigation

Automatic irrigation systems are an important tool in the management of sports fields and are highly preferable to water reels and certainly non-irrigated sports field and grounds sites.

Too often, however, automatic systems are simply set on a program and then ignored resulting in some fields becoming saturated with water and a subsequent loss in turfgrass traffic tolerance. Water-saturated sports field soils may be a result of irrigation programs being allowed to run immediately following rain events or systems set to deliver a quantity of water that the sports field soil does not have the capacity to accept. In either case, the sports field manager must regularly assess soil moisture (i.e. buy a soil probe!), view weather data, and know the ability of his/her sports field to accept varying quantities of rainfall and irrigation in order to program the automatic irrigation system accordingly.

Cultivation

Poor design and construction methods can accelerate turf loss on sports fields. If designed with inadequate surface pitch and/or manipulated when wet, even those soils that may have supported agronomic crops will be prone to poor drainage and compaction, conditions that are not conducive to growing healthy, traffic tolerant turfgrass.

Deep slicing and deep tine cultivation are methods to alleviate compaction at deeper soil depths, often a result of poor

construction procedures. Severely compacted soils may not readily allow a tine to penetrate to a soil depth greater than several inches. In these cases, it can be advantageous to first perform deep slicing. These tools are equipped with heavy-duty rotating knives that cut through and fracture the soil.

Cultivation in turfgrass is more routinely performed with machines equipped with tines (hollow or solid) capable of penetrating to a depth of 3 to 4 inches. Use of hollow tines allows for the removal of a core and can be useful to alleviate shallow soil compaction, manage thatch accumulation, and following core re-incorporation, create seedbed at the surface in preparation for overseeding.

Too often tow-behind, drum-type cultivation units are used across dry compacted sports fields with little or no impact on the surface. Albeit more expensive to purchase and maintain, reciprocating tine coring machines powered by a tractor (i.e. attached to the PTO) equipped with 0.75 to 1.0 inch tines positioned on a tight centering pattern are most effective in alleviating compaction and bringing soil to the surface.

Overseeding

During the course of a traffic-intensive sports season, turfgrass cover in goal creases, field centers, and penalty kick areas will inevitably thin. As turf cover begins to decline, it is important to initiate an overseeding program to introduce new plants. All too often sports field managers wait for nearly 100% bare soil to appear prior to introducing seed. While overseeding at this point is better than taking no action, the process should be started prior to severe damage becoming apparent.

Choosing the appropriate seed for an overseeding program is critical. Many seed mixtures are marketed as “sports turf mixtures” leading field managers and purchasing agents to buy these products for use in overseeding. These mixtures typically contain Kentucky bluegrass and tall fescue and are better suited for establishment projects where there is ample time to wait for the turf to fully establish before use.

Perennial ryegrass seed blends (i.e. two or more varieties of the same turf species) are the best choice for routine overseeding of high traffic field locations as this species will germinate more readily in cooler soil temperatures compared to Kentucky bluegrass and tall fescue, making it an ideal choice for overseeding during the fall and early spring sports seasons.

Fields badly damaged resulting from summer sports can be core cultivated to a 4-inch depth in late summer. Following core re-incorporation using a tow-behind drag, a blend of two-to-five perennial ryegrass varieties can be sown using a slit-seeder operated in two directions at a minimum of 5 lbs seed/1000 ft²

Continued on page 17

The Politics of Sports Field Management

Continued from page 12

The natural reaction to this type of conflict is ANGER and the anger could take the form of:

- Retaliation
- Us against them
- Negativity
- Poor Attitude
- Defensiveness
- Distrust
- Passive aggressive behavior
- Despair

These feelings are none other than good old fashioned Self Righteous Anger. If you look at this anger closely you might find that it is driven by good old fashioned self centered fear.

Self centered fears include:

- Being made look foolish or be embarrassed.
- Being made to something that you don't want to do.
- Being afraid that it will cost you something.
- Being afraid that you will lose something.
- Being afraid others will be mad at you.
- Being afraid that you will lose your personal power or control.
- Being afraid that you are not enough.

The more you think about it the angrier you could become. You could take it out on somebody, the coach, or a coworker or family member. Or, you might internalize your feelings only to have them come out another way. Have you ever indulged in a supersized portion of self pity or plotted how to get even? These behaviors waste a great deal of personal time and energy.

Ask yourself what could have done first to have avoided the situation? Did you do your part first by:

- Checking a schedule to see if anybody else had a legitimate right to the field?
- Communicate properly to the stakeholders your plan to be on the field?
- Properly request that they stay off the field?

The issue is not what the coach or the team did; the issue is how you handled it and how you will handle it next time. Remember, being the victim is tiresome.

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.



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
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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, clapping 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

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

Continued on page 18

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Refining cultural practices to better manage high traffic sports fields

per direction (i.e. total of 10 lbs seed/1000 ft²). Application of a starter fertilizer and maintaining moisture at the soil (i.e. seedbed) surface will increase the probability of successful establishment.

During the sports season, prior to games and practices, perennial ryegrass overseeding can be performed using a rotary spreader and allowing athletes to 'cleat-in' the seed to achieve necessary seed-to-soil contact. In the midst of the sports season, the same rotary spreader can be used to apply seed prior to games and is preferential to repeated use of a slit-seeder as the vertical blades on these machines can potentially injure new seedlings resulting from previous overseeding efforts.

Applying a sufficient quantity of seed is important to achieve overseeding success. A reasonable starting strategy would be to apply 6 lbs seed/1000 ft² between the hash marks of the football field prior to every home game. This area on a standard Canadian football field is 16830 ft² (330 x 51-ft). To apply 6 lbs seed/1000 ft² to this area, it will require two 50-lb bags of seed. If after several games, and potentially other events, turf cover is still diminishing

and new seedlings are not establishing, the seeding 'rate' can be increased to one or more additional 50-lb bags.

Conclusions

At minimum, turfgrass requires mowing, fertilization, and water. Regular mowing with efficient equipment, supplying adequate fertility, and avoiding the temptation to rely simply on the program 'clock' to apply irrigation are basic refinements to primary cultural practices. To maintain turf cover on highly trafficked sports fields, the integration of cultivation and overseeding into existing primary cultural practices will better ensure success.

Reference

Turgeon, A.J. 1999. Turfgrass management. Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.

Brad Park is Sports Turf Education & Research Coordinator, Rutgers University; member of the SFMANJ Board of Directors since 2003; and Editor, SFMANJ Update newsletter



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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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Atlantic City Surf Stadium in 2012

piece of equipment made a rut that had to be repaired making sod installation a pain. Using straight sand as a growing medium came from the golf industry and is called a California method. The theory was you could save money without adding organic material or the cost of blending. I have seen method used on golf courses and athletic fields with most opinions siding with the notion that they wish they had used some organics.

After sod, we laid plywood over to the infield. We did a physical soil test for particles and determined that the infield mix was a very sandy material. The test came back with of course heavy sand, light clay and silt for existing infield mix. The city asked about different choices in infield mixes which we reviewed and selected a Marco clay product. The infield mix they choose was 15 to 20% percent clay. Not quite a major league scale but close. As an added amenity we installed 2 zones of irrigation dedicated to just the infield. This irrigates the infield completely in just minutes maximizing efficiently. Some customers have commented that having water on demand like that is better than adding heavy clay infield mixes. The exotic infield mixes with high clay contents have so much additional maintenance involved we have noticed that they prefer irrigation water to seal infields before games. We rototilled blending-in new infield mix, laser graded and topdressed with vitrified clay which is a sister product to the infield mix. It matched colors very well and finished very nice.

The warning track is 24' wide on the outfield side and 15' on the foul lines. It had not been maintained in years, so the first thing we did was strip the top 2 inches of material. We then recycled the material by screening on site. We handpicked large weeds and then screened with a skid steer bucket that was built for rock removal. The process was a great rain day project that we completed in stages. After cleaning we spread the material and picked weeds and trash as needed to groom. After the warning track was finished we built the bullpen mounds (2 on each side) and the pitcher's mound out of Marco mound clay products. The batter's boxes were also constructed with green bricks and the Marco mound clay.

All in all we only worked about 14 days on construction. As soon as we installed sod, the 30 day maintenance began. The contract had a 2-year option on maintenance in which the City contracted with Georgia Golf Construction. We just completed our first year of maintenance and have closed the stadium for the winter. I am writing this article just after the Hurricane Sandy and the second Nor'easter the following week. The stadium field did well. We had to pick shingles that got ripped off. Right before all the rain we aerified and topdressed which served us well. The field drained very well considering the amount of rain we received in a week.

Sean Connell is President, Georgia Golf Construction, Woodbine, NJ; and SFMANJ Treasurer



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