SPORTS TURF

by Ron Hall, associate editor

'The Boss'—our buddy

"The Boss" (aka Bruce Springsteen) knocks the socks off millions of rock and rollers. When "The Boss" plays, stadiums fill and pulsate with foot-stomping fever. Last year

it was Michael Jackson. Next summer, who knows?

They're the unknowing friends of groundsmen who pamper ballyard turfgrass everywhere.

Because of phenomena like megastar rockers, grounds managers at stadiums with the real stuff, grass, are pushing turfgrass beyond what even they could have imagined a few years ago. Unintentionally they're also dismembering the myth known as synthetic turf.

They're demonstrating—if the decision-makers at the carpeted stadiums really want to see—that

turfgrass is tough, real tough. It can, and should, be used for more than just ball games. That's been a rap against grass.

Sports turf? Let's call it "entertainment turf." Members of the Sports Turf Manager's Association (STMA) bend the terms as they increase our knowledge.

A handful of groundsmen at professional ballparks kicked off STMA five years ago to trade tips and pool collective experiences. That circle is growing. STMA is gaining members and spinning off new techniques to expand turfgrass's usefulness.

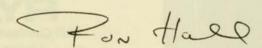
They're aided in their jobs by sophisticated satellite-radar weather forecasting, a new generation of irrigation and maintenance equipment, and improved varieties of turfgrass.

Groundsmen didn't have these tools when the first roll of Astro Turf bellied up to the outfield fences in Houston's Astrodome 20 years ago.

Far-sighted grounds managers are also re-adapting and tinkering with products that have been around. Breathing, porous, geo-textile covers, previously used only in plant beds and golf sand traps, are now unfurled over turfgrass to save it from the pounding of spectators at concerts. The crunch of vehicles in motor sports events. The cleats of subs along the sidelines.

The renaissance of turfgrass in our ballyards, the new entertainment turf, is under way.

To "The Boss" and others who challenge our grounds managers: thanks.



Bushman says the articles (the last, recently mailed and titled "Fall Lawn Care") accomplish two purposes: "giving the PLCAA high exposure, as well as educating the public on proper lawn care."

Bushman tells WEEDS TREES & TURF Stauffer Chemical is investigating other joint projects with PLCAA.

LAWN CARE

Dow offers LCOs handy door-hanger

Lawn care operators can reassure customers about the safety of materials used on their lawns with a doorhanger designed to sort fact from fancy for homeowners.

The piece can help increase customer confidence, according to representatives from its publisher, Dow Chemical Co., Midland, Mich.

Dow representatives have free samples available, and bulk supplies can be ordered through the Professional Lawn Care Association of America. The brochures contain no company or product identification.



SPORTS TURF

Bossard talks dirt with top groundsmen

Start baseball field renovations now, says Roger Bossard, field maintenance whiz for the Chicago White Sox.

"Late summer and fall is a logical time for local park districts to undertake a rebuilding program because vacations are over and the fields can be worked without disrupting playing schedules," says Bossard, who hosted a special gathering of groundskeepers in mid-July.