

New sports turf association seeking allies on sports field

Turf industry leader Dr. Fred Grau pleads for unity in a national drive for safer sports fields.

"It's not just a cause anymore. It should be a crusade," said Dr. Grau to a 12-member "sports turf summit" this past October in Beltsville, Md. The gathering, the second summit convened at the Agricultural Research Station this year, will seek the help of allied green industry associations

for safer ballyards.

"Let's bring all the splinters together," said Dr. Grau, who along with Dr. Jack Murray of the USDA co-chaired the meeting.

"This is an opportune time for us to concentrate our efforts," Murray added. "We've got to let people know who we are and what we're doing."

Attendees of the summit



Jack Murray, left, and Fred Grau chaired turf "summit."

agreed to form the National Sports Turf Council (NSTC) under the wing of The Musser Foundation which Dr. Grau directs. The NSTC will act as an "umbrella" organization. It will seek the support of allied associations and suppliers serving the industry.

The next step for the fledgling council will be the drafting of policy statements by a committee

chaired by Dr. Eliot Roberts of the Lawn Institute.

Look for NSTC to begin a search for an executive director soon also. Murray said he would like to see a director in place (possibly headquartered in Beltsville) within a year.

Says Murray: "I just think in 10 years we're going to be overrun with things we should have done five years before, or even today."

Pro gridders say real grass better

Most National League Football players prefer grass over synthetic turf.

That's the message John Macik, of the NFL Player's Association, delivered recently to the second "Sports Turf Summit" in Beltsville, Md. A

dozen top turf experts attended The Musser Foundation-sponsored summit.

Macik said the Player's Association sent surveys to 1,300 NFL players during the spring of 1985.

Survey results?

Of the 465 responding players, 380 favored natural turf, 55 indicated no preference, and 30 said they'd rather play on synthetic turf.

The NFL Player's Association advocates natural turf playing surfaces in an effort to protect the careers of professional football players. Macik added he feels the natural-versus-synthetic argument is heating.

Says Macik: "I think you're going to see the NCAA and other athletic powers putting together some forums to determine how they're going to deal with this controversy."

The five best playing surfaces voted by NFL players are all natural grass: Tampa Bay, Miami, Denver, Anaheim and Los Angeles.



NFL's John Macik

New lab for ag center

The Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC) of Ohio State University has received a new laboratory to study the fate of insecticides on turfgrasses.

The Wooster, Ohio, lab, under the direction of Dr. Harry D. Niemczyk, professor of turfgrass entomology, will place emphasis on the fate and movement of insecticides in thatch and underlying soils.

"This facility will allow us to undertake some long-overdue studies on what happens to insecticides and

pesticides after they are applied to turf," Niemczyk tells WTT.

One project examines the role of microbial degradation in the breakdown of insecticides used for grub control.

"We have to begin to pay a good bit more attention to things like groundwater contamination," cautions Niemczyk.

Equipment and staff funding comes largely from the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation and allied industries.



Lab technician Jill Karner works with a flash evaporator.