

# Turf managers help make World Cup soccer story one for the record books

**WORLD CUP CITIES**—The announcers might still be shouting over the winning scores (Brazil 3, Italy 2 in a finals shootout), but World Cup soccer '94 is one for the books. And although the U.S. soccer team was eliminated along the way, American sports turf managers won considerable accolades for the way they prepared and cared for the playing fields, indoors and out.

In retrospect, the World Cup soccer championships may represent the greatest challenge ever to face American sports turf managers.

"The U.S. may not lead the world when it comes to the game of soccer," says Doug Fender, executive director of the American Sod Producers Association, "but the contribution we can make to excellent playing conditions is unmatched."

Crews worked within tight schedules, on multiple-use fields. Foxboro hosted a "Pink Floyd" concert, Stanford, a graduation ceremony. At both sites, a protective material called Terra-Plas was used to minimize field damage.

Seven of the eight fields were resodded. San Francisco's Stanford Stadium was only partially sodded, but still required covering a portion of the running track with turf.

"We were dealing with an extremely tight schedule," says Neal Beeson, owner of Sports Turf & Facility Management Company, Anaheim, Calif. Beeson's company sodded the Rose Bowl, which required the entire field to be regraded and resodded.

"After removing and hauling away the existing sod, and regrading to bring the field to a consistent one percent grade



**A groundsman looks like he's ready to play as his turf teammates re-sod the Rose Bowl in preparation for World Cup soccer.**

Photo courtesy Southland Sod Farms

from crown to within 12 feet of the stadium perimeter, we began laying 137,000 square feet of sod on May 1," says Beeson. Games there began on June 3.

The biggest challenge fell to the crew at Michigan State University, where sod grown on plastic sheeting was placed in large, soil-filled, metal modules of varied shapes. (See July, 1993 LM)

**All-star turf team**—The Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) organized a special task force to engineer the field logistics.

Don Lockerbie, president of the Olympus Group, was venue coordinator for the STMA's Architectural, Construction and Turf (ACT) Team.

Steve Cockerham of University of California Riverside served as ACT Team agronomic coordinator and manager of field playing conditions testing. Cocker-

ham went so far as to invent a Field Performance Indicator to measure ball bounce, roll distance and deflection, to assure similar conditions at all venues.

Dr. Jim Watson also served as an ACT agronomic coordinator.

Serving as ACT Team turf technicians:

- George Toma, Chicago's Soldier Field, Detroit's Silverdome;
- Chip Toma, Foxboro (Mass.) Stadium, New Jersey Meadowlands;
- Steve Wightman, the Rose Bowl (Pasadena, Calif.);
- Tom Lujan, Stanford University Stadium (San Francisco);
- Don Follet, the Dallas Cotton Bowl, Orlando's Citrus Bowl;
- Tony Burnett, RFK Stadium (Washington, D.C.);
- Eugene Mayer, all practice fields.

## This course battles late sleepers in Keizer, Ore.

**KEIZER, Ore.**—Golf managers at McNary Golf Club here had to battle to get a variance on noise curfews set by city council.

Gregg Smith, a resident whose condo is two blocks from McNary—but right near its maintenance facility—convinced city fathers to outlaw any mowing activities before 7 a.m.

The Keizer police warned the course about violations in April. Not much later, a public hearing was held, at which 200 McNary Development homeowners showed up in support of their course.

"City council decided we could mow our

greens only at 6 a.m.," says golf course superintendent Dave Bashaw. "All other mowing has to wait until 7 a.m."

Interestingly enough, the ordinance outlaws a gang mower hooked to a tractor, but not a fertilizer spreader hooked to the same tractor. Nonetheless, "We haven't pushed things; we want to be a good neighbor," Bashaw contends.

The council legislation also established decibel levels for other golf maintenance tasks, which are measured at the corner of Smith's property.