

# A 1981 decision by George Toma set the quality standard for bowl turf in the modern era.



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That blend was Ph.D.<sup>®</sup> and Toma's decision has made a big difference in the world of sports turf ever since.

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As Toma puts it: "I recommend Ph.D.<sup>®</sup> to any turf manager who must have durable, show quality turf. It germinates rapidly, develops a deep, strong root system very quickly, has excellent dark green color and can take a lot of punishment."

That's good advice from an acknowledged master of turf preparation.

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# That Sevin® SL controls compared with its other benefits.

True, nothing is more effective than SEVIN® brand SL carbaryl insecticide at controlling turf pests like grubs, sod

webworms, and chinchbugs.

But perhaps more important, SEVIN® brand SL, unlike other turf insecticides, carries

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Because it's low in mammalian toxicity, it's ideal for use

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# 28 turf insects is insignificant

on lawns, parks, golf courses, or wherever people and animals may be present.

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It's the one insecticide your customers have known and trusted for more than 25 years of dependable outdoor

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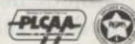
Because you are responsible for more than just healthy plantlife.

*From the turf care group at Union Carbide.*



Carbide Agricultural Products Company, Inc. As with any insecticide or herbicide, always read and follow label instructions.

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# AN OLD MASTER

Harry Wilcox uses the knowledge of more than half-a-century in the turf business to help save teenaged knees and ankles in Pennsylvania. He works his magic like the old master he is.

by Jerry Roche, editor

**T**urf consultant Harry O. Wilcox has celebrated the ninetieth anniversary of his birth. He is hard of hearing and slow of foot. But a soil probe in his hands is like a sip from the Fountain of Youth.

One day not long ago, Wilcox spryly raised the trusty custom-made probe over his head and thrust it into a small bare spot on the varsity football practice field at Warren (Pa.) High School.

"Look at that," he told a handful of observers. "That's good, loose topsoil. I've been on fields where my probe bounces right off the ground."

Wilcox takes particular interest in Warren's practice field. The cultural

practices used on the field are the same ones he suggested for Upper Merion (Pa.) High School more than 20 years ago.

John "Toby" Shea, then varsity football coach at Warren, read a June, 1965 article in *Athletic Journal*, entitled "Safer Athletic Fields." Its author was Harry O. Wilcox.

Wilcox moved to Warren in 1979 and met Shea one day in 1980, a copy of "Safer Athletic Fields" in his hand.

"I'm familiar with that article," noted Shea. "I'm glad to meet the author. We've been trying to follow the practices the article describes since I first read it."

When Wilcox and county extension agent Bernie Wingert first inspected Warren's practice field (at Shea's request), they had few suggestions.

"Harry and Bernie recommended we put tile down because we had a bad drainage problem," remembers Shea. "So we tiled along a bank next to the field and along the outside of the track's straightaway on the other side. We now also have six-inch tiles along the inside of the entire track."

In 1980, Warren varsity football players suffered exactly two injuries during practices: both sprained ankles, both occurring on the cinder track during calisthenics.

Two years later, Wilcox again visited Shea (who is a practicing athletic trainer), and again asked him about injuries. The reply: "We had to tape a few ankles due to hardness of the field during dry weather when we couldn't water the field. But we had no injuries serious enough to cause any players to miss either practice or play."

## The program

Warren is a small school district, and thus must manage fields using limited financial resources. Though varsity games are at the local municipal field which is mowed by city crews, Warren High employees must aerate, seed and fertilize that field. What money is saved goes toward improving three practice fields, especially the varsity field behind the high school.

Annual cost for materials used on the practice fields is \$440. Here is what the cultural program looks like:

**Early spring:** Aerate fields to break up compaction. After the field

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Harry O. Wilcox (left), probe in hand, believes that soil compaction is the athletic field manager's biggest problem. He shares that observation with Arden Walter (center) and Toby Shea of Warren (Pa.) High School.



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# What aquatics experts have to say about new Sonar.

## Terry Westergard

Owner  
South Shore Fish Camp,  
Lake Orange, Florida

"Sonar controls weeds longer than mechanical harvesting and I've seen no adverse effects from it. And the fishermen like the fact that they are able to fish in places where they haven't been able to get into for a number of years. They enjoy it because it reminds them of what the lake was like before the hydrilla.

"Fishermen want to go out without worrying about burning up their engines, and be able to throw in a lure and catch a fish. This is what we had 10 or 15 years ago."

## Mike Mahler

Operations Coordinator  
Polk County Environmental Services  
(Florida)

"With Sonar, we were able to put the lakes back to the condition they were in before hydrilla came in. We've had some lakes that were virtually 100% surfaced out in hydrilla before we used Sonar. Now, it's rare to see hydrilla in those places.

"Sonar can be applied in the early spring or late winter, when our crews normally are idle. It's helped us catch the problem and knock it down before it becomes a problem.

"Most of our treatments ended up with more than 12 months of control. Contact herbicides give us about three months of control.

"On a per-acre, per-year-of-control basis, Sonar is cheaper than any other material."

## Will Davis

Executive Director  
Lake County  
Water Authority (Florida)

"If I had to say there was one big advantage to Sonar, it's very selective on the plants it controls.

"Hydrilla is our main problem, and Sonar is our primary chemical for treating it. With Sonar, we got 99% control on Lake Yale without retreating...and we're seeing a good influx of native plants to take the place of the hydrilla.

"We're getting much longer term control, which means we're putting a lot less chemical in the water. Every year that you don't get a regrowth makes a big difference in costs over the long run. There was no cost-effective method of getting a lake clean until Sonar came along. I don't know of a chemical on the market that can even come close to it."

## Paul Myers

President  
Applied Aquatics,  
Eagle Lake, Florida

"I was one of the fortunate few who was able to work with the product during its development stages. I was extremely excited about it because new aquatic herbicides are few and far between.

"With Sonar, we've gotten annual control with a single application in lakes and ponds. With contact herbicides, you can figure you're going to have to treat two to three times a year.

"Sonar is the most recent aquatic herbicide to be registered by the EPA and is the most highly scrutinized product in terms of toxicological testing. That's extremely important to homeowners."

## Get the new Sonar story.

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has been aerated, bare and thin areas should be overseeded with Scott's Sports Turf Seed. A seeding rate of 2 to 3 lbs. per 1,000 sq. ft. is recommended. Apply Scott's ProTurf High Density Starter Fertilizer to the entire field to stimulate early spring growth.

**Spring:** Apply ProTurf High Density Starter Fertilizer to improve root development and density.

**Early summer:** Apply Scott's Fertilizer Plus Dicot Weed Control to eliminate dandelions and 23 other broadleaf weeds while providing a full feeding of fertilizer.

**Early fall:** A couple of weeks prior to the opening of the season, apply Scott's ProTurf High Density Super Fairway Fertilizer, for thick dense turf with crowd-pleasing color.

### Other practices

"Compaction is potentially our worst enemy," says Wilcox, a past president of the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council. "If you're on a limited budget, the best thing to use your money for is aeration. At least two times a year—the more the better. I've never seen a field ruined by over-aerating."

Wilcox recommends using open-spoon tines because, he says, they

penetrate into the soil up to five inches. Other kinds of tines only penetrate two to three inches, he believes.

Some turf managers put too much emphasis on applying seed, according to Wilcox. "Seed is important if you have large bare

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**ANY BARE SPOTS IN ATHLETIC FIELDS LARGER THAN THIS (4-5 INCHES IN DIAMETER) SHOULD NOT BE SEEDED, ACCORDING TO TURF CONSULTANT HARRY O. WILCOX.**

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spots," he notes. "But it just doesn't pay to seed areas smaller than four or five inches across. If you aerify and fertilizer those spots, they'll heal by themselves."

Warren High School personnel applied 50 pounds of seed to the area inside the running track, which includes the practice field, this year.

Wilcox also believes that lime should be applied according to the type of grass in use. Bluegrass

definitely needs periodic liming while turf-type tall fescue may not.

According to district maintenance supervisor Arden Walter, the fields are mowed at 3 inches during the summer and 2½ inches when football practice begins. "We don't believe in mowing too low," he says. "And the way we fertilize, we find that we've got to mow at least once a week."

Keeping the three fields playable—and safe—takes two people 30 hours per week, according to Walter.

### Constant cooperation

One of the most critical requirements of good field management is cooperation from the coaching staff.

Wilcox says that coaches should try and spread out practices. He says that Northampton (Pa.) High School uses the areas beyond the end zones of its practice field so three groups of players can each use a field 60 yards long.

Shea, when he was at the controls of the Dragon football team, didn't waste opportunities to cooperate with others like Arden Walter and Norge Luvison, director of buildings and grounds. "Men like Toby Shea are doing a wonderful job," says Wilcox. "I've never seen a coach who cared so much about his players." **LM**

# THE ONLY GAME IN TOWN

During the fall, the townspeople of Findlay, Ohio direct most of their attention at Donnell Stadium. So when the field tried to hide under mud, it was noticed.

By Jeff Sobul, assistant editor

**T**he field was only two years old. But it had aged well beyond its years. Eleven Findlay High School and Findlay College football games each year, numerous soccer games and other events, coupled with wet weather and poor drainage, had taken their toll. By the end of the second football season, in November, 1985, the Donnell Stadium field was unplayable.

In fact, an NAIA Division II playoff game between Findlay

College and St. Ambrose, Iowa, had to be played at nearby Bowling Green State University.

Something obviously had to be done.

And something was done. In addition to building a separate field for soccer to distribute field use, the Donnell field was replaced again, this time with a Prescription Athletic Turf (PAT) System perfected and patented by Purdue University professor Bill Daniel, Ph.D.

Artificial turf was considered. "It was either put in a PAT system or a similar system or go to artificial turf, which I won't do," says Jack Volkmer, business manager for Findlay Schools. "It's a horrible thing to make people compete on an artificial surface."

### A little help

Now, boasts Volkmer, "Donnell is probably one of the nicest high school facilities around." The installation cost slightly less than

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\$250,000, no small change for anyone, including a small town.

All stadium maintenance is funded by the Donnell Foundation, Volkmer says. "The money doesn't come from tax money. Otherwise, we wouldn't have been able to afford to do this." The Donnell Foundation is a fund set up by the Donnell family, former owners and operators of Marathon Oil, a primary employer in the small, industrial western Ohio town.

This major undertaking began in December of 1985. Daniel, Laurel Meade and David Heiss, who are marketers of the system, all came out to survey the field after Volkmer contacted them. (They were also in attendance for the first game on the new field.)

Excavation began in December and continued through the winter, with problems other than some occasional bad weather hampering construction. "We had some real terrain problems," Volkmer notes.

"That's built on solid rock. That's a  
*continued on page 54*



At the end of the season, after 11 games, two played in downpours, there were no visible signs of heavy wear down the middle of the field.

In one off-season, the Donnell Stadium field went from a mud hole to a near perfect playing surface when the season opened in September, 1986, after the PAT System was installed.

