

The *Sideline* Report

Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association

October 2011

“Failure to plan is planning to fail”
Ross Knab, CSFM, Denver Broncos



Read Baseball Infield Makeover- Pro Quality at the High School Level
by Dave Minner, PhD on pg. 10

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A Letter from the President- Stuck in a Rut

Tony Senio, University of Iowa



One would think that with a two month gap between newsletters that it would be simple to come up with a suitable topic every time. Not for this guy. Inspiration and creativity have

been lacking for me recently and I don't know why. Is it because of the shortage of sleep associated with our new baby? Possibly. Is it the monotony at work the last two months where it seems as though I spend every afternoon syringing the same four fields? Maybe. Or could it be the sting of the loss to the Cyclones has had more of an effect on me than I originally thought? No, I doubt it's that. Maybe at the ripe old age of 33 my creativity supply has already been tapped. God, I hope that's not it! Whatever the case is, as I sit here attempting not to waste your time, and with the added pressure knowing that this is one of the two printed issues of The Sideline Report for the year, the lack of original thought is quite frustrating.

I'm going to chalk it up to being 'stuck in a rut,' which oddly enough is so much worse than being 'in the groove.' It's easy to feel stuck in a rut. Take our jobs for example – charge irrigation, fertilize, mow, water, spray, mow, water, seed, mow, water, fertilize, mow, water, aerify, blow irrigation, plow snow, repeat. (Yes I realize there's much more to our jobs but for the sake of the point I'm trying to make, let's just go with this for now- besides, I've finally had a decent thought so let me get it out.) Now what about being in the groove? Well, take work for example – charge irrigation, fertilize, mow, water, spray, mow, water, seed, mow, water, fertilize, mow, water, aerify, blow irrigation, plow snow, repeat. Sounds as much like being in a rut as it does like being in a groove. So what's the difference?

Could it be as simple as changing our mindset? I think the answer is yes. Of course as simple as the solution is, actually doing so is much more difficult. But consider this for a bit. The tasks we perform on a regular basis are likely not to change much from year to year and whereas that could be seen in a bad

light, I think that if we simply (and I use that word tentatively) approach things in a positive manner we will quickly find that it's not a rut we're stuck in but rather a groove that we're coasting in.

And once in a groove life seems so much easier – better for sure! You know I used to despise those people who were always walking around so cheery and smiley, acting like there was nothing wrong with the world and trying to get others to feel the same. But it's occurred to me now that there's no way those people didn't have their own set of problems and hardships, it's just the way they choose to deal with them was with a positive outlook which, more often than not and certainly more often than for me, lead to a positive result.

It's been proven by study after study that there is a direct relationship between improved health, extended life, an overall sense of well-being and having a positive, happy attitude towards life. So I challenge you to pull yourself out of the rut and get in the groove for the sake of your health and for those around you. And if you can't convince those around you to share the same pleasant outlook, then find someone else to spend your time with. It is a proven fact that we are what we think --- so put good thoughts into your mind. The Beatles had it right – "All you need is love, love, love is all you need!"



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Synthetic Turf Repair 101 & G-Max Testing

Jeff Bosworth, Drake University

Synthetic Turf Repair 101

For those of you with Synthetic Turf fields, which I'm sure is a growing number of you, may or may not have experienced "in-lays" coming up. Drake University's synthetic turf field is going on six seasons and this fall is the first we have encountered in-lays being pulled up. The first one appeared at the 15 yard hash mark and two more appeared a week later, one being on the 25 yard hash and another on the kick off X. I'm sure the damage was caused from running the greens groomer across the field with the tines down to loosen the infill and evenly disperse the rubber. This maintenance practice scares me every time just for that reason, however grooming is a "must do" on any synthetic field.

If you are like me you have been told how to repair these minor blemishes, but have never had the opportunity to actually repair them. Let me give you my two cents worth on repairing them, I was pleasantly surprised how quick and easy the process was. Here is my 4 step process.



Items needed:

- 1 Tube of PL Premium / Caulking Gun
- Scrap pieces of angle iron
- Shop Vac
- Infill material

Step 1 Take shop vac and remove all rubber in and around inlay that is coming up. Pull back in-lay that is coming up and vac underneath so you can get a good bond to carpet backing.

Step 2 Pull piece of turf back, take small (scrap) pieces of angle iron and place around turf to keep infill and turf fibers from laying over onto the backing that you will be applying glue. The angle iron only acts as a border around where the in-lay will be placed.

Step 3 Apply PL Premium caulking to backing. Lay the in-lay back onto backing and press firmly. Remove pieces of angle iron. Let caulking set for an hour before next step.

Step 4 Finally start replacing infill back into turf. It is best to know the composition of the infill material that your field has. Apply small amounts of infill back into the area and brush into turf. Repeat this until the inlay is as level and firm as the surrounding area. Take scissors and cut fibers that may have been pulled up.

G-Max Testing

Since our Synthetic turf was installed (Fall 2005) we have not had a G-Max test performed on our field. We are told G-max testing is something that needs to be performed bi-annually to make sure the field is playing the way it should, not too soft or too hard. If there was a serious head injury on the field the first thing that may be asked is: What is the G-max of the field? I felt like Drake has done a good job maintaining the field (grooming) but I had no idea as to the hardness of the field.

This summer we had Turf Diagnostics perform a G-Max test on our field. Results came back just as I hoped they would, under 200 points. Per specification under ASTM F1936 all test points must meet the requirement of <200 average G-max. Drake University's average G-max for all spots tested on the field was 142.6 with readings ranging from 126 – 159 depending on the amount of play/foot traffic on that portion of the field.

While Turf Diagnostics was at Drake we ran the greens groomer across the field in a few spots with the tines down and had them re-test those areas to see how much the G-max was reduced. The average

Synthetic Turf Repair 101 & G-Max Testing Continued

decrease in G-max readings was 5 points. This gave me some sort of idea the impact of this maintenance practice.

In conclusion, I hope those of you with Synthetic fields will better understand how to repair a simple in-lay when the day comes. It's not a matter if, but when it will happen. Also, the importance of having your field G-max tested. I know I probably waited too long, however I feel good knowing the hardness of the field and that we are keeping a safe playing condition from a field hardness perspective. If you want any more information regarding these two items please feel free to contact me jeff.bosworth@drake.edu



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The Benefits of Service

Jeff Wendel, CGCS, Iowa Turfgrass Institute

One of the challenges facing ISTMA is involving people with the operation and administration of the Association. Everyone is busy; doing more with less at work, taking care of family, finding time to spend with friends, sitting in bleachers, the list is endless. So why would anyone say “yes” to serving on a Non Profit Board of Directors? Service to a board does several things for you.

- New experience in a setting you may find challenging and interesting
- A chance to develop your team skills and communication proficiency
- New friends and cohorts in your chosen field
- Exposure to strategic planning, budget review, public relations issues
- Advanced understanding of Financial Statements
- Improved Perspective of your Industry
- A chance to contribute to the Associations mission and causes

Thanks to the ISTMA Members who have volunteered to run for the ISTMA Board in 2012. Every ISTMA Member should consider service in the future. Also, remember that you can benefit your profession and your chapter by getting involved. Attend the ISTMA Annual Meeting during the Iowa Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show, give input and feedback to the ISTMA Board, attend Chapter events or offer to host an ISTMA Workshop. Your ideas and input are a critical component of the Association’s success.

In talking with Professional Turfgrass Managers of every kind I have learned a tiny bit about the differences in managing Golf Course Turf vs. Sports Fields vs. Lawns. Some of the differences are readily apparent, some are very subtle. In view of all those differences, I have found that people who manage turfgrass as a career have one thing very much in common; each of us would like others to know the complexities of our work.

The ISTMA Mission Statement:

ISTMA’s purpose is to collect and disseminate scientific, professional and practical knowledge through association with those persons engaged in or concerned with the research and maintenance of safe and improved sports turf areas. ISTMA collects and supplies current information on effective management practices for the improvement in quality and safety of all sports facilities. One of the main outlets for ISTMA information is the Iowa Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show. That event, along with several outstanding workshops each year, provides a wealth of information for Professional Sports Turf Managers.

Get more involved with the ISTMA; it will ultimately be good for you and your profession.

ISTMA Awards!

The deadline for ISTMA Awards is October 31st. The Award forms are available at: <http://www.iowaturfgrass.org/istmaawards.htm> Nominate a fellow Sports Turf Manager, Field or Facility

Are you a student in need of a scholarship for college?

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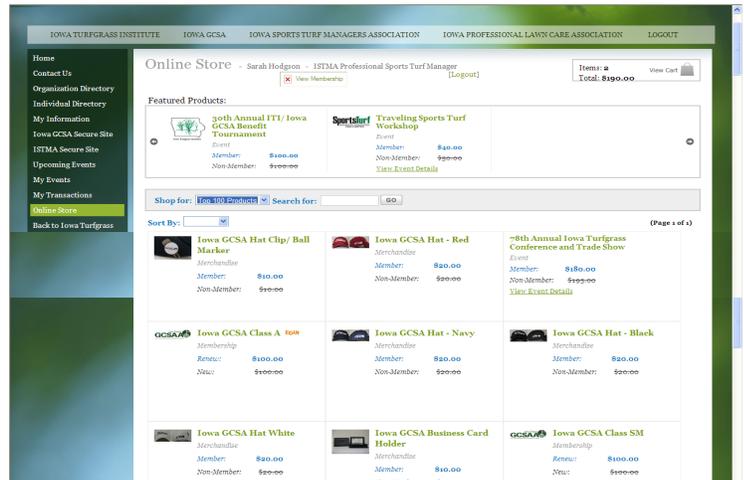
Applications are due to the Iowa Turfgrass Office by October 31, 2011

For more information and the application form go to www.iowaturfgrass.org/istmascholarship.htm

Avectra 101

New Shopping Cart & QR Codes

Some of you may have noticed our recent face lift to the online shopping. These changes have become available to make your shopping easier on our site. If you click on "Manage your Membership" from the ISTMA homepage at www.iowaturfgrass.org/istmahome.htm it will bring you to the membership site. After you log in, please visit the Online Store tab on the left hand side of the page. When you get to this page, you will see a slightly different look. Across the top we will have a scroll bar and highlight important or upcoming events for all Iowa GCSA, Iowa Sports Turf Managers, Iowa Lawncare Professionals, and the Iowa Turfgrass Institute. We will feature different events throughout the year so check back often! If you are looking for something specific, below you will find a category search and a search box to quickly locate your needs. To find anything related to ISTMA please search "ISTMA" and all related products will appear. Below the search boxes is where all of our available event registrations, merchandise and memberships are located. Instead of a list they have been placed in easy to read boxes. Every listing will have a green title. If it is an event, there will also be a link that will bring you to a description of the particular event. To purchase an item or register for an event just click the green title in the box. All events will bring you through a registration questionnaire before bringing to your Shopping Cart. Merchandise and memberships will lead to a description page where you can select add to cart or continue shopping. A new added feature is the Cart box towards the top right hand side of the page. This will keep track of the amount of items in your cart and your running dollar value while you shop! When you are ready to check out you can select View Cart from this box. Review your items and select proceed to check out. From here everything should be the same. If you have questions or have trouble locating an item please don't be hesitant to call the office or email sarah@iowaturfgrass.org.



A new thing to be on the lookout for is QR Codes. For those of you that don't know what a QR Code is, it is a Quick Response code that you can scan with your smart phone, or tablet (only if it has a camera). To be able to scan it you will need the proper app for it. If you search for QR Scanner in your app search from your phone you will be able to find plenty of free QR Scanners. After the app is downloaded, you can open it up and position the code into your screen. Click scan and it will relocate you to the site I have the QR code programmed to. ISTMA plans to use this for fast registration from your phone or tablet. If you never have used a QR Code before please try out the one on this page! It will bring you to the ISTMA homepage. From there you will be able to search around on the site and in the membership database. Be on the lookout for QR Codes in the future with important updates and registration for the 78th Iowa Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show!



Scan the Code to be taken to the ISTMA homepage on your phone or tablet!

Southwest Director Update

TJ Brewer, Burlington Bees

Ahh, fall! This is my favorite time of year. The baseball season is over and college football is in full swing. Personally I could care less about the NFL, it seems to be a bunch of rich guys arguing with richer guys about not making enough money! The main reason I like this time of year is I get my evenings and weekends back, no games to worry about. The only thing that really gets me going at this time of year is my aerator. I have been with the Bees for six years and had the pleasure of working with the same wonderful aerator for each one of them. This thing is a real treat it works real good taking up space in the back of my shop, but bring it out onto the field and look out... it is going to break.

Just the other day I was doing my post season aeration thinking of Iowa State beating Iowa in triple overtime when: boom, boom, clank, clank. Just the sound I had been waiting for... something broke in the aerator head so I head back to my shop to check it out. This is the part of the story where you really get a feel for how my aerator and I get along. As I was driving around the

warning track all of a sudden thump, thump, thump I get a flat tire just to add insult to injury. I don't know how many times I have aerated, or tried anyway, in my six years here (just for a reference I like to aerate 4 or 6 times a year), but I have only successfully completed the task twice with nothing breaking on my aerator.

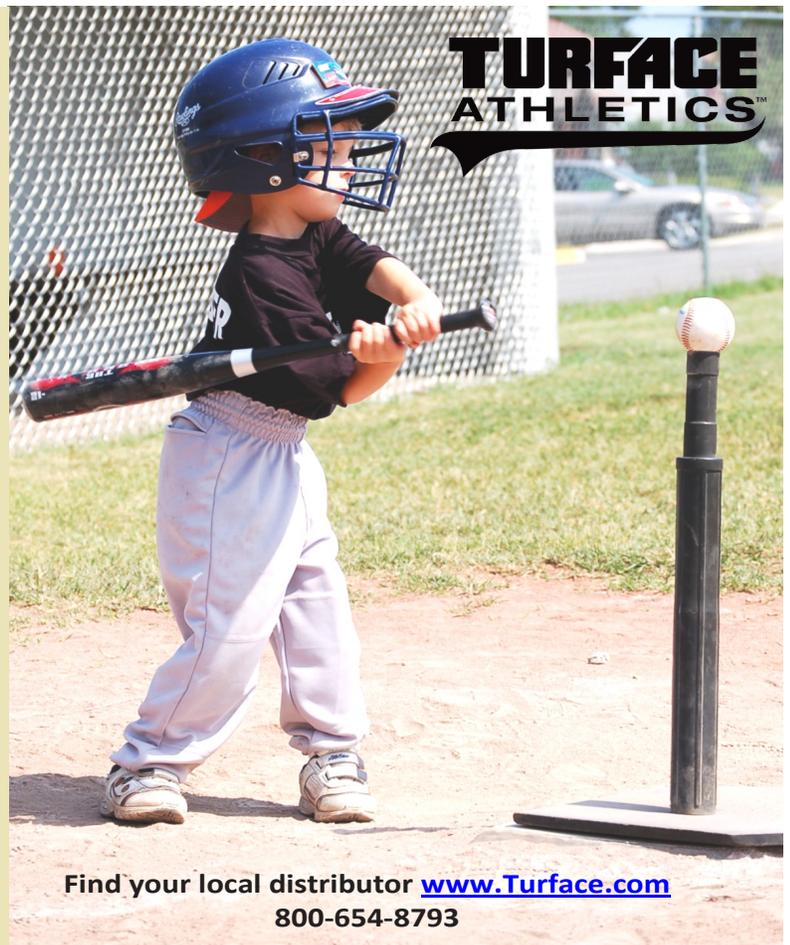
That's enough of that! Hopefully you are all having a good fall! I am sure mine has gotten better and I am well on my way to getting my field to bed for the winter. Hopefully you have all enjoyed the electronic versions of this newsletter. If you have any advice for how we can make it better let us know. We are always looking for people to add their own articles to the Sideline Report, we need your help. Now that our workshops are done for the year, and what a great year for those, we can look forward to the conference. I am really looking forward to it. This year will be great having it all located in the Marriot! For now have a great fall, see you soon!

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Central Director Update

Tim VanLoo, CSFM, Iowa State University

As I write this we are preparing for our first game at Jack Trice Stadium. I personally like the first game better than any other. If you give me a few minutes I will explain why....

1st, the summer is on its way out. I love summer for many reasons; golf, bonfires, grilling, and growing grass. Summers around Ames are great because the students aren't here. Don't get me wrong, I like students, but not so many that I have to wait in line at Jimmy Johns for my lunch. Growing grass this summer was particularly difficult. I would say the most challenging I have had in my 5 seasons as an Athletic Field Manager. Our July in the central region was very hot and very humid. Making sure I was not watering too much was a challenge. It's hard to turn that water off when it's 100 degrees, but with high humidity you have to trust that the water is not going anywhere. Disease pressure was high and I am sure everyone got a chance to see some brown patch or pythium. It was a tough summer to keep the roots deep and the grass green. If you were successful, go ahead, pat yourself on the back.

2nd, fall is coming. Fall is my favorite season. It's that time of the year that growing grass gets easy again and things start to slow down a bit. I am usually not stressing about irrigation or diseases. I'm not sweating as soon as I walk through the door on my way outside. The best part about the first game is Bow season is coming. I personally have not found a better way to slow our world down than to sit in a tree stand for a morning, evening, or all day. We all need that something that "charges our batteries" or "gets you excited". Bow season is just that for me. If you don't know what that is for yourself, I would encourage you to find it. Work can't be what drives us.

3rd, all of our students, staff, and athletes get to show off their hard work. For my crew and I it's what we spent all those days aerifying, topdressing, fertilizing, seeding, watering, monitoring, spraying, and worrying. It's the pinnacle of what we do. The field never looks better. The paint is bright, the mowing pattern has been set for weeks, and the weather is typically pleasant. To be frank, "It's what we do"; "It's why we are here".

When you read this the first game will have gone by and we will be starting to think about irrigation blowouts. I taught an irrigation class at DMACC this past summer. The best part about teaching a class is sharpening up on things you may have forgot about. I thought I would share a few points about blowouts that I was reminded about and will use this coming fall.

1. Have good knowledge of your piping system and outlets (Identify natural drainage points)
2. Use biggest hose possible with an exterior pressure regulator valve set at 50psi.
3. Compressor should operate at 80psi and the pressure regulator attached to hose should be set at 50psi. The compressor needs to operate at 80psi b/c it's designed that way. Low pressure can cause oil to blow by seals and enter your pipe.
4. Do everything slow, just like start up. Turn all valves slowly and fill the pipes /hose slowly.
5. Blowout end lines first. Quick couplers or drain valves.
6. Once you start blowing out the heads start nearest to the compressor. Work your way out.
7. Make sure every head has a fine mist. Then move on.
8. When you have done every head/zone once, lower the pressure to 40psi and repeat. Especially targeting the low areas and end lines.
9. This is also a good time to note any repairs you will have to do. If it's not too late in the year do them so you don't have to in the spring.

This was just a quick list of tips to follow for your upcoming blowout.

I hope all of your fall seasons are going well and that the fields played to your expectations. I look forward to seeing all of you at the ITI show this January. If you ever need me for anything please don't hesitate to ask. Thanks,

Tim VanLoo, CSFM
Iowa State University
Athletic Field Manager
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Baseball Infield Makeover- Pro Quality at the High School Level

Dave Minner, PhD, Iowa State University

With high school baseball season in the rearview mirror and Friday night football all around, it seems that baseball fields are abandoned and left to fend for themselves until the spring snow begins to melt. However, the best time to prepare the field for next year is immediately after the summer baseball season. If you are doing a regarding project then start right after the last game in late July so you can get your seed in the ground early. For a renovation that kills the existing grass and smoothes the field with only aerification and topdressing plan to start and complete the project between August 15 and September 15. It is imperative that you seed as early as possible, no later than September 15 so the grass will have time to completely cover the ground by the end of the fall growing season in November. This is especially true if you plan on starting spring baseball in April. Seeding on September 15 will just barely make the field ready by May 15. Renovations involving sod are best completed in September to allow for good rooting, especially if you want the field ready by April. If you can wait until May 15 to use the field then sod can be installed as late as November 1.

Many Iowa baseball fields in are in pretty rough shape with thin weedy turf and bumpy uneven ground. Aside from being an embarrassment they create an unsafe playing surface because you just can't tell which way the ball will bounce. The proceeds from high school baseball are substantially less than football and track & field, so baseball usually is underfunded. Never the less, I have been working with coaches, athletic directors, and booster clubs to come up with programs that fit your budget and put some pride back in the baseball facility. At a minimum start with the grass on the baseball infield. It is a small 7,400 sqft area that is highly visible and receives most of the play. Positive improvement of this area may lead to additional resources for the entire field. The first thing I request when improving a baseball field is automatic irrigation. Without it I just can't grow grass. To get you started, at least put four irrigation heads on the infield grass with a quick couple behind the mound. If you can afford more then go to the foul areas in front of the dugouts and behind home plate. Once they see the benefit of irrigation, it's an easier sell to get the rest of the field installed with

automatic watering. Hose and traveling sprinklers are better than nothing but it is labor intensive, inefficient, and generally gets neglected which eventually leads to decline of the field. I personally get involved with some local fields each year because I enjoy seeing a successful renovation. My first comment is "call me when you have made the commitment to irrigation, then I will help".

Next we need to make sure you have a good mower, at least for the infield area that will be renovated. If you are fortunate enough to have a reel mower then you are probably set. If not then consider the self-propelled walking rotaries with a striping roller that mows at cutting heights between 0.5 to 2 inches. They give an excellent cut with attractive striping that pleases the fans and gives a real big league appearance. A real key to making a smooth surface will be to mow the infield at some height less than 1 inch. Your standard homeowner rotary mower will not do the job. The commercial striping rotary mowers by Eastman, Hayter, and Toro are better built, require little maintenance, and are easily used by coaches and players. These heavier mowers use a roller to lay the grass over and make a nice stripe; the repeated rolling action also helps keep the surface smooth. I like to grow the field in at a 1/2 inch cutting height to promote maximum smoothness and then can raise the height to 3/4 inch playing conditions any time before the season starts.



Brian Hoff a mound building phenom single handedly constructs a Flexiclay Mound at the Story City Baseball Complex.



Iowa Athletic Field Construction laser grades the grass infield Area to restore the crown and surface drainage at Story City High School Baseball facility.

Surface drainage is important. If the field holds pockets of standing water then you may want to have an athletic field contractor give you a bid on grading to provide a crown or adequate slope to prevent water ponding on the surface. Years of continually adding skin material raises the infield skin so that water is trapped in the lower grass infield area. You may need to bite the bullet and have the skin and grass areas regarded so that the surface water is shed from both areas. Laser grading will also remove all the bumps in the field and get you off to a good smooth start. If you don't need grading and just want to smooth out some of the high and low spots and reduce the "bad hops" then follow the steps presented in order below.

1. **Kill the existing grass** – If you are satisfied with the grass quality then skip the killing phase and just proceed to scalping. Most fields are a combination of weeds, old Kentucky bluegrass varieties, and perennial ryegrass that makes for an unattractive and bumpy surface, so I highly recommend killing the existing vegetation with glyphosate so you can start with a clean slate of improved Kentucky bluegrass. Choose low mow varieties that are good in both low and high maintenance, have early green up for spring ball, and above all have less susceptibility to the disease summer patch. Use the interactive NTEP spreadsheet at <http://www.hort.iastate.edu/research/turfgrass/extensionpub> to choose the best varieties.

2. **Scalp mow** – 7 to 14 days after application of glyphosate the turf existing vegetation should be completely brown and killed. "Scalp mow" the dead material as low as possible, preferably to 0.5 inches or less. It may take repeated mowing to get it mowed this low. Bag or remove all the excess clippings. This

really exposes all of the humps and bumps in the field. A 16ft aluminum screed can be laid on several areas of the infield to visualize the high and low areas. Fill low areas with topdressing and use the screed to hand level the surface. It works best if you have two people on the screed and one shoveling the sand in front of screed. It is hand work but it is amazing how smooth you can make a surface. "Think pool table" that's your target. Scalp mowing is a necessary part of the leveling process. Grass, dead or alive, left at a 2 inch height will not allow for smoothing by topdressing.



Sand and compost topdressing applied by hand. You can bet there is a smart phone in those shorts but hand topdressing still works... the grass doesn't know the difference, just wants to be covered with love.

3. **Topdress** – Sand, compost, or a 50/50 mixture of sand and compost can be used for topdressing and filling low spots. Use more compost and less sand in the mix when filling depressions greater than $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch deep. If you don't have a topdresser don't let that stop you. It takes me about an hour to sling a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of sand on an infield grass area. Get a big scoop, turn shovel sideways and fan it across the surface like you are hitting a hockey puck. This is a good job for volunteers.
4. **Hollow tine aerify** – Any means of aerification is beneficial but I like using a hollow tine machine to place holes on 2-inch centers because it brings up soil material to mix with the topdressing, relieves compaction, and creates holes for seed to establish. A reciprocating type aerifier does a better job of making holes for planting seed than a rolling type aerifier. Break up cores and drag into the surface. Use the largest diameter tine possible. A $\frac{3}{4}$ inch or larger tine helps move coarse compost into the soil. I prefer coarse compost because it creates larger mac

Continued on page 12



Coach Chris Hill spreads compost topdressing from Chamness Technologies in April following the September renovation and seeding of the Story City Baseball Field.



After dragging the coarser chunks of compost may not be attractive but the grass easily grows through it and I actually prefer the coarse particles that blend into the surface with aerification and topdressing to create macro pores for better water infiltration.



Close up of sand fill depressions to create a smooth and true surface.

ropores for better water infiltration. Don't be afraid of the chunks in compost that are 2 inches long and about the diameter of a pencil; what isn't initially worked into the surface will eventually be buried with topdressing sand. Larger pieces that remain on the surface just get chopped up by the mower.

5. **Verticut** – If you do not aerify then use a verticutter to slice up the surface. Rake the loose plant debris from the surface to prepare a good seed bed. The verticutting is used to open up more channels for seed and topdressing to mix into the surface.
6. **Seed in multiple layers** to guarantee good germination and coverage. Broadcast seed over open aerifier holes and drag. Broadcast seed and bury with a thin layer of topdressing or compost. Drill seed in multiple directions. Seed 1.5 lbs Kentucky bluegrass/1000sqft for each of the three operations. This will be a total of 4.5 lbs seed per/1000sq.ft total. Some may say this is excessive, but seed is inexpensive, you don't have time to wait for it to fill in, and my experience has been that these seeding rates do not cause any turf problems and it gives you the best chance at getting the density that you need by next spring/summer. Many coaches have complained about the “ratty” appearance and poor mowing quality caused by perennial ryegrass in their old field, so I just use 100% Kentucky bluegrass with the new field. You need to use your own experience and judgment when it comes to the order of seeding, aerifying and topdressing. Each job is a little different depending on how the ground is working. I generally try to seed then topdress, then aerify, then seed again, then drag, then drill or slice seed, then broadcast seed and hand rake with spring tines. Two things to watch for; try not to drag all the seed into the low areas and give the aerification cores some time to dry so the wet cores don't build up on the equipment and collect the seed.

7. **Fertilize** any time during the operation with a starter fertilizer. Usually it is the last operation over the field. Follow local guidelines where there are restrictions on phosphorous application. The new Kentucky blue grass varieties are still very slow to establish so be sure to maximize nitrogen during the fall grow-in period. I

check the field every 15 days after the seed first emerges and make a decision on nitrogen. If I think it is growing too slow then I apply a ½ lb N/1000 sqft and reassess in another 15 days.



Coach Hill prefers no skin in the base paths because it eliminates “lips” and reduces maintenance. Picture taken at the end of the season.

8. **Roll** if the surface is a little loose from all of the coring, sanding, and drill seeding. Rolling improves seed-to-soil contact and helps with germination. I sometimes eliminate rolling when I am satisfied that my multiple seeding techniques have sufficiently worked the seed into the ground. If you don't roll and the compacted tire tracks show better grass establishment then it is a good sign that rolling may have helped. Live and learn.

9. Consider using a **winter cover** for better establishment, winter protection and earlier spring green-up. If you use a cover then you may want to use a fungicide to prevent snow mold from occurring under the cover.

10. **Water** as you would any new seeding with light and frequent applications for the first 2 weeks gradually moving to heavier less frequent irrigation as plants establish deeper roots. Try watering for 5 minutes every 3 hours from 6 am to 6pm. Make adjustments to avoid dry soil or standing water during establishment. The goal is to keep the top inch moist enough for germination, then water deeper as the roots grow deeper.

11. **Mowing** – Start mowing when the grass reaches a half inch in late summer and then raise the mowing height to ¾-inches for the last couple of mowings in the fall. Mowing the following spring and summer at ¾ inches may require mowing three times a week. To reduce your mowing frequency to once a week at ¾ inches, consider monthly applications of Primo plant growth regulator starting after your second normal mowing. Plan on making about 3 applications of Primo for the season.

12. **Fungicides** – If Summer Patch develops during the first season, then plan on using preventative fungicide applications in May and June of the following year.

of planning. With four people you can usually complete steps 2 through 10 in a single day. Ross Kucab from the Denver Broncos and the first Certified Sports Field Manager, has a saying I always remember when it comes to renovation projects, “failure to plan is planning to fail”. This is the start of a good plan that has successfully transformed many a bumpy high school baseball infield into a smooth and safe surface that really gets noticed. Have fun and start your own field of dreams. These kids really do recognize and appreciate when you give them a surface that makes them feel like a pro. Involve the parents and coaches and the field becomes part of the community.

For more pictures and the article go to: <http://www.iowaturf-grass.org/BaseballMinner.htm> or scan the QR Code.





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This sounds like a lot of work, but it really is just a lot

Grinnell College Water Collection Tank

Jason Koester, CGCS, Grinnell College

Grinnell College completed phase two of an athletics building construction project in late August of 2010. The phase two construction consisted of an Olympic size swimming pool and an indoor field house with athletic offices attached. Phase one { gym } has been completed for a few years. A unique aspect of the phase two project included a rain water collection system from the large field house roof and surroundings. The water collected is used for toilets in the field house and to irrigate the game day football field. A new main irrigation line, valves, decoder system and controller were installed after the building project was completed. This system was hooked onto our current infield piping and irrigation heads. We will be installing a wireless Solar Sync unit in the near future to help with weather monitoring. Weather monitoring will help conserve water on the football field.



Figure 1: Indoor Fieldhouse

City water is used for all of our other fields and the water quality is not real good. With high pH, bicarbonates and sodium issues, the idea of using natural rain water was quite positive. With any unique projects we had our reservations but after a full calendar year of having the system in tactic it has performed well.



Figure 2: Gameday Football Field

How the collection system works is simple, the rain water is collected from the roof, storm drains, and bleachers from the field house area and funneled by drains into a large concrete holding tank under the field house. Condensate from chiller and air conditioner units also help feed the storage tank. The collection tank was actually dug, formed and poured with concrete as the field support structure was being constructed.

When the tank water level reaches a full level of 91", the excess water is diverted to the storm sewer system which feeds the Grinnell Country Club ponds. [Irrigation for golf course is pumped out of these ponds]. When a low point level is reached at 34" the system switches to city water by sensors and electric valves, until the collection tank is recharged by rainfall. As I write this article in late August we are currently experiencing drought conditions .5" for the month and the collection still is in operation. Ground water seepage and the condensate



Figure 3: Drain to Holding Tank

Figure 4: Pump Room



lines must be adding a lot of water to the tank to keep up with our current water demands and lack of rainfall.

The water from the collection tank is filtered on the way out of the tank before reaching the pumping system, which is a dual variable pump system, is based on flow needs for the restrooms and field irrigation. The variable pump system has been a large upgrade also the coverage of the irrigation heads has increased. The water quality has been relatively good so far, we have been sending in water samples to track the water quality to see if there is much fluctuation in the tank water thru the year. One interesting sample I sent in was in early April 2011 at irrigation start up, the water that had been sitting for an extended period of time; the test came back very good even after being stagnant. Water tests have fluctuated some but the tank water has been a huge upgrade in quality for Turfgrass compared to our city water.

This water collection system has been a success so far. Benefits we are experiencing so far are saving water, spending less money on water resources, slowed the watershed runoff speed from the building and have increased the water quality immensely.



Figure 6: Automatic Two Way Valve



Figure 7: Tank Depth Sensor

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Irrigation Question and Answer

Responses by Members of the ISTMA

Irrigation plays a critical part in many of our turfgrass management programs. There is a fine line between too much and too little. Most of us are working towards minimizing our irrigation to save money and be environmentally conscious. We all know that if we overwater we are inviting disease in, wasting money, and promoting shallow rooting to name a few. If we under-water we are risking losing our turf to drought stress and disease along with other problems. The textbooks all say Kentucky bluegrass requires about an inch of water a week and that we should irrigate deep and infrequently. I don't know about you, but I have never heard two turf managers with the same philosophy when it comes to irrigation. I thought it would be a good idea to ask some of you how you go about your irrigation schedule, your irrigation system, and what your general irrigation goals are. (AE : Andy Eifert, University of Iowa, JG: Joe Grandstaff, Iowa Cubs Sports Turf Management, and JJ: Jamie Johnson, Linn Mar School District) Hopefully we can all learn something from these different managers.

When was your irrigation system installed? What kind is it? On A scale of 1% - 100% what would you say the effectiveness or accuracy of your system is?

AE: We take care of a wide area of sports turf and building surrounds. We have 12 irrigation systems in and around all of the University of Iowa Athletic buildings. Installations were made ranging from 1998-2011. Most of our systems are Toro, but we do have some new Hunter systems on some of our fields. We range from small mister heads to 500 gallon per minute canons at field hockey. We have a variety of pipe sizes and heads. Over all the fields and surrounds I would say that our effectiveness rates around 85%. On a non windy day

JG: My system was installed in 2008-2009 after the flood of '08. We initially had a hydraulic system, and I had that changed to a decoder system after the floods. The controller is a 200 station Toro, of which we use 123 stations. For the initial phase of construction we used Toro valves, which we weren't happy with. They would continuously stick on, and we had some decoder and solenoid issues. The other 7 fields we went with a

Rain Bird valve which we are more than happy with. All of our heads are Rain Bird 7000's, which we really like. They are easy to work with, and are a durable and dependable head. I would give my system a 95% effectiveness rating. There are little kinks in the system from time to time, but overall we are pleased with the accuracy and dependability after we worked out all of the little issues we had after construction.

JJ: We have five separate irrigation systems. The varsity softball field has a Toro system that is probably the most effective of all the systems. I would give this system an 80% rating. The varsity baseball field also has a Toro/Hunter/KRain/ you-name-it system with a 70% rating. Excelsior Middle School football field has a Toro system with effectiveness of 75%. The hillside at the new Linn-Mar stadium has a brand new Toro/Hunter system with effectiveness of 55%. You would think this would be the best system since it is brand new but definitely not the case. It was not designed with enough heads. Lesson to be learned: never trust the architect; always double check design prints. Armstrong football field (old LM Stadium) has a Toro system that has 60% effectiveness.

What type of turf are you irrigating? What is the level, sport (s), and season your field is in use?

AE: All of our Competition fields are either a blue or a blue rye mix. The level of play on five of our fields I would rate as high, Practice Football, Softball, Baseball, Competition Soccer and Practice Soccer. These fields are used for by the teams in both spring and fall, as are all of our fields.

JG: Our 12 soccer fields are approximately 95% bluegrass and 5% rye. Our season is really consistent from April 1 until around Thanksgiving. We have a month or so in July and early August where we have little to no play. We have 9 full scale 12 field tournaments per year along with the State Boys High School Championships, Drake and Grandview University men and women, 3 CIML schools, Adult leagues, and we consistently host Region II Championships which average about 225 teams over 5 days. Next year we will be the home field of AIB in Des Moines as well.

JJ: All of the irrigated fields are Blue/Rye/Poa mix. All of the irrigated fields are used primarily by high school level sports. Excelsior middle school is the only one that

isn't used by high school.

What is your base? (sand, native, mix)

AE: Practice football and Women's soccer are both sand fields. The rest of our facilities are native soil.

JG: Of our 12 fields, 11 of them are native soil base, and our championship field is a 90/10 sand-peat mix.

JJ: Native

What is your general irrigation philosophy? (1" a week, deep & infrequent, certain moisture level, light & frequent, how often and when) Do you have a set irrigation schedule? Do you use advanced sensors? (rain click...)

AE: I would say that our watering schedule varies week to week. It mostly depends and this great Iowa weather. If I would have it my way it would rain every 3-4 days and syringe when needed, with 50 degree night time temps and 70 degree daytime. But we haven't seen rain here in Iowa City for over a month, day time temps range from 80-100 with high humidity. When this happens you can throw any plan out the window. You just try to replace what evaporated during the day and a little more. That's about all you can do. On the sand fields I like to keep the sand moist and be able to compact it with my hand. But we don't want it to wet that the roots won't go deep in search of water.

JG: My irrigation habits change frequently due to numerous factors: Weather, field conditions, and the schedule of games. It is difficult for me to water deep without many vacant days on the fields. I prefer light and frequent for most of the year when needed. The only times I will usually run a heavy cycle is if we have just done some work to the fields (aeration, seeding, topdressing) and we have a little time off with no play. We are on a full Primo regiment at Cownie, so we can give the occasional heavy watering and not have to get on the fields with a mower for a couple days. It is nice to see how well the fields can recover with some moisture and no activity. My schedule usually starts about 11 pm and runs until about 2 or 3 am. I am able to water 20 zones at a time, which equals out to about 70-80 heads at once. One thing we have at Cownie Soccer is more than enough water pressure for a fast and thorough watering. We do not use any sensors.

JJ: Every sport is different mainly because the

and is too wet to begin with. The football fields are watered the 2 days leading up to the game. I feel 2 days gives it enough time to dry out but not too much to where it plays rough and hard. During the off season of football I rarely water. If I am not trying to grow in grass I really like to push some roots during the summer months. During the off season for baseball and softball I water only when I need to. The systems are usually shut off; except for this year- I set a program for most of the month of August. I am firm believer in not giving a 2 1/2 inch mowed field more than it absolutely needs. If you baby your field you are never going to grow roots and strengthen your turf for when it counts during the season.

Are you using reclaimed water, city water, well water, pond water...? How is your water quality?

AE: We deal with both City, and University water. I would say that our water is a good quality but I personally have never had it checked.

JG: We use City of Des Moines water.

JJ: Some fields use city water and some are well water. How much time do you or your crew devote to irrigation (repairs, maintenance, scheduling, hand watering)?

AE: This is a good question; our crew in peak season will spend about one day a week. I have been with the University of Iowa for ten years now and I don't think that we have ever had all of the systems leak free. We always know were a valve is leaking... job security. Most of our time is spent with checking the fields, setting boxes. It takes me a good 45 min to travel around and turn off all the controllers.

JG: With a new system, the repairs are minimal. An occasional broken head or leaking swing joint is about the extent of it. We spend very little time working on irrigation, which is a good thing!!!

JJ: Some fields use city water and some are well water.



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January 17-19, 2012

Downtown Des Moines Marriott Hotel

Tuesday January 17, 2012

Turfgrass Fundamentals Workshop

Time	Topic	Speaker
8:30	Species Selection & Establishment	Nick Dunlap, ISU
9:15	Soils & Soil Amendments	Andrew Hoiberg, ISU
10:00	Break	-----
10:15	Turfgrass Insect ID & Management	Donald Lewis, PhD, ISU
11:00	Turfgrass Weed ID & Management	Jeremy Buhl, PBI/ Gordon
11:30	Lunch	-----
12:30	Understanding Pesticide Modes of Action	Rick Fletcher, Cleary Chemical
1:30	Turfgrass Disease ID & Management	Dave Minner, PhD, ISU
2:15	Break	-----
2:30	Fertilizer Basics	Marcus Jones, PhD
3:15	TBA	TBA

Sports Turf Workshop

Time	Topic	Speaker
8:30	Renovation Talk	TBA
9:15	Scholarship/ Student Talk	Troy McQuillen, Kirkwood CC
10:00	Break	-----
10:15	NFL: Sports Turf Manager	Allen Johnson, Green Bay Packers
11:00	Audubon Certification for Sports Fields	Dave Minner, PhD/ Kevin Mercer
11:30	Lunch	-----
12:30	Sprayer Technology for Sports Fields	Tim VanLoo, CSFM, ISU Athletics
1:30	Construction/ Renovation Technology	Steve Bush, CSFM, Bush Sports Turf
2:15	Break	-----
3:30	Poa Trivialis, Bentrgrass, Tall Fescue, Etc	Zac Reicher, PhD, UNL
2:50	Grass Selections for Sports Fields	Dave Minner, PhD
3:10	Skin Maintenance	Panel

Mathematics of Turfgrass Management

Must Register to attend

Time	Topic	Speaker
8:00	Mathematics of Turfgrass Management	Nick Christians, PhD
10:00	Break	-----
10:15	Mathematics of Turfgrass Management	Nick Christians, PhD

Wednesday January 17, 2012

General Session/ Keynote

Time	Topic	Speaker
8:30	Awards	Jeff Schmidt, CGCS
8:45	Scholarships	Troy McQuillen, Kirkwood CC
9:00	Iowa Golf Association	Bill Dickens, IGA
9:15	Hope this Doesn't Happen to You	Zac Reicher, PhD, UNL
9:45	New Products	Exhibitors
10:00	Keynote Speaker	Chad Carden
11:00	Trade Show Grand Opening	-----

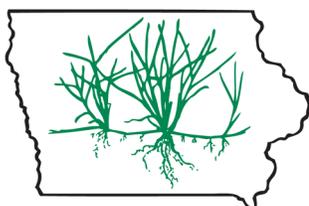
Sports Turf Session

Time	Topic	Speaker
1:30	Topic TBD	Panel
2:15	A Sprinkler Rising Experience	John Newton, CGCS
2:45	Break	-----
3:00	ISTMA Annual Meeting	-----

Thursday January 19, 2012

Sports Turf Session

Time	Topic	Speaker
8:00	Synthetic Turf: The Real Story	John Netwal
8:45	Break- Trade Show Open	-----
10:15	Maintaining Sports Fields on a Municipal Budget	Brad Thedens, Sioux Falls Parks & Rec
10:45	ISTMA in Action	Jason Koester, CGCS, Grinnell College



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More information is available at www.iowaturfgrass.org/iticonference.htm



2012 ISTMA Election

Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association Board of Directors Candidates for At-Large Director

Mark Heick

City of Iowa City Athletic Facilities
ISTMA Member – 10 years



Employment History:

City of Iowa City: 1988- Present
Previous 12 years with athletic facilities

Personal Information/ Family/Hobbies:

I am married to my wife Shari. We have two sons; Ryan who is 8 years old and Logan who is 4 years old. I enjoy golfing, following the Iowa Hawkeyes and St. Louis Rams and spending time with my family.

Education:

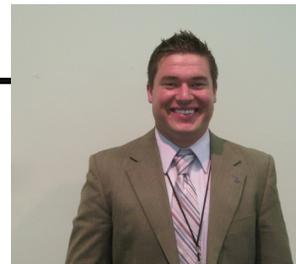
Twelve years working with Joe Wagner

Goals as a Board Member:

My goal as a board member would be to keep the association moving forward as the former board members entrusted us to do and to always continue to improve the association for the membership while making sound decisions for them.

Troy McQuillen

Kirkwood Community College
ISTMA Member – 6 years



Employment History:

Kirkwood Community College - *Assistant Professor*: 2005 - Present
Cedar Rapid Kernels and Upper Iowa University's Athletic Departments: 2003-2005

Personal Information/ Family/Hobbies:

I have been married for 4 years to my wife Lindsey. We have a new baby girl named Kinley who was born in April 2011. My hobbies include spending time with my family, Iowa State Football games, and a lot of golf.

Education:

Master's in Higher Education from Iowa State University : 2011
Bachelors in Plant Science from Upper Iowa University: 2006
Applied Science Degree in Turfgrass Management from Kirkwood Community College: 2004

Goals as a Board Member:

As a board member, I would develop a stronger relationship between the student of the Sports Turf Industry and the Professional Sports Turf Managers. I would bring a better Awareness to other affiliate organizations about the ISTMA and encourage non-members with sport fields to participate/ join in the ISTMA. I hope to continue the success as the chairman of the education committee to keep growing the attendance and the quality education at area workshops and state conference. As a board member I also want to continue ISTMA involvements with the National Sports Turf Managers Organization.

2012 ISTMA Election

Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association Board of Directors Candidate for Central Representative

Tim VanLoo, CSFM

Iowa State University Athletics Turf Manager
ISTMA Member – 2 years

Employment History:

Iowa State University: 2010- Present
Northwestern University: 2007 - 2010
Michigan State University: 1999 - 2007



Personal Information/ Family/Hobbies:

I have been married to my wife Amber for 9 years. We have two children a little boy 3 years old and a daughter 6 months old. I enjoy playing basketball, golf, and softball. I hunt as much as I possibly can during bow season.

Education:

Masters of Science: Turfgrass - Michigan State University
Bachelors of Science: Turfgrass - Michigan State University
2 Year Certificate: Turfgrass - Michigan State University

Goals as a Board Member:

My goals on the board would be to simply serve our organization and members in any way that I can. I am committed to this industry and will do whatever I can to help it move forward. It is important to find economical ways to educate our members and use our commercial members responsibly. Together we can continue to make ISTMA one of the strongest local chapters in the STMA.

Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association wants You!

ISTMA is looking for a great representative to be involved on the Board of Directors as the Southwest Director!

Being involved on the board of Directors gives you a great chance to improve your team building and communication skills, get a better understanding of business financials, strategic planning, and public relations while getting to know great new friends and cohorts.

For more information contact any board member found on the back page of this issue or call the Iowa Turfgrass Office at 515-232-8222.

Run today and make a difference in YOUR Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association.

ISTMA Conference Social
Tuesday January 17th, 2012
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Please RSVP on your conference registration or email to Sarah at sarah@iowaturfgrass.org

Send your pictures from the 2011 season to be featured at the Social! Send pictures to Jason Koester, CGCS at jkkoester@yahoo.com or Jeff Bosworth at jeff.bosworth@drake.edu

ISTMA will host an exciting opportunity to socialize with your peers and vendors during the 2012 Iowa Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show. On Tuesday evening following the all day workshop, ISTMA will be having a Social at Principal Park's Cub Club. Heavy hors d'oeuvres and cash bar will be available. A shuttle will be available from the Downtown Marriott Hotel to Principal Park's Cub Club for transportation to and from.

Join the ISTMA for a great night of remembering the 2011 season with a short program and great networking!



Is it Ever Going to Rain Again?

Mark Heick, City of Iowa City

For the first time in fifteen years from June 2 to September 17 we went without a single event being cancelled because of rain.

Is it ever going to rain again was a question asked in Iowa City most of the summer. With the rain falling in amounts barely enough to sustain a birdbath we had an issue. We have 26 baseball/softball fields along with 22 soccer fields to maintain along with the grounds at an outdoor theater.

We have irrigation in 10 of the ballfields, 20 of the soccer fields, and the outdoor theater. The biggest challenge would prove to be the 4 sandbased soccer fields built in 2010. This was our first summer with the new fields and mother nature decided to make it an interesting one for all involved. The process proved to be a learning experience trying to fit all the scheduled maintenance between the constant irrigation and at the same time finding out how the sand would handle the effluent water we use at the soccer complex.

In between the watering and besides mowing the fields were deepened, sliced along with foliar applications and gypsum. Eyes were constantly watching for dry spots, watching the irrigation run making sure heads were working up to speed and renozzleing if the need arised.

At one point during the summer, we were watering out of a 35 hour period around 33 hours throughout the 20 fields at soccer. With all the calculating and work figuring out schedules for watering we came to the conclusion that we were watering the sand at 5 times the rate as the native fields. It was nice to have all the soccer staff on board with the process from the begining because that meant 4 more pairs of eyes to keep an eye on the sand.

After this summer of hot and dry weather we have a better handle on what it takes to keep the sand happy in Iowa City. Next year will probably be wet and cool so then we start from square one. Well thats it from Iowa City . Later on keep the green side up.



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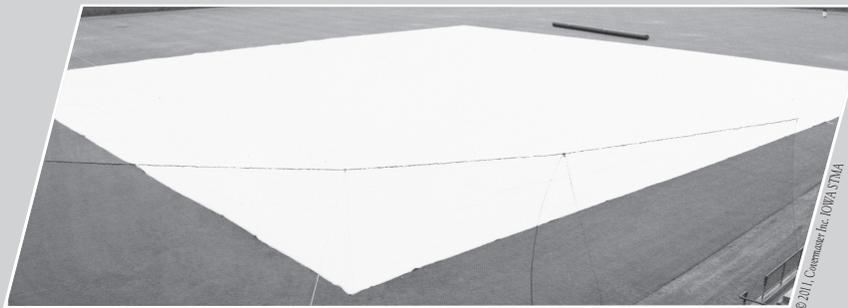
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