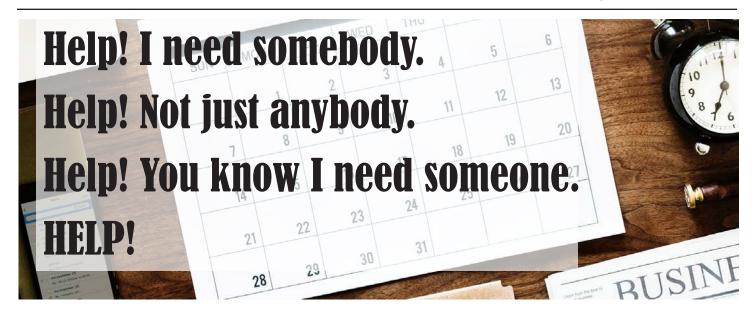
TALK TURF

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Those words aren't just the lyrics to a Beatles song they are what I hear all the time now days when I visit Grounds Managers. With very few exceptions staffing is becoming one of the toughest challenges our industry is facing.

It used to be we would be turning people away for seasonal jobs and full time positions had multiple applicants. With unemployment below 3% in the state currently and a shift in society to a technology heavy lifestyle that is not the case anymore. Enrollment in turf focused college programs is down. Seasonal labor from out of the country sources are limited now with immigration being a focus of current government administration.

What can be done to counter this dilemma?

Pay More

This is easier said than done as it directly affects the budget. The reality of the labor pool we are focusing on is competitive industries are paying more for what is most often less labor intensive work. Culvers, McDonalds, etc. are paying \$10-12/hr. to work a cash register in an air conditioned environment. Landscape and construction companies are paying \$15-18/hr. for labor. Our \$8-9/hr. is not going to cut it to get the same type of people unless that individual likes to work in an outdoor environment. I have seen one Grounds Manager go to the powers that be at his facility and tell them point blank, I need to raise my wages \$2/hr. across the board, both starting and for his existing staff. He didn't want his long time employees to hear new hires were

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Wisconsin SportSturf MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE —



Greetings, I hope all of our members are having a great summer! This summer we have had above average temperatures, torrential rainfalls, and extremely high wind speeds. To say Mother Nature has been difficult is an understatement. All of these environmental challenges have kept us on our toes. As we are all in "go" mode, we must remember to step back/slow down and take a deep breathe. It is very easy to get burnt out in the dog days of summer. Our members that take care of summer sports fields are in full swing, and football

is right around the corner. With a hot, humid summer, take a few minutes to unwind and hydrate. I assure you, soon we will get a break from this heatwave and fall will be here before we know it!

As dedicated as our Sports Turf Managers are, I hope you can take the time out of your busy schedule to attend a few of the events put on by our chapter. Your WSTMA board continues to work hard to make quality educational sessions and networking opportunities available to you. The WTA is hosting their summer field day on July 24th at the OJ Noer Turf grass Research facility in Verona. This is always an awesome event. The day consists of a rotation of educational sessions with turf grass plots which cover current and new products used in our industry, insect control, and sprayer calibrations. I encourage anyone who can attend, to do so. You can check out the WTA's website for registration and information.

I'm pleased to announce we will be hosting our fall event/field day on October 19th in Green Bay Wisconsin. Our educational sessions will be located at the Green Bay Distillery, which is across the street from the Green Bay Packers training facility. There will be room for our vendor partners to place equipment if they choose to do so. We will have great speakers and networking sessions, along with tours of the Green Bay Packers training facility and fields. We will have more information about this event in the upcoming weeks, so keep your eyes open! As always, I hope most of you can attend these events.

Once again, I hope everyone's summer is going great. Stay cool, hydrated, and focused on continuing to maintain the safest athletic fields around!

Bart Bartelme

"All winning teams are goal-oriented. Teams like these win consistently because everyone connected with them concentrates on specific objectives. They go about their business with blinders on; nothing will distract them from achieving their aims."

Lou Holtz, former Notre Dame football coach



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HELP! continued from front

making almost as much as them starting out. Another facility that had high turnover in full time staff finally raised the pay scale almost 50% to get quality people to want to stick around. The trade-off was fewer seasonal staff so full time staff has to do some of the less skilled tasks regularly.

Do More with Less

I believe everyone is as sick of this phrase as I am but it is the world we live in. We have to become more efficient with everything we do now days. If you can utilize your labor budget to pay more to fewer people but get better skilled people that is a start. Training a new staff member without any experience to do a task to your expectations/efficiency level can take a month or so. Plus it takes your time to keep checking on them and correcting mistakes.

Combine tasks to limit travel time. I know of one operation that has built an enclosed trailer to haul their field groomer, lining equipment, hand tools, garbage collection, etc. They have multiple locations for fields and they are able to have 2 people transport together in a pickup truck to prepare an entire complex at a time. They are have limited the amount of transport vehicles, storage facilities and groomers needed this way. Teamwork to knockout a job quickly is the key.

Work Smarter, Not Harder

Depending on your facility setup you might use growth regulator applications to reduce your mowing needs or extend your paint line life.

Also consider more efficient equipment to reduce labor.

Everyone loves the patterns that a zero-turn style mower can make in a field but that can take a long time. It may have to be forgone in our current situation. Instead of 2 zero turns, maybe an 11 foot or even a 16 foot rotary to cover more ground with less staff. There are large area striping mowers available now too, 10-12.5' wide. The initial investment may be higher but if you finance the unit over a number of years your offset in labor may pay for the purchase in the long run.

Contract out some tasks. Many companies are specializing in custom fertilizer and chemical applications. Cultivation can be contracted out too. When a project in needed, contract labor for a day or two to get the work done without sacrificing you regular workload.

Adjust to the Millennial Lifestyle

One phrase that many of us have heard repeatedly is the "Millennial" generation likes to have a flexible work schedule. They want to come and go, not be pigeon holed into an 8-hour fixed shift. This may be difficult with the field use/event schedules but possibly split shifts, more part-time staff or sharing staff between departments, etc.

Always be actively recruiting through you current employees, print and online as people aren't walking in much anymore. Be proactive and visit schools, churches, senior living, etc. Create a good work environment as being a dictator doesn't work anymore.

While these are just a few ideas and observations, you are going to have to be creative as we don't see this labor issue ending anytime soon.





WEST SALEM FOOTBALL FIELD RESURFACE/DRAINAGE Scott Johnson

Going into the planning stages for a fall referendum to remodel the existing middle school, the school board of the West Salem, WI School District decided they needed to also repair or replace their track which is located near the middle school. While evaluating the area, they decided that the need for track replacement was high and very crucial. They were not able to host a track meet the previous spring due to unsafe conditions of the

track. In addition to replacing the existing track, they could reshape the track to the "normal" oval shape of a track giving more room for the middle school. The existing track was more of a rectangle.

Next question was what to do with the football field. Now was the time to correct some drainage issues for a field that was used heavily during the late summer and fall seasons. There were varsity, Junior varsity and C-team football games, middle school football games, an occasional practice or two and marching band practice.

The crown on the field was to

the extreme and the district wanted to lower it. At that point, the district decided to move the field closer to the stands with the movement of the track and lower the crown.

PROBLEM

"What options do we have for the surface of the field to help with drainage and damage to the surface from usage". The existing field was constructed of native soils which rely on surface draining. We had seen over the years that heavy use in rainy weather would make the field nearly unplayable afterwards.

Option #1 was to install a synthetic field. This option would solve some of the problem but is very expensive (\$800,000 - \$1,000,000+). The district was already planning to add to the stadium seating, replace softball fields and tennis courts and add a multi-event center to house hockey and gymnastics. Installing a synthetic field would be too expensive and not in the expected budget.



Next option was to install a conventional sand-based field. This option also had a heavy price tag (\$400,000 to \$700,000) but would mean the field would not be playable for over a year to year in a half. The district already knew that they would be with out a football field for one season.

SOLUTION

The district then sought help from Beck's Ornamental turf management owner, Jim Beck. The less invasive and lower cost option was to install the "Spartan Cap system". This system was developed at the Michigan State University using the built-up



sand cap athletic field system. Using this system would cost the district between \$125,000-\$200,000 making it the most inviting.

The plan was to plane down the surface of the field removing a small layer of topsoil (2-4 inches) and lower the crown. This topsoil was set to the side and to be used later by the district as compost. Next was to install the drainage and irrigation system. Once the field was leveled with the correct slope of .05 to 2.0 % slope, the

contractor trenched in the drains and water lines.

The drain tile was installed by rolling out the drain tile tube at the same time as back filling with course sand. This would allow water to flow evenly into the drain tile in a heavy rain event. The drain runs were spaced approx. 12 to 15 feet apart and ran the entire length of the field connected to the main drain at the end. The trenches were filed entirely of sand. The contractor then leveled the field and topdressed the field with sand approx. ½ thick.

The irrigation lines were then run parallel to the drain lines for even coverage. With the irrigation

spaced evenly between the drain runs, they could get the maximum use of watering and not lose any to the drains.

SETBACK

Due to the timing of the project and weather, the field was not ready for seeding in time before the winter. This was a minor set back but come the spring of 2018, the district was able to get the field hydroseeded and start the growth

of the field. After the turf is established, the contractor then plans to topdress two more times to get a solid sand base for the turf roots to thrive. This process coupled with the districts normal annual field renovation program will bring the turf to life.

CONCLUSION

In the end of the project, the field will be a beautiful natural turf field that can thrive in the heat of the summer and the busy fall and spring seasons.



SAY HELLO...

We're highlighting new WSTMA Board Member Rex Zemke, Wausau School District.

WHAT FIRST SPARKED YOUR INTEREST IN TURF MANAGEMENT?

As a high school baseball player we had to prep and care for our diamond after every practice or game.

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE AS A SPORTS TURF MANAGER?

Coaches....Their passion and drive sometimes clouds their vision and judgment. This tends to lead to a lack of patience and a willingness to sacrifice a field's future just to get todays game in.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

Knowing that my crew and myself are improving our facilities and making them better and safer for our student athletes.





WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT OF YOUR CAREER?

Being elected as a WSTMA board member.

WHAT DO YOU WISH OTHER PEOPLE KNEW ABOUT THE TURF INDUSTRY?

That it is more than growing grass. It is true that anyone can grow grass. However, there is a lot more to growing turf that can withstand the

stress of the four seasons, sport seasons, and still remains safe and healthy. In addition to the science and research that is involved with the different seed types, there is so much more below the "grass" that impacts good turf.

WHO HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST INFLUENCES/MENTORS?

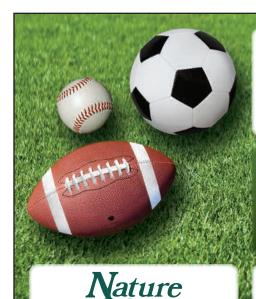
Mark Simon. Mark was my head baseball coach at D.C. Everest and I not only had the good fortune to play for him, but I was his able to be his assistant coach until his retirement. His knowledge of field care as well as his willingness to continue to learn has influenced me to do the same and strive for perfection.

WHEN YOU'RE NOT WORKING, WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO?

Coaching baseball and hunting.

IF YOU WERE NOT IN THE TURF INDUSTRY, WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO DO?

I would be in the tree care industry.





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POA ANNUA

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For decades, the golf industry has spent fortunes and tarnished careers controlling or managing it, most often on bentgrass surfaces. There are a multitude of products out there to incorporate into turf programs for bentgrass, but when it comes to Kentucky Bluegrass, Perennial Ryegrass and Turf Type Tall Fescues playing surfaces, the options for control dwindle to a handful of chemical options.

The WSTMA in conjunction with Doug Soldat and his team at the University of Wisconsin decided to put this handful of products side by side to judge what product(s) are going to give Sports Managers the best options for control of Poa. While there are some very good University research studies regarding Poa control products from across the country, few compare products side by side.

It was decided to compare Tenacity, Prograss, and Xonerate at various rates, timings and tank mixes. There are a couple other options out there, but these seem to be the most viable on the market for sports turf uses. We chose a site at Oregon School District for the trials and Turf Manager and Board Member Ron Novinska was gracious enough to give us an area on his practice fields. . The study time line is Spring 2018-Summer 2019.

Parameters include: Visual Turf Quality, Turfgrass Injury and of course Percent Annual Bluegrass.



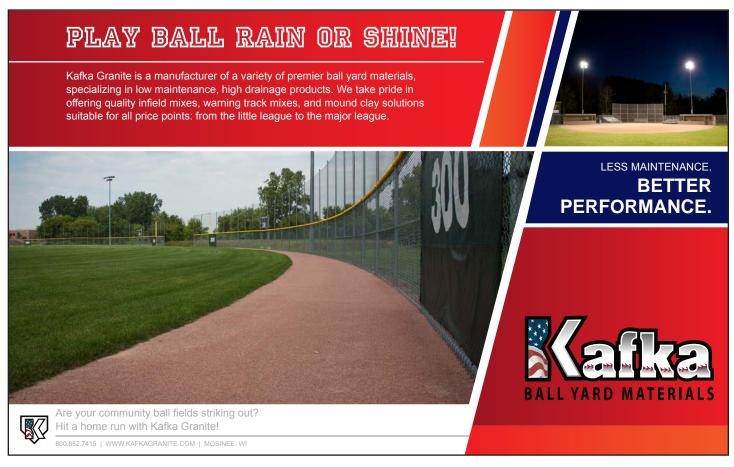
The trials were laid out on May 1st and applications commenced thereafter. As of June 7th, 5 applications of Tenacity gave the best Poa control so far, but as stated before, that is not the only parameter being measured. Prograss will not be applied until Fall.

Stay tuned to the WSTMA Facebook, Twitter and Newsletter for updates.

WSTMA POA ANNUA RESEARCH

Treatment #	Product	Rate	Timing	Application Interval
		1.5	2 apps fall	
1	Prograss	oz/1000		21 days
2	Prograss	1.5	3 apps fall + spring	
		oz/1000	follow up	21 days
	Tenacity + NIS	5.3	3 3	
3	.25%	oz/1000	3 apps	14 days
	Tenacity + NIS	3.2		
4	.25%	oz/1000	5 apps (2 per wk)	
5	Xonerate	2 oz/1000	2 apps spring	14 days
6	Xonerate	1 oz/acre	4 apps spring	7 days
7	Xonerate	1 oz/acre	4 apps spring	7 days
	Tank Mixes			
8	Xonerate	1 oz/acre	2 apps spring	14 days
	Tenacity	4 oz/acre	2 apps spring	14 days
9	Xonerate	1 oz/acre	3 apps spring	14 days
	Tenacity	4 oz/acre	3 apps spring	14 days
	Non-treated			
10	Control	N/A	N/A	N/A





Carrying Capacity of an Athletic Field

Pamela Sherratt

This article originally appeared in the June 2016 Sports Turf Magazine

I have recently received several questions along the lines of "How many games can a sports field host per year?" My answer to this question is, "Between 25 and 200, depending on your field." The reason I answer this way is because each field is different, and the field is only as good as the care it receives. In essence, fields with no investment will deteriorate quickly, while fields that are supported by the community and taken care of by a turf professional may host 200+ games. Reading the stories about facilities that have received STMA's Field of the Year Awards are a testament to the notion that high quality is achieved through education, craftsmanship, and available resources.

Breaking down the question about the carrying capacity of a field, the most important factor to evaluate is the drainage capability of the field. Since the 1970's, when sports turf drainage systems were introduced, the quality of fields has significantly improved if a drainage system is installed. Improving the drainage of a field results in fewer canceled games, better playing conditions, greater tolerance of high intensity use and therefore greater carrying capacity. The dustbowls and mudbaths of those early years are now considered unacceptable and customers expect fields that are playable (firm), aesthetically pleasing (have 100% grass cover) and are safe (even). Those three criteria: firmness, ground cover and surface evenness are the benchmarks for what constitutes a "high quality" athletic field and they are achieved by having a field that drains.

Increasing carrying capacity then goes hand-in-hand with improving field drainage. The most cost efficient drainage option is to adopt a rigorous, annual soil cultivation and sand topdressing program, which may or may not be done in conjunction with sand slit installation every 4-5 years. This operation can significantly improve the carrying capacity of a native soil field and is a common practice at schools

and parks facilities. The cost of this operation is several thousand dollars per field/year, but these types of fields can last decades and should be able to host upward of 70- 100 events. It is important on topdressed and sand-slit fields that the topdressing is carried out annually, to prevent layering.

More effective and expensive options to improve drainage would include field reconstruction. Construction of a graded and seeded native soil field ranges in cost from \$60,000 to \$400,000, depending on whether the on-site native soil is used, or if sand is imported to ameliorate the soil. Sand cap systems range in cost from \$60,000-\$600,000 (Michigan State's Spartan Cap System is estimated at \$60,000-\$100,000, for example), and suspended water table constructions, referred to as sand fields, range from \$600,000-\$1,000,000. The upper range of these costs may cover extra items like irrigation, lights and scoreboards. Similar to the upgraded drainage approach, annual maintenance practices like topdressing and organic matter control are also going to dictate the longevity of each field.

In addition to its drainage capabilities, there are many other criteria that dictate the carrying capacity of a field. Fields that are maintained by turfgrass professionals will obviously be produced to a higher quality standard than fields that are not. Turfgrass professionals have the craftsmanship and the knowledge to make informed decisions about turf maintenance, pest control, water and nutritional needs, and soil improvement. Community investment is also critical, since the turf manager needs both money and support to do their job.

At the local park where my kids play soccer, zero dollars from funds raised by leagues are returned for field maintenance. As such, the field are covered with prostrate knotweed and ankle-sized craters, but until the community speaks up those improvements

won't get made. Intensity of use plays a big part in field longevity, since it will affect how quickly the ground cover is worn away and how much renovation time the sports turf manager has. Ideally, fields and practice locations should be rotated to allow for turf renovation, but small facilities or land locked facilities may not have that option. One of the worst scenarios I see is fields with multi-purpose soccer and football goals set in concrete, which thwarts any kid of renovation plan.

Lastly, age of the athlete can also plays a role; younger users typically cause less wear than older athletes.

So to summarize, the question "How many games can a field host?" is far too broad in nature for me to reply with one number. Carrying capacity and longevity of an athletic field depends upon its quality, and its quality depends upon the level of investment from the community and the knowledge of the person











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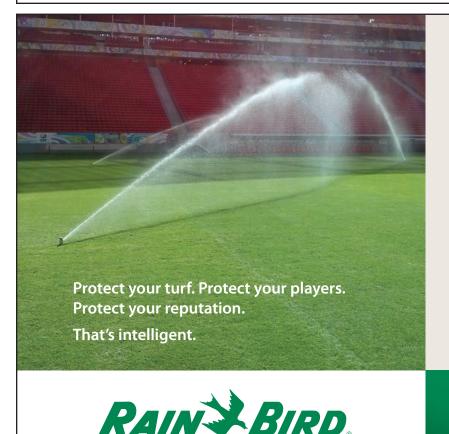


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Carrying capacity continued from Page 10

taking care of it.

This leads me into a story. Several years ago, before I was enslaved by my iPhone, I bought a phone from a big-box store. It was a great deal and didn't bind me to any one service carrier. After my excitement of the deal wore off I quickly learned that both the quality of the product and the customer service that followed were beyond terrible. The phone was made with

cheap plastic and every attempt to talk to someone about it resulted in me banging said phone on my head.

Later, complaining about this experience to my friend and colleague Karl Danneberger, he cut me off midwhine, looked at me wryly, and said, "Pam, you get what you pay for." Truer words were never spoken.



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