

# TALK TURF

Official publication of the Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association

VOLUME 18 ISSUE 2 | SUMMER 2017

Pictured: Dr. Doug Soldat of the OJ Noer Turfgrass Research Center at 2017 Summer Field Day



## A LOOK BACK: WTA SUMMER FIELD DAY

The Wisconsin Turfgrass Association 2017 Summer Field Day held on July 25, was a gorgeous day at the O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility in Verona. The WTA did their usual excellent job in organizing and presenting the research that is being pursued at this first-class facility.

The research accomplished at the O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research Facility is relevant to all who work with turfgrass in the Midwest and the nation. The research provides measurable data that guides our decisions on many topics, including; snow mold management, turfgrass seed selection, broadleaf weed control, insect control, application techniques, fertilizer selection and application, and nutrient management. All managers of turfgrass need to have the most current research results to be able to employ the most cost efficient, most effective, and most up to date practices.

In addition to the research presentations there were many our partners in sports turf managers, that is, equipment

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As you receive this issue of Talk Turf, I'm sure most of you are very busy at your facilities. I hope everyone has had a great summer up to this point. Football season is gearing up, baseball is nearing the end, and school is almost back in session. We have all had struggles this year, and I'm sure some of us are starting to feel the stress. No worries, I assure you cooler weather will be here before we know it! I hope you have had a chance to take a break, get away for a few days, or just take time to reflect and recharge a bit.

The WSTMA board had recently held a meeting at the OJ Noer Turf grass field day on July 25th. We had a great meeting and are continuing to make our chapter even better for our members and sponsors. There will be a field day held on October 11th in Pewaukee, so mark your calendars, more information will be out shortly. Our winter conference will be on Thursday February 15th at Neuroscience Group Field at Fox Cities Stadium. Once again, I have to thank all of our sponsor members for your help with this events, and by promoting the WSTMA.

This time of year, most of us are spending more time at work, than with our own families and loved ones. We have to remember how to balance work and personal life. My message for everyone is to take time to spend with the ones most important to you, as life is way too short.

This year, the green industry lost a long time member, Roy Zehren. Roy was one of the WSTMA's founding members who laid the stepping stones for our foundation as a chapter. His passion drove his desire for the better of turf grass and the green industry. With Roy's passing, his family had wished, in lieu of flowers, money to be donated to the WSTMA scholarship fund. The WSTMA is honoring Roy with the Roy Zehren Memorial Scholarship. We intend for this scholarship to help out new and incoming turf grass/horticulture students. Our chapter could not be more proud to honor Roy by doing this, and we are forever grateful to Roy and his family.

Thank you all for everything you do. I wish everyone the best for the rest of your seasons!

*Bart Bartelme*

"Life is too short to wake up in the morning with regrets, so love the people who treat you right, forget about the ones who don't, and believe that everything happens for a reason. If you get a chance, take it. If it changes your life, let it. Nobody said life would be easy, they just promised it would be worth it." — Harvey MacKay



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# FALL CONFERENCE

## DATE

October 11th, 2017

## LOCATION

Wagner Park, Pewaukee, WI

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# WHAT IS THE “GLUE” THAT HOLDS YOUR DIRT TOGETHER.

By: Dan Jennings (Sr. Sales of Diamond Pro)

*“What’s the most important thing field managers need to keep in mind when maintaining their infield on a daily basis?”*

When managing an infield dirt or clay area no matter what climate, the most important aspect is moisture content. Moisture is the “glue” that holds every particle together and gives you the ability to manage the hardness and softness of your material.

Proper moisture management does take some time and effort to achieve the proper consistency. To make sure you have an appropriate infield mix you’ll need to make sure it contains a good blend of sand, silt & clay with accurate drainage slope; this process will also increase your chances of having a successful rain event. Using topdressing materials like vitrified clays and calcined products will protect your infield grade and help you manage moisture. To ensure you have suitable moisture levels in your baseball or softball clay areas prior to game time.

A quick Diamond Pro tip to test your moisture level is to take a car key and push it into your infield dirt or mound/homeplate high traffic areas, if you cannot push the key into the dirt, you’ll need to increase the moisture level. If you push your key into the dirt and then pull it out and dirt sticks to the key your infield dirt is to wet but if your key goes in and comes out clean your infield moisture is perfect!

Proper moisture along with proper grade will make the coach’s job a lot easier; in addition it will help to provide a safe and playable field day in and day out! With our years of experience at Diamond Pro®, we truly enjoy explaining and helping field managers and coaches execute those proper steps.



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# BATTLING JAPANESE BEETLES

By Michael Krupke

It's just about that time, those pesky, down right annoying Japanese Beetles will be here soon. Most years starting in mid to late June through July, they emerge to feed, mate and lay their eggs.

Whether it's your ornamental plantings or your trees, Japanese Beetles can raise havoc by chewing the leaves of your precious landscape plants, leaving them defoliated and potentially killing them. Luckily, you do have options when it comes to battling these pests.

First, you may treat your trees and shrubs systemically with a chemical called Imidicloprid well before Beetles emerge. Trade names include Mallet or Merit.

Treating systemically means applying a chemical solution to the ground around your plants this is called soil drenching, or injecting the solution into the ground around the roots with a soil injector. Your goal is to have the chemical taken up into the plant through the roots when the plant is taking up water and nutrients from the soil naturally.



The chemical is then translocated to the leaves through the plants vascular system where the Beetles ingest the Imidicloprid while feeding and are killed.

To determine how much Imidicloprid you need for trees, simply measure the trees diameter at chest height. The chemicals label rate suggests .1 to .2



fluid ounces per inch of diameter. This calculation is used for either method of application, soil drench or soil injection. You then mix the chemical in sufficient water to thoroughly drench the area around the tree (10 gallons per 1000 square feet) or in the case of injection, enough water to make sure the chemical is well distributed around the tree.

For shrubs, the rate is based on shrub height, .1 to .2 fluid ounces per foot. For flowers or groundcover, the process is somewhat different. The solution is broadcast with a sprayer at a rate of .46 to .6 fluid ounces per 1000 square feet, then it is to be watered in to ensure it gets down to the roots.

Timing for these applications is as follows, trees 30 feet and under should be done in the Spring, 30 feet and over in the Fall. Ornamental shrubs and flowers should be done in the Spring.

Another option for control is foliar application. This can be done by spraying the leaves directly with a

sprayer after the Japanese Beetles have emerged. Various chemicals are available such as Bifenthrin (Menace), Cyfluthrin (Tempo) and Deltamethrin (DeltaGuard) to name a few. All have different application rates that can be found on the product label.

Whatever application you choose, always follow product label directions.

One last helpful hint... Japanese Beetle traps do attract the little pests, however, realize you are attracting the beetles from the whole neighborhood to a party in your yard.

If you have any questions, or want more information, please contact your Frontier-Servco Turf Specialist. We would be happy to assist you!

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# FOUNDING WISCONSIN MEMBER OF THE STMA, ROY G. ZEHREN PASSES AWAY

Roy G. Zehren of Port Washington passed away peacefully on Saturday, June 10, 2017. He was born in Milwaukee to Gilbert and Josephine (nee Ulrich) Zehren on July 18, 1930.

Mr. Zehren grew up in Milwaukee and worked many summers picking produce in his family's garden to be sold at local markets. He graduated from Rufus King High School and earned an associate degree in photography in 1951. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Zehren was drafted into the army to serve in Korea. His experience with a camera enabled him to leave his rank as a combat rifleman and become a combat photographer. He rose to the rank of Sergeant and became a photographer for army generals. For his service, he was awarded both a Purple Heart and Bronze Star. In 2013, Ozaukee Press featured Mr. Zehren's donation of his slides and prints for exhibit at the WI Veterans Museum in Madison.



In 1953, he married Ruth Arle in Manitowoc. The couple lived in Milwaukee and photography remained his hobby. In 1954, he founded Zehren Landscaping as a residential and commercial landscape architect. With his growing expertise in designing natural turf drainage systems, he founded Natural Athletic Turf, Inc. and Sports Turf Consultants in 1974. Mr. Zehren worked with golf courses and professional sports teams across the country, including the Milwaukee Brewers, to develop systems that could sustain healthy natural grass playing surfaces. He was a lifelong member and officer of many professional associations as well as an avid golfer, obtaining the ultimate golfer's goal: a hole in one on a windy spring day in Florida. In 1978, he married Geri Ryer in Port Washington. Together their love of gardening blossomed. As active members of the Port Washington Garden Club, their beautifully landscaped yard

in Port Washington, complete with putting green, was featured on the club's garden walks.

Roy Zehren was instrumental in the creation of the Sports Turf Managers Association and the Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association. In 1981 a meeting was held in Purdue at the Midwest Turf Conference in March. To quote from a STMA publication; The History of the STMA and the Annual Conference, "Harry (Gill) called a meeting that evening to be held in his room in the student union. In attendance were Doc Daniel, George Toma, Dick Ericson, Steve Wightman, Bill Weisenberger Purdue Groundskeeper, Roy Zehren a contractor and friend of Harry's from Wisconsin and a young park Superintendent from Northbrook Illinois, named Mike Schiller, and a few others. During that meeting the STMA took shape and began moving forward."

Roy Zehren as a member of the STMA and WSTMA from the very first days. Roy was also active with the initial creation of the STMA, serving on its first Board of Directors. Additionally, Roy served as the 1968 President of the Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Association and in 1975 President of the Wisconsin Green Industry Federation.

Mr. Zehren's obituary, as listed in the Ozaukee Press indicates that in lieu of flowers, memorials to the Wisconsin Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association Inc. Scholarship Fund and the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Foundation Inc. are suggested.

The above article is based on the obituary of Roy Zehren from the Ozaukee Press and from The History of the STMA and the Annual Conference by Schiller, Wightman, and Petry.





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# SAY HELLO...

*We're highlighting WSTMA Board Member Mark Robel, Territory Manager, Reinders, Inc.*

## **What first sparked your interest in Turf Management?**

As a 12-15 year old kid I worked at a golf course as a bag boy, shining shoes, and general laborer in the clubhouse. When I would open up the inside operations I would see the grounds crew going out and the Superintendent driving by with his dog. He was a family friend and I would talk to him about what was going on at the golf course. When I was old enough (16) I decided to switch to the grounds department and really enjoyed it.

## **What is your biggest challenge?**

Time. As the season is rolling sometimes trying to get everywhere gets tough. I can try to plan my day but as everyone that works in this industry knows things happen and you have to adjust to what just became priority.

## **What do you like best about your job?**

Meeting new people, seeing different operations and trying to help customers solve their specific operational issues.

## **What has been the most memorable moment of your career?**

Working at Kiawah Island Resort in South Carolina. Right after college I moved 1000 miles away from home and was on my own. For 5 years I was able to get up and see the sunrise over the ocean. I had to come back to Wisconsin though, I missed the seasons and couldn't stand the summer heat and humidity.



## **What do you wish other people knew about the turf industry?**

Right now I wish people thought about the turf industry as a career. We are so short on turf students we are struggling to fill key positions on staffs. The plus side is hopefully with a shortage of qualified people it might raise the wages which would help attract people to the industry.

## **Who has been your biggest influences/mentors?**

Tie between Jim Shaw at Chenequa Country Club and Harvey Miller at Oconomowoc Golf Club. I first worked for Jim on the grounds staff at Chenequa. Jim would take things as they came and change things up as he saw things come up during the day. Jim told me after a couple of seasons there, to work at various courses to get different agronomic experience and see different management styles. Some of the best advice I was ever given. Harvey was the second guy I worked for in the grounds industry, he was extremely organized and firm but fair disciplinarian. They both really taught me a lot and are still good friends of mine to this day. I see them both every week.

## **When you're not working, what do you like to do?**

Much of my off time is spent coaching my daughter's softball and basketball teams. When time allows I golf, hike, cross country ski and hunt.

## **If you were not in the turf industry, what would you want to do?**

I would probably do something with the DNR managing state parks. Something that would keep me outdoors.

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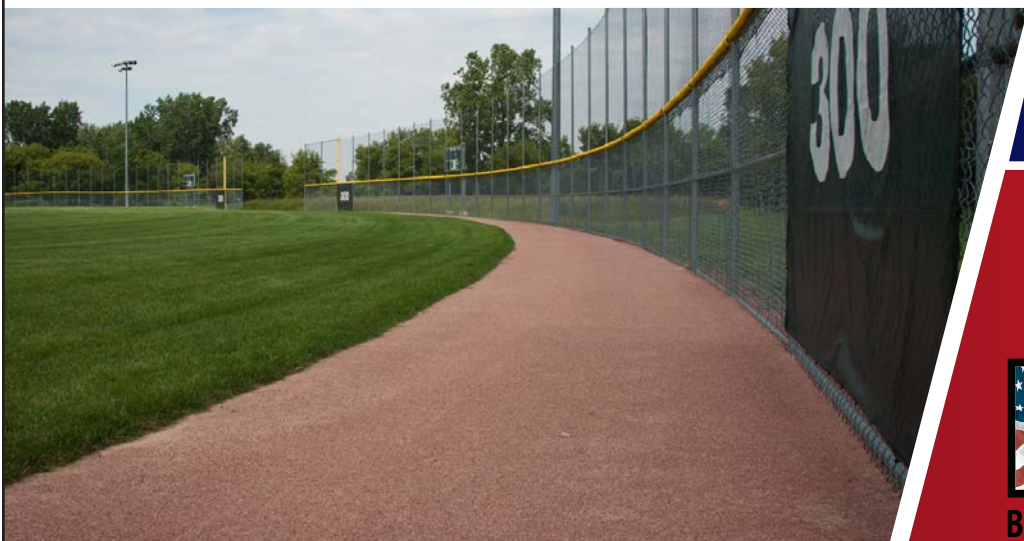


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## Field Day Continued from Front

and product sales representatives. There were several new vendors, and I enjoyed talking with them to learn more about their products and the application to turfgrass management.

Most of the research plots centered on the results of the current growing season, but several plots are longitudinal studies that cover several years past and will proceed into several years in the future. I was impressed with the work showing how different cultivars of grasses and how different blends have responded to weed control without use of herbicides. Another plot I found very interesting was the thick dark green turf displayed in the Holiday trial. This research demonstrated a specific blend of grasses managed with minimal fertilizer and minimal mowing.

Some of the other demonstrations plots addressed: Reduced risk herbicides, Low input turf selections, Lawn & sports turf snow mold control, Herbicide evaluations, Hose end sprayer calibration, Mosquito and other nuisance pests' abatement, Dew removal impacts of fungicide efficacy, Potassium on bentgrass, Agronomic & economic evaluation of liquid fertilizer, Earthworms management options, Cultural dollar spot control. Anyone who would like more information on any of these topics should directly contact the Turfgrass Research Center at 608-845-6536.

Overall, I always find the research and displays very interesting and certainly provides information pertinent to the management of sports turfgrass. Wisconsin is very lucky to have the highly qualified staff at the University of Wisconsin and the University of Wisconsin-Extension that manage this research and this facility.



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# AERATION 2017

By Mark Robel

Years ago, you mention aeration and everyone groaned. Players and coaches hated the mess and grounds crews hated the labor involved in this process. In 2017 that is no longer the case with the vast array of tools available to the modern turf manager. This process has evolved from a once a year task to a target area specific, multi-option cultural practice. A quick overview of the different types of aerators are outlined below.

## TRADITIONAL HOLLOW TINES

Traditional core aeration 2-4" deep is still the most commonly employed method and probably the most effective overall aeration technique. Core aeration helps manage compaction, drainage, thatch/organic matter. Early "punch style" aerators were slow, often requiring multiple days to aerate a single field with limited tine head



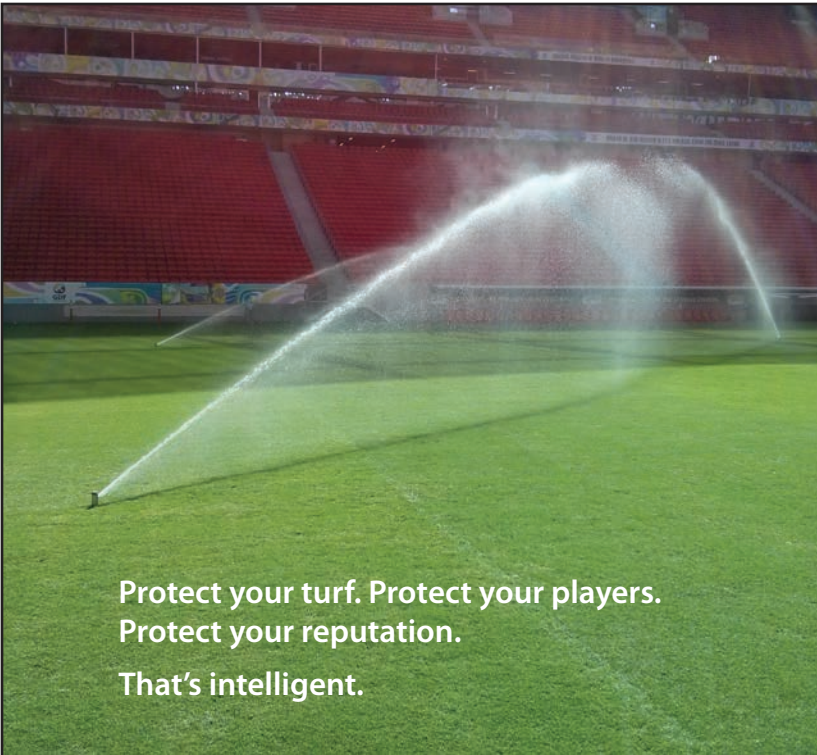
Original drum style aerator vs modern punch style aerator for large areas.

options. The drum style aerator was fast, but spacing and penetration were limited, yielding limited benefits. Modern equipment has changed the core aeration game dramatically in both quality and speed. Larger punch style aerators are now being employed on fields instead of the drum style.

Instead of being limited to a 1/2-3/4", tine sizes now range from 1/4"-1". Tine heads now allow for spacing as tight as 1.25". Combine the right tine head and tine size to impact play as much/little as required. Use core aeration to manage organic matter and to introduce new root zone materials.

**SOLID TINES** The selection of tines available for aeration is probably the best development for the modern turf manager. We now have solid round tines, star tines, bayonet tines and multiple

*Continued on page 15*



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## Aeration continued from page 12

other configurations beyond the hollow coring tines. Solid style tines allow the turf manager to treat heavy use areas without affecting playing surface quality in season. While no organic matter is controlled, compaction can be managed in goal mouths, base paths, sidelines, between the hash marks, etc. This allows water to penetrate and air to be exchanged with zero complaints by the participants. Many turf managers are employing solid tine aeration in high wear areas every 2-3 weeks in season. These tines are readily interchanged with the hollow tines giving multiple options with the same machine.



Sample of solid tines available and the limited impact on the playing surface.

**SPIKING** A variation of the solid tine is the spiking units available now. Older 3 point mounted aerators had spiking options that would penetrate 1-2". New units allow for 4-8" penetration depending on the soil composition, moisture levels and tines selected. Extra weight can be added for even deeper penetration. Entire fields can be treated quickly and frequently. While spacing is not close, the speed and ease of this treatment can be beneficial for treating fields with surface compaction and opening up localized dry spots.

**DEEP AERATION** When soils are heavy or multiple years of shallow depth aeration have left a buried hard pan layer it is time to go deep. Deep tine aerators are going to penetrate 6-16" deep and come in either a solid tine or coring tine configuration. Tines typically will range from

5/16"-1.25" in diameter. These are specialty units requiring a large enough tractor (typically 45-60 hp) to operate them. These units can help save a field from total renovation by slowly changing the root zone material. Two different type of deep tine aerators are available. Traditional tractor mounted "kick" style or the Drill and Fill. The Drill and Fill drills a hole and backfills the channel with material. Drill and Fill is slow and most often a contracted process.



Examples of the specialty aerators available.

**SPECIALTY AERATORS** Specialty aeration equipment is an ever evolving market. Dry-Ject, Air Injection and Rotational Blade aerators are all specialty products. The Dry-Ject is a contracted service that uses high pressure water to blast a channel in the ground and then incorporate a soil amendment. The Air Injection unit is fairly new in the US and involves injecting high-pressure air into the ground. Both of these methods are very slow but low impact on playing surface. The rotational blade units can carve a channel up to 15" deep in the ground and is excellent for poorly draining soils.

*All pictures taken from Bing images. Photos used to demonstrate technology only and not an endorsement of any product.*



Traditional "kick" style deep tine aerators and the Drill and Fill.

# Wisconsin SportsTurf

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