

# The *Sideline* Report

Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association

February 2011



**Golden Cleat Award**

**Gary Peterson Scholarships**



**Beware "Meadow in a Can" Seed Mix**

**Seeding Tips for Maximum Results**

**2010 ISTMA Sports Complex of the Year/Soccer Field of the Year**



**STMA Conference Recap**

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# A Letter from the President

By Tony Senio

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I hope the winter storms and arctic air have subsided and that this publication finds you all in good health and good spirits. I write this in the wake of another successful

Iowa Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show, hoping that you were able to attend you found value in doing so. Much appreciation should be lauded on the planners of the event, the presenters and of course the sponsors.

For as long as I can remember, in every newsletter, at every workshop and every conference there has been a call for your contributions as writers, your participation as hosts and your feedback as attendees and readers. These are not empty requests – we truly want to know that the things we are publishing, planning and presenting, with your interest in mind, are really the things that you want to learn about. We do not want you to become bored with the same writers on the same subjects or with the same demonstrations at the same complexes year after year. Understandably there will be similar articles and talks, but there can be a lot of monotony to our tasks and thus certain subjects require continual education and re-education. That said, the more opinions and feedback we receive, the more pertinent the information we present can be. We cherish the old voices but crave the new. With new voices come new ideas, new experiences and new teachings. You may be taking care of a grass T-Ball field in the middle of rural Cedar County but your problems and practices are real and thus there is much value in sharing them.

The million dollar word at conference this year with regard to our organization was “transparency.” Changes have been made to allow you more say in association affairs. Things were emphasized in hopes of making you feel like your voices are heard, recognized and then considered in future decisions. Personally, I hope you feel that the nine of us you’ve elected aren’t just doing the things we want for the people we want at a price we want. Believe me, the only profit any of us gain from this whole thing is the satisfaction gleaned from whatever you get out of what is given. I hope you feel that those of us who have been elected by you to direct the ISTMA can be spoken to in a candid manner – with the gloves off – telling us whether you feel the value of your membership is worth the price. We pay association fees just like the rest of you and we would expect the same sort of representation if others sat on the board. On one of the pages of every issue of The Sideline Report is the entire listing of board members. Contact any one of them, better yet contact all of them, and consider yourself heard.

My friends, good or bad, there is an ever-increasing emphasis and exposure toward athletics. Events are piling up, while labor and input budgets are being cut. With all of that, developing your knowledge and augmenting your capabilities in this trade will serve as weapons to combat this movement. As our friend, Jesse Cuevas, so eloquently stated to us during the first session at conference, “Now is not the time to say I can’t.” Help us help you prepare for the challenges that lie ahead.

- Tony Senio, ISTMA President

# Seeding Tips for Maximum Results

By Brian Wood

With the introduction of new seeding equipment in recent years, let's look at some of the "do's and don'ts" of successful seeding.

I've been seeding turf for over 28 years and my company contract seeds thousands of acres of athletic fields, golf course tees, greens, and fairways. Some of the things that I see in the field can be quite disturbing. Operators now have the option of seeding up to 1 1/2 inches deep. Some people actually try to seed that deeply! The main key to good seed germination is good seed-to-soil contact, right? Not necessarily! If it's Bentgrass, Bermudagrass, Ryegrass, Bluegrass, or Fescue, the results are always the same. If you plant the seed too deep it's not going to grow. Even if you have a bad thatch problem, don't plant the seed so deep (to get in contact with the soil) that you bury it! It will not come up when planted that deep!

For the smaller seeds such as Bentgrass, Bluegrass, or Bermudagrass, I've seen the best germination results when planting around 3/16 to 3/8 inch deep. Even for larger Ryegrass and Fescue seeds, the best germination rates seem to be when planted 1/4 to 1/2 inch deep. If thatch is a problem, go ahead and plant the seed shallow, right into the thatch layer. This will give you the best germination rates, faster germination, and usually a cleaner seeding job. **After** getting the turfgrass re-established, **then** start to tackle the thatch issue. Through verti-cutting, topdressing, and coring, the thatch can then be remedied with little disruption to play.

So remember, with all the new seeder technology out there.... Just because the seeder will go that deep,.....Don't!

Use plenty of seed. If you are going to the ex-

pense of seeding, whether hiring it out, or doing it yourself, don't be skimping on the seed. If you try to save money by seeding at a lighter rate, and Mother Nature doesn't cooperate and you get a poor germination rate, the results may be sub-par. This can be embarrassing when players and/or spectators say "I thought you seeded this area", and you have to say "well, I tried to save money on seed and now I've lost my seeding window". Seed at a high enough rate so that if you don't get good germination (due to weather or other causes), there will still be enough seed there to give you acceptable results. After seeding, if you have irrigation, perform light frequent watering. Deep watering isn't important for good germination. Just keep the seed wet (2-3 times per day).

- "Seeding" continued on page 5

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## “Seeding” continued

Topdressing? A light topdressing is okay after seeding, just don't drag it in. If you try to drag the topdressing, you will also drag the seed off of the high spots and into the low. Just use the topdressing as light mulch.

Mulch? Some people choose to mulch after seeding. I like to use a “hydro-mulch” or else pelletized mulch on bare ground, especially on slopes. Straw mulch will bring in weed seed that will have to be taken care of after establishment, but is a lot cheaper alternative if you insist on mulch.

Apply a good designated “starter” fertilizer at the same time as planting, this will help insure healthier and quicker establishment.

So there you have it: Pick the right seeder, seed the right depth, fertilize, water, and get ready to mow!

Happy seeding!

-Brian Wood

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# Gary Peterson Scholarships Awarded

At the ISTMA Annual Business meeting on January 19, 2011 the Gary Peterson Scholarships were awarded to three deserving students. Matthew Hollan, Zachary Simons and Shaun Eberhart.



Matthew Hollan is a senior at Iowa State University with plans to graduate with a Bachelors of Science in Horticulture- Turfgrass Management Option in the spring of 2011.

Matthew's work experience includes facilities and grounds intern for Iowa State Athletic Department and is owner of Hollan Lawn Care in Alburnett.

Matthew hopes to start a graduate studies program in turfgrass management. Upon completion of graduate school his goal is to begin his career as a sports field manager and working towards his Certified Sports Field Manager certification.



Zachary Simons is a senior at Iowa State University whose current major is Turfgrass Management and plans to graduate in May with a Bachelor of Science degree. He already possesses a Associate of Science in Biology from John Wood Community College.

Zachary's work experience includes a summer internship with the Iowa Cubs, an internship with Accadia Bluffs Golf Club in Michigan and a seasonal position for 8 years with Westview Golf Course in Quincy, IL.

After graduation Zachary plans on finding a job at a sports field and working and gaining experience and then becoming an assistant sports turf manager and use that experience to land a head-groundskeeper job.

*- Gary Peterson Scholarships continued next page*



Shaun Eberhart will graduate from Kirkwood Community College in April. His current major is Athletic Turfgrass Management and will be receiving his AAS degree upon completion of his studies.

Shaun's work experience includes jobs with the Clinton Lumberkings and two summers for the City of Iowa City athletics facilities staff. After graduation, Shaun will go to Boston for an internship at Fenway Park.

Shaun hopes to be a grounds superintendent at a professional stadium within baseball if it be minor or major leagues.

ISTMA is pleased to offer these scholarships and wishes each recipient much success as they pursue their careers. ISTMA would like to express our gratitude to the individuals and businesses who donated items towards the ISTMA silent auction at the Iowa Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show. All proceeds from the silent auction go towards providing scholarship opportunities to Iowa university, college and technical schools pursuing careers in the Sports Turf industry.

If you are a student interested in applying for the 2011 ISTMA Scholarships, you can find a link to the application at <http://www.iowaturfgrass.org/istma/> <<http://www.iowaturfgrass.org/istma/>> istmahome.htm.

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# 2010 ISTMA Soccer Field of the Year

At the ISTMA annual business meeting on January 19<sup>th</sup> 2011 the Soccer Field of the Year was awarded to Cedar Valley Soccer Complex in Waterloo.

Cedar Valley Soccer Complex opened in Waterloo in 2001 with 11 full size fields, 4 practice fields and one lighted field. They have 4 full time staff one each for concessions, field manager, garbage and administrative.

Randy Muller is the field manager and says the fields are cared for by strictly volunteer labor during the week. Volunteer's jobs range from painting, mowing and also placement of goals for practices and games

They play host to the Northern Iowa soccer team as well as Cedar Falls High Schools and other high schools from surrounding communities. They are the home of the Cedar Valley Youth Soccer league which consists of youth from kindergarten all the way to 19 years old. They host a number of tournaments throughout the year all with volunteer labor essentially.

Congratulations to Randy Muller his staff of volunteers and Cedar Valley Soccer for winning the 2010 Iowa Sports Turf Managers Soccer Field of the Year.

## Awards Committee Gives Big Thanks

The awards and scholarship committee would like to thank the following vendors and other individuals for donating goods to the ISTMA silent auction at the Iowa Turfgrass Conference and Tradeshow. Money raised through this silent auction enables us to award scholarships to Iowa university, college and technical school students pursuing careers in the Sports Turf Industry.

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Andy Eiffert

Tony Senio

Once again thanks for everything and everyone who donated to the silent auction and everyone who helped in the booth during the event.

Awards Committee Chair

Mark Heick

# Jesse Cuevas Recieves Golden Cleat Award

During the ISTMA Annual Meeting, held during the Iowa Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show, long-time ISTMA member Jesse Cuevas was recognized as this year's Golden Cleat Award recipient. Jesse has worked for the city of Omaha as Head Groundskeeper at Johnny Rosenblatt Stadium since 1987.

Cuevas began working at Rosenblatt as a 9-year old youngster, shagging foul balls in 1969. He served in nearly every capacity – from running the manual scoreboard to working in the team clubhouse – during his early career. In 1979 Jesse found his passion working as a groundskeeper under the tutelage of the legendary Head Groundskeeper, Frank Mancuso. Jesse worked hard to perfect his skills and when Groundskeeper Mancuso passed away in 1986, Jesse was naturally – and in typical Cuevas style - without fanfare, was named Rosenblatt's Head Groundskeeper. He's held the position since then. With Rosenblatt Stadium being abandoned for a new stadium in downtown Omaha, Jesse finished his Rosenblatt career this past fall.

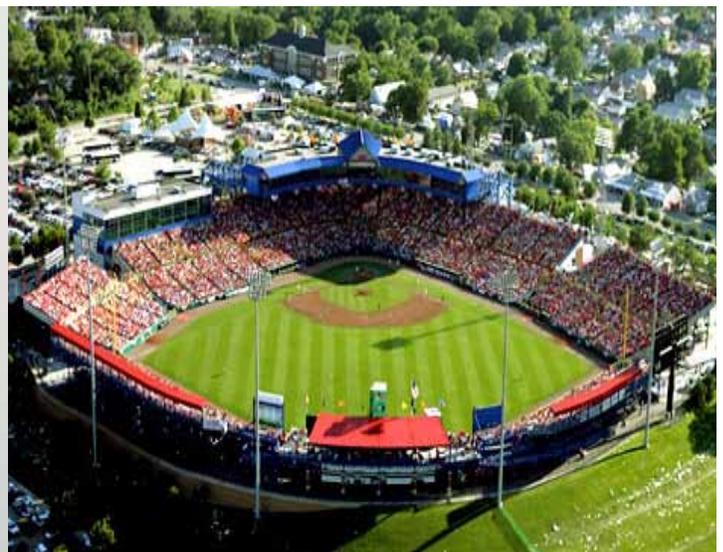
During Jesse's career at Rosenblatt he's been honored in many ways by many organizations. The NCAA recognized his efforts and years of devotion to the College World Series. The city of Omaha and the Omaha mayor's office recognized his efforts on numerous occasions through

official proclamations. In 1992, Jesse was named the American Association (AAA baseball) Groundskeeper of the Year. Jesse was named a national STMA Board of Director in 1999 and in 2002 he received one of STMA's highest awards; the George Toma Founder's Award.

Jesse has been a member of the Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association since 1992. In that time he's hosted numerous chapter workshops and has served as one of our chapter's most generous ambassadors. Whenever our chapter asked Jesse for a favor, input or to share his expertise, the gentle giant NEVER refused. Asked by the Omaha Herald to comment on his generous outreach, Jesse is quoted as saying, "That is the way I was raised and educated under Frank Mancuso and George Toma. They believed in helping anyone who asked. If you can help all levels of the game, that is important. Everyone should give something back to the game."

You've perfected the art of "giving back", Jesse Cuevas. On behalf of the membership of ISTMA it is our privilege to recognize your long time generosity and passion to the members of this chapter and award you OUR highest honor; the Golden Cleat Award.

## Congratulations Jesse!



# 2010 ISTMA Complex of the Year



The city of Grinnell is home to Ahrens/Paschall Memorial Park. The 100 acre park is home to eight youth softball and baseball fields, two outdoor basketball courts, two tennis courts, a sand volleyball court, three youth soccer fields, a golf driving range, several playground areas, shelters, a sledding hill, and a one and a half mile outdoor walking path which is open year round.

Educational and recreational programs are very abundant at Ahrens Park. Everyone in the Grinnell community young and old has an opportunity to take advantage of the recreational programs offered at Ahrens Park. Also located at the park are the Ahrens Family Center, Grinnell Athletic and Recreation Center, Grinnell Community Daycare, offices of the Claude and Dolly Ahrens Foundation, Ahrens Park Foundation, Iowa Amateur Softball Association, and the Iowa Park and Association Headquarters.

The Grinnell Community Recreation Department, Grinnell School District and the Grinnell Soccer Club are just some of the organizations that utilize the space at the park.

Many tournaments and athletic programs of all sports and activities are hosted at Ahrens Park. Trees and landscaping provide a beautiful setting for any activity that you are participating in. In a

time when many parks are cutting back maintenance, programs and projects Ahrens Park has been able to keep moving forward with continued maintenance and upgrades.

The field conditions are excellent, they are used heavily from spring to fall, with the extreme weather that the 2010 season brought the playing conditions lived up to the high expectations of sports turf manager Troy Gosselink and his crew. Congratulations to Troy Gosselink and his crew at Ahren/Paschall Park on winning the 2010 ISTMA Complex of the Year.



Pictured from left are staff members of the Ahrens Park Foundation Troy Gosselink, Shane Gosselink, Lyle Muckler, Larry Kunce, and Bill Mason



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## Iowa Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show

Thanks. Thanks to all of you who make the 'Iowa Show' one of the best. Exhibitors, attendees, speakers and moderators all contribute to making this show work. I hope you all know how much your support is appreciated. Attendance was up 15% in 2011 compared to 2010.

Brian Abels and Sarah Hodgson made things so much better for the 2011 show; I cannot possibly thank them enough. Brian's help and presence on the Trade Show floor made a big difference and Sarah's work with registration and 'details' carried a huge part of the burden. Tremendous!

It is truly amazing how often during conference that when I need help with something, all I have to do is grab the person closest to me. Sports Turf Managers are amazing at jumping in to help and I know it's you that make this event possible. Thanks to all of you who helped.

Changes are coming for 2012, and many of you have heard that we may have the entire event at the Downtown Marriott next year. I heard a lot of positive response to that idea, and a change is necessary due to the eventual closing of the Polk County Convention Complex. The final decision is not yet made and there are lots of details to be worked out, please contact me if you have ideas, comments or concerns. The Iowa Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show is your show; your input makes it stronger.

## Avecetra Software

We had planned to launch our new Avecetra database and online directory before conference, but I sent the link to the affiliate Board members and received so many phone calls and emails from that 'limited launch' to 40 people that I was afraid to send out to everyone. Just would not have time to take care of problems for all 1000 members if we launched pre conference. Sorry about that.

## W

We will launch soon, maybe before this article is printed. Here are a few bullets to help you take advantage of the new online directories and other functionality.

- Make certain you add [jeff@iowaturfgrass.org](mailto:jeff@iowaturfgrass.org) to the 'safe senders' list in your email, or you will not receive messages from the Avecetra Software
- You will get a 'Welcome' email, follow the directions (login and change your password, then verify your personal info in correct)
- I will also send out a 'quicknotes' to announce the launch, if you don't get the Avecetra message, but get the quicknotes message, the office will need to know, call 515-232-8222 or email [jeff@iowaturfgrass.org](mailto:jeff@iowaturfgrass.org)
- We will use Avecetra for membership renewal, meeting registration and for hosting an online store: much of that functionality may not work at first, your patience is appreciated.
- Avecetra will replace the printed membership directory. Make sure you keep your personal info up to date and inform the Iowa Turfgrass Office if you change employers
- The electronic newsletter and ISTMA Quicknotes will eventually come through Avecetra, so let us know if you are not getting communications. This software will be a 'collective brain' of all Iowa Turfgrass Affiliates, but each member type will eventually have their own 'secure area.' Keep track of your new password as the ISTMA Secure site is coming soon.

- Jeff Wendel

# Beware “Meadow in a Can” Seed Mix

By Inger Lamb

I encounter a lot of challenges in my adventures as a native landscaping consultant. Tiny plots, huge plots, invasive species, height requirements, steep slopes, weirdo engineered soils; the list goes on and on. The worst and most frustrating situation? The mess created by well-meaning folks who get duped into buying pseudo-prairie seed mixes. I refer specifically to ‘prairie’ mixes because I live and work in Iowa, where that was the historic landscape. If you live in other parts of the country you should substitute the name of your own lost native landscape: desert spring meadow; Adirondack meadow; karst meadow etc.

These mixes go by a variety of names: meadow in a can, wildflower mix, Iowa wild color, etc. Usually the word “prairie” is not in the name. But landowners looking for prairie (or at least Iowa native plants) often think that’s what they are buying. Few buyers realize that the word “wildflower” has no defined or legal meaning, and may refer to just about any flowering plant capable of growing outdoors.

It’s almost heartbreaking to visit one of these plantings and have to tell the landowners that not only have they wasted a few years waiting for their field of (prairie) wildflowers to establish, but they now have a well-developed stand of undesirable species, usually with a heavy weed component. It’s even worse to have to tell them that the stand must be



removed before they can start over with a genuine prairie (locally native) seed mix.

Obviously these fake-prairie mixes are not all the same, but in general they contain inexpensive species that are readily available commercially, with little to no regard for whether they are native or even suitable for the local landscape. And they skirt around the subject of the ability of the resulting stand to hold its own against weedy species (a big plus for true prairie reconstructions).

Recently I analyzed one mix, and found that of the 30-plus species listed, three could be considered native to Iowa and the rest were from foreign countries or the southern US, including three that are often invasive. Others mixes I’ve looked at are harder to assess because only common names are used, and/or there are so many phrases like “may contain” and “species composition varies with availability at time of order” that it’s impossible to determine what’s really in the package.

My issue with the wildflower mixes is not that they aren’t native. Many nurseries and garden stores stock only exotic species, and that’s what many people want. My problem with the wildflower mixes arises when they are promoted in such a way that landowners think they are getting a seed mix that will result in a prairie-like field of flowers, with the associated environmental benefits of soil improvement and stabilization, plus habitat for wildlife.

Unfortunately, this is very much not the end result. Often for the first growing season or two, a nice show of (non-native) flowers develops, but diversity and attractiveness decrease over time because the showy non-natives die out. Weather extremes eventually eliminate most species, leaving a low-diversity mix of plants that are not only unattractive,

*“Beware” continued on next page*

but don't function as a prairie matrix, plus a few truly undesirable species. This leads to a landscape where weedy species that typically cannot compete in a prairie matrix are able to establish easily. The absence of deep-rooted species means the soil is not stabilized and improved as it is with "real" prairie reconstructions. This situation is underscored by the fact that marketers of some of the pseudo-prairie mixes actually recommend regular re-seeding, literally acknowledging that most of the showy species will die out and need replacing – with the associated endless expense and labor.

As for wildlife, non-native plants have been shown to support only limited insect abundance and diversity when compared with native plants.

Insects are fundamental to the wildlife food chain, and exotic flowers and grasses can't and don't support wildlife the way prairies do. Native animals, from butterflies to bobolinks, evolved with native plants, and native plants are the best habitat for them.

What to do? Unfortunately, there are no mechanisms in place to stop these exotic seed mixes from being promoted as if they were prairie mixes. So it's a buyer-beware situation.

Below is my advice to landowners who are new to prairies, but want to establish real prairie plantings and enjoy the results. Prairies don't provide the same quick show of annual color as the exotic mixes, but they are far better for soil, water, and wildlife. And unlike those alien canned meadows, prairie plantings can become, with a little management, more interesting, environmentally beneficial, weed-resistant, diverse, and beautiful every year.

First, at a minimum, don't expect to get a decent prairie mix from a business that prima function as a prairie matrix, plus a few truly undesirable species. This leads to a landscape where weedy species that typically cannot compete in a prairie matrix are able to establish easily. The absence of deep-rooted



species means the soil is not stabilized and improved as it is with "real" prairie reconstructions. This situation is underscored by the fact that marketers of some of the pseudo-prairie mixes actually recommend regular re-seeding, literally acknowledging that most of the showy species will die out and need replacing – with the associated endless expense and labor.

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- "Beware" continued on page 14

# Special Thank You



ITI would like to send a big thank you to the ISU Graduate Students for all their volunteer help during the 77th Iowa Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show. It would not have gone as smoothly without you!

Pictured from left to right: Derek York, Andrew Hoiberg, Chris Blume, Nick Dunlap, Marcus Jones, Quincy Law



Thank You!

It was truly an honor to receive the Meritorious Service Award from the Turfgrass Industry at the 2011 annual meeting

I looked across the audience and saw many familiar faces. Faces that I've worked with for 20+ years and although we have a few more wrinkles and maybe a little more gray hair, the continued passion for the turf industry was there along with many new young faces waiting to take our place.

And with a great deal of pride I can say the turf industry is still here! The industry is thriving, growing and continues to have a significant economic impact to the state. For that, we can be proud!

Again, thank you for the honor and I look forward to working together for many more years.

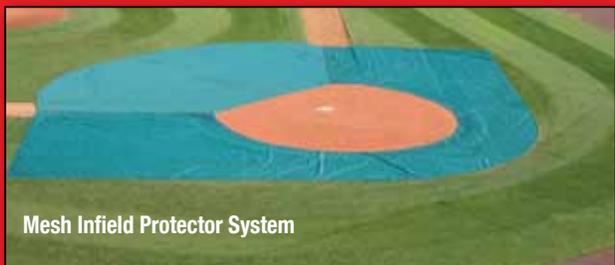
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## Beware “Meadow in a Can” Seed Mix continued

ment, more interesting, environmentally beneficial, weed-resistant, diverse, and beautiful every year.

First, at a minimum, don't expect to get a decent prairie mix from a business that primarily sells lawn and agricultural seed. If the species list is vague (“may contain”) and/or does not include Latin names, don't buy it. Mixes that include Ox-eye daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*), Baby's Breath (*Gypsophila paniculata*) or Dame's rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*) absolutely should be avoided. Those species are frequently invasive and clear indicators that the mix is not a prairie mix.

Some “wildflower” mixes include crown vetch, Eurasian clovers (red, white, and sweet), bird's foot trefoil, and cool-season European grasses. Those species are the very exotics that prairie managers spend considerable time and energy fighting to eliminate. Don't plant them if you want a prairie. And since most of these species are invasive as well as exotic, your neighbors may not appreciate them either.

You can create your own prairie mix using prairie species that you know to be native to Iowa, or find a prairie expert to help you. Information about prairies is available in books and online. You can also purchase seed from a reputable source that provides specific information on how to start and manage prairie plantings, knows where the seed came from and whether the species are native to your part of Iowa, and provides a defined mix with at least 25 species, preferably 50 or more.

Good prairie-seed sources tend to be run by knowledgeable prairie enthusiasts who are happy to answer questions. If you know much more about prairies than the person selling the prairie seed, be cautious. A good test is to ask for photographs of prairies they have established – with the specific request to see older plantings, no first-year showy sales photos. They should be advising you that the stand will take some time to develop, and that diversity will increase over time (as opposed

to a need to re-seed to maintain diversity).

Be prepared to pay more per pound for a good seed mix. Remember that in the long run, it will be far less expensive. It's much better to get a good mix the first time, to say nothing of avoiding a complete sterilization and re-seeding a few years down the line.

If you know someone who is considering prairie-planting, please share this information. You'll be helping that person, and you'll be helping the future of prairies as well.

For more information please feel free to contact:

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# 2011 STMA Conference Recap

## By Tim VanLoo, CSFM

The STMA conference is always a highlight of the year for me. I know it's early in the year, but what can top talking turf for a week with friends. This year's conference may have been my favorite of the six conferences I have been able to attend. Attendance was up by 7% and the tradeshow grew by nearly 20 booths. I will try to share the highlights of what I experienced and learned.

I arrived Monday night late, due to weather issues. I won't go into detail about the travel issues, but it did include a canceled flight and baggage that was delayed. I was able to still catch the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the BCS national championship game.

Tuesday at the conference is always an early conference highlight for me. The Seminar on Wheels this year took us to the campus of Texas A&M located in College Station about 90 miles from Austin.

Upon arriving at the University we started touring their athletic fields. Though the temperature was 34 degrees with about a 20 mph wind, the facility tours were great. We saw their indoor track, indoor football, practice football, stadium field, softball, baseball, soccer, and recreation fields. Texas A&M has great facilities and manage all of them at an elite level. Their operation is one for all to look up to. They truly do it the right way and should be applauded for their efforts toward high quality athletic fields. Craig Potts and Leo Geortz not only know how to grow grass, but are two of the finest people I have met at STMA.

Tuesday night was Chapter Officer Training (COTS). I attended on behalf of all of you. Mike Andresen and Joe Wagner gave a nice presentation on some of the changes that have happened in our chapter bylaws this past year, some of which many of you witnessed at the annual ISTMA meeting. The rest of the time was spent in small groups bouncing ideas off of one another to help make our chapters more productive. The ability to get ideas from chapters all over the country is truly a



*Pictures from Seminar on Wheels to Texas A&M in College Station, TX. Courtesy of Tim Van Loo*

learning experience. I was humbled by representing our great chapter. Thank you.

Wednesday at the conference brought the SAFE golf outing. This year the temperatures were in the low 30's and the wind was blowing like it does in Ames. I would like to report that I was hitting the ball great, but this was a round to survive. That is what we did. We survived with cold hands, cold feet, and wind burn on the face. A lot of money was raised for our efforts for the SAFE scholarship fund, but it wasn't easy.

Wednesday night was the Welcome Reception. It may be the easiest place to network in our industry. All it takes is a willingness to stick your hand out and introduce yourself. I always enjoy the welcome reception. I never miss it.

Thursday morning brought us a great look back in time with Dr. James Beard long time turf Professor for Texas A&M. He spoke of how we got to this point in our industry. It's always useful to know where you came from; it usually helps give you good direction on the future. Understanding the turf industry's past mistakes and victories helps all of us be better turf managers and seeing what our early sports turf pioneers endured made me appreciate the special jobs we have.

The rest of Thursday I attended great talks from Ross Kurcab, CSFM, Mike Trigg, CSFM, and a panel of Cool Season grass experts. I won't go into detail on each of the talks, but I will say that I learned something from all the speakers that I am going to try and incorporate into our maintenance this next year. The experience that our industry professionals are willing to share is truly incredible.

Friday morning brought the student challenge. Iowa State University represented well with a 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> place finish, while Kirkwood Community College brought 3 teams and placed 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup>. The state of Iowa has a bright future for sports turf managers.

Friday afternoon brought more education op-

portunities. I attended two talks. The first was a non turf talk that had to do with employee relations. The second was a discussion with Bob Campbell, CSFM. Both of these talks fit in the category of "Professional development". They were both about working with people and how we should react to certain situations. Since growing grass is a small part of what we do, I found these talks absolutely priceless. Understanding how to deal with people is vitally important to running any sized facility. Gaining knowledge through other peoples experiences can only help our own situation. The Trade Show opened Thursday afternoon and ran through Friday afternoon. Much of the conference could not happen without the support from our vendors. To all our commercial partners who support sports turf managers through this avenue we thank you for all you do to help our turf products/services and get some business industry. The trade show also is home to the silent auction and other fun activities. It is also the spot to see the latest and greatest new accomplished with sales people, construction companies, and all other commercial supporters.

The Awards Banquet was the grand finale of the show. Iowa was represented well with John Netwal, CGCS winning high school football field of the year for North Scott Community Schools. Steve Bush, CSFM, from Bush Sports, won an STMA Innovative Award for his robotic field monitor. I am not doing Steve any justice with my description of his new piece of technology; just know what the unit has the potential to do some serious field evaluation. Also, Kirkwood Community College student Shaun Eberhart won the 2-yr SAFE scholarship.

For those of you that were not able to make it this year, I hope you will be able to join the masses next year in Long Beach, CA. It should be another great conference, with plenty of opportunities to learn new things, meet new people, and see old friends.

-Tim VanLoo



# Congrats to Iowa STMA Student Challenge Teams!

On Friday, January 14, 2011 college students competed in the STMA Student Challenge. Iowa State University teams place 3rd and 5th place in the 4-year division while Kirkwood Community College placed 4th, 5th and 6th in the 2-year division. We are proud to have such a great representation of Iowa and would like to congratulate them on their success in 2011. The next STMA Student Challenge will be in January 2012 in Long Beach, California.

Pictured above are both Iowa State and Kirkwood students, professors and sponsors that were all apart of the success of each team.

Standing from left to right: Jacob Button, Zach Smith, Dave Minner, Jake Newman, Brad Larson, Zach Simons, Jeremy Claussen, Eric Van Ginckel, Justin McNeal, Chase Manning, Lynda Wightman, Troy McQuillen, and Colin Stuhr.

Kneeling from left to right: Matt Hollan, Nick Baker, Shaun Eberhart, Chris Kellner, Charlie Miles, Brandon Buch, Jake Travis, and Matt Venditti.

Not Pictured: Andrew Hoiberg

Pictured below are some of the individual teams from Iowa State University and Kirkwood Community College.



# 2011 Conference Photos



## Editor's Timeout

Hi Everyone! My name is Sarah Hodgson and I am your new Sideline Report Editor. I hope you are enjoying February's Issue. I had a lot of fun creating it.

A little background about myself, I grew up in LeMars, Iowa, and I was the only girl in my family. You can about imagine how fun growing up was for me. In December, I graduated from Iowa State University with my bachelors degree in Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management. Jeff Wendel gave me the wonderful opportunity to come help in the Turfgrass Office in October and I have loved every minute of it so far.

I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who helped contribute to this issue, and I am looking forward to the next one. This year we will only be printing the February and October issues so look for the other four issues in your online mailbox. If you would like to contribute to the up-coming issues please let me know at [sarah@iowaturfgrass.org](mailto:sarah@iowaturfgrass.org). I look forward to working and meeting everyone. Thank you for this opportunity to be your editor.

-Sarah Hodgson

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