



Experts on the Field, Partners in the Game.

STMA Playing Conditions Index[®]
STMA PCI[®]
&
STMA PCI Media Advisory Bulletin[®]

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**To download and print the STMA PCI in its usable format,
please log on to www.stma.org.**

Gain More Respect for Your Work

Dear STMA Members:

In 2006, the STMA Board of Directors approved the development of a tool to help members assess the playability of their fields. Two years later and with the assistance of more than 50 members and consultants, the Playing Conditions Index (PCI) is ready for your use.

The motivation behind its development was simply to gain more respect for your efforts in managing your fields. As fellow sports turf professionals, we understand the complexities involved in conditioning sports fields for safety, playability, and fan enjoyment. We believe that the PCI will help your employer, athletes, coaches, and fans understand the skills and knowledge needed to provide high quality playing surfaces.

This booklet explains the assessment tool, how to use it and why you should include it in your management practices.

Each member may find the PCI useful in different ways. We encourage you to use it to your benefit in the way that makes the most sense for your situation.

STMA's mission, "To be the recognized leader in strengthening the sports turf industry and enhancing members' competence and **acknowledgement of their professionalism,**" clearly puts responsibility on the association to advocate for more recognition for our members. Our Strategic Plan also focuses on this effort, which is stated in our second goal: "Gain recognition and respect from the media, athletes, employers, end-users, and the industry for members' work." It is through your efforts and use of the PCI that together we can continue to advance our industry.

Thank you for your consideration in using the STMA PCI.

Sincerely yours,

STMA Board of Directors

Mike Andresen, CSFM

Mike Trigg, CSFM

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About the STMA PCI[®]

In 2004, the STMA Board of Directors hired Ackerman PR from Nashville, Tenn. to propose ways in which the association might increase its visibility and market the on-field expertise of the Sports Turf Manager. At that time, Ackermann designed the current STMA logo and developed new image materials for the association. Another idea the PR firm proposed was to create a metric that could be used on athletic fields, similar to the slope rating of a golf course (i.e. stimpmeter), to assess that field's playability. The STMA Board of Directors put together a group of experts to begin evaluating such a program, and after receiving very positive feedback, the Board created the STMA PCI Task Force.

The STMA PCI Task Force, comprised of six well-respected Sports Turf Managers from around the country and representing different facility types, began the development of the STMA PCI instrument. There were numerous draft editions of the STMA PCI before they recommended a nearly final instrument for testing. That instrument was then sent out to a focus group spanning all STMA membership segments and from all geographic regions of the country. After making some adjustments, the PCI Task Group finalized the STMA PCI Worksheet, and it was then offered to the membership as a "pilot" program for 2008. That pilot resulted in a few modifications to the instrument and the final PCI instrument, which is included this booklet in an example form.

Some of the comments that were made by PCI Task Group members and those who "piloted" the PCI are:

- "It is a great start to something that can be used as a tool for managers to tune their programs, and help as firepower when asking for a better budget."
– Peter Lockwood, Head Groundskeeper, Nashville Sounds, Tenn.
- "The worksheet is a good tool for assessing your fields. It forces you to take the blinders off and really look more specifically at your field instead of generally, as I tend to do when conducting a daily inspection."
– Scott Pippen, Superintendent of Streets and Parks, Village of Lincolnshire, Ill.

STMA members who have already used the STMA PCI in its formative stages, either those in the Task Group or those in the Focus Group, state several reasons that the STMA PCI is a useful tool to them in their current situation. There are primarily three reasons cited:

- "will allow me to go to my administration to justify additional resources"
- "a tool for my media relations department"
- "it will help me to communicate with all the constituent groups involved: parents, coaches, players, administrators, etc."

The STMA PCI can also be used to help garner publicity and acclaim for your field. At the end of this packet, you will find the STMA PCI Media Advisory Bulletin. This Advisory Bulletin will assist you in conveying the overall performance of your field in a more media friendly format. You may also find it helpful to use the Media Advisory Bulletin when communicating about your field with any external audience.

STMA is dedicated to making the STMA PCI a useful tool for the Sports Turf Manager. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please note them in the Comments section on Page 4 of the STMA PCI Worksheet and fax or email them to STMA at 785.843.2977 or PCI@STMA.org. If you need more immediate assistance, please call STMA Headquarters at 800.323.3875.

STMA PCI Task Group[®]

Larry Berry, CSFM

Scott MacVicar

David Schlotthauer

Mike Tarantino

Steve Wightman

Luke Yoder

PCI Instructions and Guidelines

The following guidelines should be followed when filling out the STMA PCI:

- This worksheet is segmented into four sections: **Resources, Activities, Agronomic Performance of Turf, and Baseball/Softball Specific**. Within each section, select your answer and place the corresponding number in the blank provided. In some instances, the number is a negative (-), so be sure to subtract that number when totaling your score.
 - **To assess a football, soccer, lacrosse, or rugby field**, please fill out the **Resources, Activities, and Agronomic Performance of Turf** sections.
 - **If you are assessing a baseball or softball field**, you will need to fill out the **additional Baseball/Softball Specific** section to get an accurate STMA PCI.
- When you have completed the worksheet, **add up the numbers and place the total in the box**. Find the corresponding level in the chart. This is your field's Playing Conditions Index or PCI.
- The STMA PCI is to be filled out for **one field at a specific point in time**. If you manage multiple fields, please fill out a **worksheet for each field**.
- The STMA PCI should be filled out by the **sports turf manager in charge of the field**. If there is not a designated sports turf manager, the person most familiar with the maintenance practices employed on the specific field should fill out the worksheet.
- STMA recommends that it be **used at least four times** over the course of a year and may be used weekly, or more frequently, if deemed necessary.
- Fill out the STMA PCI as **objectively as possible**. Some questions have subjective elements that require an opinion based on your expertise, and you may wish to award a point value that is not listed. However, please adhere to the point system for each question when possible.

The STMA Playing Conditions Index[®], STMA PCI[®], and STMA PCI Media Advisory Bulletin[®] are property of the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA)

To download and print the STMA PCI in its usable format, please log on to www.stma.org.

STMA PCI[®]

Sports Turf Manager Name: _____

Date PCI Performed: _____

Facility Name: _____

Facility Location: _____

Facility Level (check one):
 Parks and Rec Schools K-12
 College/Univ Professional
 Other

Comments:

This worksheet is an opinion about the playing conditions of the field and is not to be used as an assessment or endorsement of a given field's safety. STMA does not assume any liability for actions or injuries resulting from play on a field rated with this worksheet.

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Resources

1. **Head turf manager experience** _____
1 = 1-2 years
2 = 3-4 years
3 = 5-6 years
4 = 7-8 years
5 = 8+ years
2. **Head turf manager experience at site** _____
1 = 1 year
3 = 2 years
5 = 3+ years
3. **Total number of fields currently overseen** _____
1 = 16+ fields
2 = 11-15 fields
3 = 6-10 fields
4 = 2-5 fields
5 = 1 field
4. **Head turf manager education (highest level completed)** _____
1 = High school
2 = Attended some college
3 = Non-turf related AA or BS
4 = AA in turf management/agronomy
5 = BS in turf management/agronomy or higher
5. **CSFM designation from STMA** _____
0 = No
1 = Yes
6. **Weekly man hours dedicated to maintaining field** _____
1 = 0-24 hours
2 = 25-49 hours
3 = 50-74 hours
4 = 75-99 hours
5 = 100+ hours

Activities

7. **Are multiple sports played on this field?** _____
0 = No
-3 = Yes
8. **Last activity type (see Table 1 at end of worksheet)** _____

9. **Time since last activity** _____
1 = less than 24 hours
2 = 2-5 days
3 = 6-9 days
4 = 10-13 days
5 = more than 2 weeks

10. **Activity scheduled to occur (see Table 1 at end of worksheet)** _____

11. **Amount of rainfall on field in last 48 hours** _____
1 = more than 1.5 inches
2 = 1.0-1.4 inches
3 = .5-.9 inches
4 = 0.2-.4 inches
5 = 0.0-.1 inches

Agronomic Performance of Turf

12. **Turfgrass variety suited to activity (consider activity and season)** _____
1 = Unmanageable
3 = Manageable
5 = Ideally suited

13. **Add 3 points if you overseed (0 if you do not)** _____

14. **Root zone quality (consider depth and mass)** _____
1 = less than 1.0"
2 = 1.0-2.0"
3 = 2.1-4.0"
4 = 4.1-6.0"
5 = 6.1"+

15. **Add 1 point if you conduct soil testing annually or more frequently (0 if you do not)** _____

16. **Add 1 point if you conduct nutrient analysis annually or more frequently (0 if you do not)** _____

Add 1 point if the results of your nutrient analysis were ideal (0 if no nutrient analysis or poor results) _____

17. **% Turf worn/bare** _____
1 = More than 40% field is bare soil
2 = 30 - 39%
3 = 20 - 29%
4 = 10 - 19%
5 = 0 - 9%

18. Desirable turfgrass cover of field is currently _____

- 1 = Dormant
- 3 = Overseeded
- 5 = Growing

19. % Diseased _____

- 1 = More than 40% infected
- 2 = 30 - 39%
- 3 = 20 - 29%
- 4 = 10 - 19%
- 5 = 0 - 9%

Severity of disease *Answer only if awarded

1 - 4 points on question 19*

- 1 = Moderate (red thread, dollar spot, etc.)
- 3 = Severe (pithium, gray leaf spot, etc.)

20. % Infested by insects _____

- 1 = More than 40% infested
- 2 = 30 - 39%
- 3 = 20 - 29%
- 4 = 10 - 19%
- 5 = 0 - 9%

Type of infestation *Answer only if 1 - 4 points awarded on question 20*

- 1 = Moderate (cut worm, army worm, etc.)
- 3 = Severe (grubs, mole cricket, etc.)

21. % Infested with weeds _____

- 1 = More than 40% infested
- 2 = 30 - 39%
- 3 = 20 - 29%
- 4 = 10 - 19%
- 5 = 0 - 9%

Type of infestation *Answer only if 1 - 4 points awarded on question 21*

- 1 = Moderate (dandelion, etc.)
- 3 = Severe (goose grass, crab grass, etc.)

22. Thatch/Tensile strength _____

- 1 = Little or no thatch, weak tensile strength
- 3 = Excessive thatch, adequate tensile strength
- 5 = Ideal thatch, ideal tensile strength

23. Compaction (Account for aeration, moisture content, etc.) _____

- 1 = Too little compaction
- 3 = Too much compaction
- 5 = Ideal compaction

24. Drainage issues in turfgrass areas _____

- 1 = Devastating water retention, depressions, etc.
- 3 = Inconsistent runoff, non-uniform grade, etc.
- 5 = Excellent runoff, ideal grade, etc

25. Add 3 points if you have a sand-based field (0 if no) _____

26. Irrigation (award 0 points if no irrigation system present) _____

- 1 = Quick coupler/hose only
- 3 = Manual sprinkler system
- 5 = Automated sprinkler system

27. Quality of irrigation system (if applicable) _____

- 1 = Poor
- 3 = Adequate
- 5 = Optimal

28. Add 3 points if you conduct annual water audits (0 if no) _____

29. Mowing frequency _____

- 1 = Less than weekly
- 3 = One to two times per week
- 5 = Three times per week or more

30. Award 2 points if mowing frequency is consistent throughout the year _____

TOTAL 1

TABLE 1 - Activity references^o

- 5 = P.E. class
- 4.5 = Baseball/ softball
- 4 = Field hockey/ lacrosse
- 3.5 = Camps/ tournaments/ special event - moderate
- 3 = Soccer
- 2.5 = Camps/ tournament/ special event - intensive
- 2 = Football
- 1.5 = Concert/ festival/ band practice
- 1 = Activity during or after precipitation

Football/Soccer/Lacrosse Playing Conditions Index^o

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 121 – 103 | 5 - Excellent |
| 102 – 85 | 4 - Above average |
| 84 – 67 | 3 - Average |
| 66 – 49 | 2 - Below average |
| 48 or below | 1 - Unplayable |

BASEBALL/SOFTBALL SPECIFIC

31. Uniformity of playing surface _____

- 1 = Many large rocks (.5" or larger), other hazardous materials, weeds, etc.
- 2 = Many small rocks (.5" or smaller), other hazardous materials, weeds, etc.
- 3 = Few very small rocks, very few if any weeds
- 4 = No weeds, no rocks, but irregular or inconsistent materials
- 5 = Ideal uniformity of material

32. Add 3 points if soil conditioners are used regularly (0 if no) _____

33. Maintenance of mound and home plate areas _____

- 1 = Poor (Severe holes, filled/leveled with existing materials, moisture rarely applied, etc.)
- 3 = Adequate (Some holes, filled with fresh clay when possible, moisture applied when possible, etc.)
- 5 = Expert (Minor or no holes, filled daily with fresh clay, regular moisture, etc.)

34. Grass to skin transitions _____

- 1 = High lip, inhibits drainage, very irregular shape/edging, etc.
- 2 = Noticeable lip, very irregular shape/edging, etc.
- 3 = Minor lip, somewhat irregular shape/edging, etc.
- 4 = No lip, adequate shape/edging, etc.
- 5 = No lip, ideal shape, ideal edging, etc.

35. Infield grading of skinned areas _____

- 1 = Poor grade, devastating water retention, depressions, washout, etc.
- 3 = Inconsistent runoff, non-uniform grade, little or no standing water, etc.
- 5 = Excellent positive runoff, ideal grade, etc.

36. Frequency of moisture on skinned surfaces _____

- 1 = Never
- 3 = Sometimes/sporadically
- 5 = Daily/as needed

37. Add 3 points if field tarped during any rainfall within 24 hours of an event (0 if no) _____

TOTAL 2

TABLE 1 - Activity references[®]

- 5 = P.E. class
- 4.5 = Baseball/ softball
- 4 = Field hockey/ lacrosse
- 3.5 = Camps/ tournaments/ special event - moderate
- 3 = Soccer
- 2.5 = Camps/ tournament/ special event - intensive
- 2 = Football
- 1.5 = Concert/ festival/ band practice
- 1 = Activity during or after precipitation

Baseball/Softball Playing Conditions Index[®]

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 149 – 127 | 5 - Excellent |
| 126 – 104 | 4 - Above average |
| 103 – 82 | 3 - Average |
| 81 – 60 | 2 - Below average |
| 59 or below | 1 - Unplayable |

TOTAL 1

+ TOTAL 2

= TOTAL

About the STMA PCI Media Advisory Bulletin[®]

What is the PCI Media Advisory?

The Playing Conditions Index (PCI) captures STMA members' knowledge and expertise of turfs and grasses, the effects of weather, proper maintenance and care as well as other factors affecting field-playing conditions. The PCI packages and presents the members' expert evaluation of the field in a concise and easy-to-understand manner. The Index allows STMA members to provide relevant information to the media and become a consistent provider of this information.

Why we are doing this?

We are rolling out the PCI to educate the media on the work of STMA members and the important role they play in athletic events. By putting this system in place we are cementing STMA and its members as the leaders in creating and maintaining athletic fields and playing surfaces. This will also help to positively influence employers and enhance the professional reputations of STMA members.

What do we hope to accomplish?

The PCI will make field conditions a more easily referenced and more precise piece of information for use by the media and other communication professionals. It will help to establish STMA as the acknowledged expert and provider of playing conditions data. The PCI will "institutionalize" STMA in the minds of the media as an important contributor to the success of sporting events. It will also add value to STMA membership through increased exposure of the organization and by establishing STMA as an organization that actively involves and promotes its members.

PCI Media Advisory Bulletin Instructions and Guidelines

- If you do not already have a relationship with your sports information director and/or local media, be sure to introduce yourself and begin building a professional relationship.
- Prior to beginning the program, we suggest you have a short conversation with your sports information director in regards to the Playing Conditions Index and what it entails.
- It is recommended to set a specific time aside each week for the completion of the PCI; this will make it much easier to prepare the media advisory.
- The media advisory should be completed the day of an event several hours prior to game time. In many cases sports information directors release "game day notes" with specific references to current weather, temperature, injuries, etc. an hour or so prior to game time. The advisory will need to be completed and given to a member of the sports information office in time to be included in these "game notes."
- To fill out the STMA PCI Media Advisory Bulletin
 - Note the venue, time, date, and what sport is to be played on the field.
 - Transfer the corresponding number from the PCI Worksheet to the Media Advisory (5 – Excellent, 4 – Above Average, etc.).
 - Indicate how the performance of the field will affect the performance of the athletes using the surface.
 - In the comments section of the advisory, make note of specific conditions affecting the field including weather, temperature, amount of precipitation received, etc.
 - Provide the STMA PCI Media Advisory Bulletin directly to the public relations or marketing arm of your athletic department or organization.
- Although there is not a PCI assessment for synthetic surfaces, there is a section in the Media Advisory Bulletin for synthetic surfaces. This is to allow members who manage synthetic fields an opportunity to provide information to the media on how the field is playing based on temperature, precipitation, age of the field, etc.

STMA PCI Media Advisory Bulletin[®]

Venue: _____ Date: _____ Game Time: _____

Playing Surface

- Baseball / Softball Football / Soccer / Lacrosse

Playing Conditions Index

--

- 5-Excellent
- 4-Above Average
- 3-Average
- 2-Below Average
- 1-Unplayable

The STMA Playing Conditions Index is an overall field quality rating that takes into consideration factors such as weather, turf health, drainage, maintenance, and events or activities scheduled for the field.

Game Day / Game Week Considerations

Field Playability & Effect on Athlete Performance

Playing field conditions affect performance. While all STMA-member managed fields are professionally managed for safety and appearance, field attributes vary by design, maintenance, and other variables.

The field at _____ has the following performance attributes:

Natural Surface

- | | | | |
|----------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Speed | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast | <input type="checkbox"/> Average | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow |
| Traction | <input type="checkbox"/> Tight | <input type="checkbox"/> Average | <input type="checkbox"/> Loose |

Synthetic Surface

- | | | | |
|----------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Speed | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast | <input type="checkbox"/> Average | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow |
| Traction | <input type="checkbox"/> Tight | <input type="checkbox"/> Average | <input type="checkbox"/> Loose |

Comments:

This playing field is professionally managed and maintained by STMA member _____.
STMA members are committed to producing safe and aesthetically pleasing playing surfaces for athletes at all levels.

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