



## Appreciation and Best Wishes to George Toma as he Retires

The Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) is pleased to honor and celebrate George Toma's life, career, and legacy as he retires. It all began with the work ethic developed as the son of a Pennsylvania coal miner in the 1930s and 40s. Born in 1929, Toma has spent over seven decades working in the industry, and his expertise and dedication have earned him a reputation as the "Sultan of Sod."

You do whatever is necessary, and then, when you're sure you've done everything, you do a little more. It's a motto that has carried him through a multi-Hall-of-Fame career and earned him nicknames like "the Nitty Gritty Dirt Man," "the Sodfather" and "the Man of Sod."

Toma has been a mentor to many aspiring sports field managers, and he has helped to train and develop the next generation of sports field management professionals. Perfectionism and hard work are not only the way he approaches his work, but it's also what he expects of those who work with him.

*"Blessed to have had the opportunity to work with George over the years. He is not only a mentor but has become a friend. I am thankful for all he has done for this industry, especially always pushing for safe fields."*

*~ Travis Hogan, Head Groundskeeper with the Kansas City Chiefs*

Toma was a key leader in the infancy of the SFMA. He continues to serve as a mentor for many in the sports field management industry. He always emphasizes the importance of the entire crew in effective field management. George's motto is 'if you love what you do and give it your all – and then some' you can achieve your goals.

*"The legacy that George Toma began as one of our founders more than 40 years ago has had an impact on every one of our over 2,300 members. The "and then some" attitude is part of the fabric of our profession, as sports field managers at every level strive to go above and beyond providing the best and safest playing fields possible. His impact on our profession is everlasting."*

*~ Sun Roesslein, CSFM, 2023 SFMA President*

SFMA's George Toma Golden Rake Award validates the 'and then some' attitude of a sports field member in "on the job" activities and in community service. <https://www.sportsfieldmanagement.org/toma-winners/>

George Toma is a true icon in the industry, and his legacy will continue to inspire the profession for years to come. He is a leader in the world of sports field management. His dedication, expertise, and passion have made George a revered figure in the industry.

*"George's legacy will live on forever. He has given this industry everything he has, and then some. At 94, he still continues to share his wisdom of decades of experience and constant words of encouragement. It is truly an honor to have known George for almost 20 years and to consider him a friend and a colleague."*

*~ Tony Leonard, Director of Grounds with the Philadelphia Eagles*

SFMA wishes George the very best in his retirement - And then some!