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Quad Cities River Bandits Groundskeeper Wins 'Stars and Stripes' Mowing Pattern Contest

(LAWRENCE, Kan.) – [Sports Turf Managers Association](http://SportsTurfManagersAssociation.org) (STMA) – the organization for 2,600 men and women professionals overseeing sports fields worldwide and critical to athlete safety – has declared Andrew Marking winner of the “Stars and Stripes” mowing pattern contest.

Marking is Head Groundskeeper for the Quad Cities River Bandits (Davenport, Iowa), Class-A affiliate of the Houston Astros. With his “Banks of the Mississippi River” field design at Modern Woodmen Park, he has won a complimentary pass to the 2018 STMA Annual Conference in Fort Worth, Texas. Andrew Anderson, the club’s Assistant Groundskeeper, also helped craft the pattern.

In its second year, a record 21 entries were received via social media, solidifying it as STMA’s most popular contest to date. The winning submission narrowly won by less than 30 “likes”; selected through Facebook’s voting platform. Marking’s intricate design generated nearly 200 “likes.”

"This contest serves as an opportunity for sports turf managers to honor their country while showcasing their skill as world-class field artists," says Kim Heck, CEO of STMA. "Andrew is an excellent ambassador for the industry, both on and off the field."

A native of Floyds Knobs, Ind., Marking has more than five years of experience in the turf industry. His previous experience includes stints with the 2015 Major League Baseball All-Star Game, Texas Rangers, Louisville Bats and Purdue Athletics. He received his bachelor’s degree in turf science and management from Purdue University.

“As a sports turf manager, crafting a safe playing surface is always our primary concern, but this contest succeeds in providing members an opportunity to express themselves on a global stage,” says Marking, currently in his second season with the River Bandits. “As ‘Directors of First Impressions,’ we also have a duty to maintain visually appealing facilities year-round for the millions of fans watching.”

“Patriotic Beaver,” “9/11 Remembrance Night,” “Old Glory” and “Merry Merica Day” were among the 2017 designs submitted by turf professionals from major sports leagues, NCAA, and parks and recreation sectors.

For more information: stma.org, twitter.com/fieldexperts, 800.323.3875.

About STMA

STMA is the non-profit, professional association for men and women who manage sports fields worldwide. Since 1981, it has provided education, information and practical knowledge in the art and science of sports field management. More than 2,600 members across 34 local chapters oversee facilities at schools, colleges and universities, parks and recreational facilities, and professional sports stadiums. Sports include football, baseball, soccer, lacrosse, softball, rugby and horse racing.

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