

# Sports Field Construction: What Do You Do When The Contractor Leaves

By Hanson, Manager of Stadium Operations, Jeffco Schools

New construction, whether it is a new facility or a field renovation, is an exciting and challenging time in your professional career. It allows you, as a sports turf manager, to truly display your passion for your profession by exercising your expertise and knowledge in a new, positive application. In the general scheme of things, you could labor for years in whatever situation that you hold with little change in your daily routine. New construction usually does not come along very often in your tenure, but it can and should ignite a new excitement within your career. This is a positive experience

to encounter, so when the opportunity presents itself, it is very important to be organized and prepared.

In order to manage your project when the contractor is finished, you need to first be involved in every phase of the planning portion of the project. This guarantees that you will understand just what you possess in your new field/facility. Now is the time to exercise the beliefs and opinions that you have formulated from your experiences as a sports turf manager. Don't be hesitant in asking questions about specific areas of concern.

Regardless of the reputation


of your construction team, never allow the contractor to "hold all the cards." It is of the utmost importance for you to be involved in the design areas of the construction calendar, grading and drainage, irrigation and turfgrass issues. You are now experiencing the first phase of quality control.

Once the contractor is finished, you have two main responsibilities to manage. The first is to document problems and enforce warranty issues. To be in a position of enforcement of warranty issues, a proper contract needs to be drawn up by the appropriate parties. You, as the owner or customer, have the upper hand in the requirements of contract provisions. This can only occur when the owner authors a precise, "tight" contract. It is also the responsibility of the owner to hire reputable consultants, architects and contractors.

It is also the responsibility of the sports turf manager to take the existing construction project and get it "game-day ready." You should be capable of modifying the new field in your own professional style using your available resources. Exercise your aeration, topdressing, mowing and fertility practices that enable you to modify the soil, increase the density of your turf and toughen the performance of the field for your specific athletic demands.

*This information was presented at the 1999 STMA Conference & Exhibition in Mesa, Arizona. For further information contact By at (303) 237-7188.*

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