add more root zone to get the grass even with the lips. I asked them to look at the field from a side view. “Look at your infield,” I said. “See how it is raised almost two feet compared to the rest of the field?” Imagine a giant knife slicing through the point at which the existing grass meets the lip and continuing all the way through to the backstop.” I noted that it appeared as though loads of material just kept building up so that it made almost a two-foot difference between the outfield grass and the infield skin.

The second problem for lips is wind. Wind will take hold of that topdressing and blow it everywhere. A lot of it ends up in the grass edge. Can you ever stop lips from forming? No. You can, however, help control them by putting in a little extra effort about once per week. After each home stand, I have my crew use street broom sweeping brooms with really stiff bristles and broom from six to eight inches in the grass back towards the skin all the way around the field including inside edges, base paths, and the mound and plate grass edges. This will damage your grass a little bit. Try to make sure you only broom the same spot a couple times and move on. Also, if it’s a hot sunny day, your grass may yellow a little. Cloudy days are perfect. Once a month I sharpen all the grading rakes (iron rakes) and stand on the dirt. I place the rake in the grass edge and the infield skin. Don’t worry; it will also loosen up all the compacted lip areas. When done, broom all of your edges again to clean out any of your infield material.

Lips face it, we know all have different things going on in our lives; however, if we try to spend a couple of hours on the lips of our fields and our finished product is correct (level) the first time, it’s easy to maintain. Let’s give our players a field that is safe. There is nothing worse than someone trying to field a ball, and cannot focus because he or she is worried about tripping on the field and getting hurt.

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