

Volunteer jobs

Members of the community, whether they be coaches, players, players' parents or just interested spectators, can be used to help maintain fields. Some of the jobs they willingly accept are:

- ☞ raking
- ☞ dragging
- ☞ laying sod
- ☞ cleaning up
- ☞ fence mending
- ☞ painting
- ☞ fund-raising



The sports turf manager's skill can create field conditions that allow players to concentrate solely on the game and their part in it.

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are many sources of help: university extension agents, sports turf consultants, state and local turf organizations, and professional associations.

The Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) and its regional chapters offer excellent hands-on events for the major aspects of field care. Members readily share their own expertise with other members.

Over the last 10 to 15 years, safety and the quality of playing conditions have

improved drastically. Equipment has been modified for greater player protection. Weight training and nutrition programs have been incorporated into athletic programs at the high school and college levels. Field quality may be the last factor to be addressed, but it has reached the attention of the public.

The groundskeeper has the opportunity to pull together the entire program. By listening to everyone's expectations, he or she can develop a plan to deliver the best facili-

ty for the least cost. The athletic field manager can then make sure that wheel is rolling steadily forward, with a sturdy set of spokes supporting it all the way.

—Jesse Cuevas is stadium superintendent of Johnny Rosenblatt Stadium, Omaha, Neb., home of the Class AAA Omaha Royals and the College World Series. He is a board member of the national Sports Turf Managers Association.

Save time, make money

Mowing equipment tips from Mike Kail, founder and owner of Lawn Rangers, Inc., a full-service mowing/maintenance company in Indianapolis:

☛ If you have an open mind for mowing equipment and techniques, you can improve your profitability.

☛ If you're using walk-behinds, as your company grows, Kail suggests you consider switching to mid-size riding mowers.

"Years ago, when we first started our operation, the mid-size walk-behind mowers (36- to 52-inch deck) were—and still are—quite popular. But it takes a man to run every one." Kail says labor needs have changed in such a way to require more companies to do the same or more with

fewer employees. Stricter time management requires that he now use the mid-size riding mower. It's easier to maneuver and covers more ground faster.

"A mid-size rider (48- to 61-inch deck) will replace two walk-behinds and one man," says Kail.

☛ Mulching mowers are essential; Kail says the time you save by leaving the clippings is considerable. Tell your customers: *clippings don't cause thatch!*

☛ Select an equipment dealer who will work with you, from sale to maintenance. "If you have a good dealer who keeps you mowing, keeps you making money, that's the key."



Kail: find a dealer who'll keep you making money.