

Volunteers welcome!

Helpful parents and others can help with fund raising and field maintenance, and have fun doing it.

by DAVID MINNER
Players, parents, boosters and other supporters of the athletic program can provide substantial support for athletic

field management. Usually they just have to be asked.

Let them choose between fund raising and maintenance on the field. Fund raising efforts are usually more effective

4-way cooperation guides sports field traffic

Managing a sports facility requires communication between the facility administrator, coach, band director, and grounds manager.

Administrators in charge of college budgets should keep in mind that proper traffic control on an athletic field costs nothing in terms of dollars, and offers the most effective means of reducing dangerously worn areas on game and practice fields.

Understanding your role as a user of the field is a first step in communication.

Coaches must take an active interest in scheduling practice activities and preventing excessive turf wear. The coach and the grounds manager can work together to develop improved grass areas specifically for drills that are conducted off the game and practice fields.

Band directors should have practice field markers painted on another grass area or in a parking lot. Areas should be situated so that practice can be viewed from above, as if you were in the bleachers.

Band practice on the game field should be limited to once per week and only when the soil is dry enough to resist compaction in marching paths. No activity (band, football, or field maintenance) should be conducted on the field while there is frost on the grass.

Grounds managers should realize that they are caring for a multi-use facility rather than just a football field. Every effort should be made to accommodate all groups that have activities on the field. Each group should take responsibility for the condition of the field. Each group can be viewed as a potential resource for funding field maintenance expenses. Extra use requires additional labor, equipment, and resources. Contributions should be requested from the band and athletic booster club.

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when they are working towards purchasing a tangible item, such as an irrigation system, core aerator or mower. Items like sand topdressing, seed, and fertilizer are less attractive as fund raising projects.

Players, and sometimes parents, are usually receptive to working directly on the field. Provide ownership in the field by allowing each player to work at the position they play. Immediately after or between games players can make necessary improvements in a matter of five to 15 minutes. Pitchers and catchers can easily rework the mound and home plate by

adding and tamping clay. First and third can rake, level and repair the skin area around their respective bases. Second and shortstop can broom soil from the grass to prevent lips. Outfields can spread a mixture of seed/sand/soil into divots to fill in thin areas. Fields that are routinely managed with players seldom need severe renovation. I've actually found that players enjoy working on the field and parents take pride in seeing their kids assume the extra responsibility. **LM**

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