

GOALS FOR A SPORTS FIELD
Turf Manager's Perspective

“ To provide optimum safety and playability regardless of prior events or weather conditions. Safety and playability , firm footing, and a resilient surface that allows the players to perform at the highest level without having to make adjustments to field conditions. My goal is to present a playing surface that does not become a detrimental part of the game. Safety and playability are achieved through prudent agronomics and cultural practices that are planned and performed at the optimum time based upon events and prevailing climatic conditions.”- NFL Turf Manager

“My priority / goals for my field are 1st- safety, 2nd- playability and consistency, 3rd-, aesthetics. How we get there is by hard work, lots of experience, education, dealing with upper management in a very diplomatic way, having great help, and a sufficient budget”- MLB Head Groundskeeper

“Our primary goals here are to provide a safe and consistent playing surface that players and coaches can rely on, day in and day out. Safety is our number one concern , consistency is our number one goal. We reach these goals by understanding the current conditions of the field, expected weather conditions throughout the day and evening, and field use times. From this, we formulate our plan on how we can best achieve our goals and meet all expectations of players, coaches, and upper management. “- MLB Head Groundskeeper

“Our goal here is to provide the student athletes with the safest playing surface possible. I do not have too much demand from the AD or Director of Facilities in that regard. They trust my judgment on the agronomic practices that we perform on a daily basis. As long as the field is playable for the student athletes, then they are happy. Now, my standards are a bit different. I have structured a budget that allows me to have the fields in near professional condition. We are very aggressive in our maintenance practices when compared with the schools that are in our conference. No other school mows their turf at one inch, no other school consistently aerates and topdresses, and no other school schedules and performs a plant protection program like we do here. My goals are to provide the athletes with a safe, playable field that is maintained at the highest standards allowed by our budget. ” – Grounds Superintendent, Private School

“My goals for my playing surface is to have the best soccer field in the MLS if not he world. By best I mean playability and aesthetics with playability coming first. I want every player when they walk out onto the field to be amazed on how nice the turf is. Getting to that requires following all kinds of schedules- we fertilize on a strict schedule, we never miss an application. We are not necessarily day specific but week specific. Same for spraying, we always get our apps in. We follow a strict post game ‘clean up’ which includes filling all divots with a homemade divot mix. We aerate and topdress at least twice/ season. Lastly, we try and spread play as much as possible. When we have high school games and non-pro games we shrink the field as often as possible. We do this to try to limit the wear in our normal ‘high wear’ areas.”- MLS Turf Manager

“Primary goal is safety and then aesthetics. How we reach those goals is communication with the user and strong horticultural practices based on the type of sports field i.e. baseball, football and the use of the Player Conditions Index established by STMA.” -Director of Grounds and Operations, Public School

“Our primary goals are to provide a safe and playable sports surface. At Delta Park we are able to manage play so that they are permitted for play only and practice is not allowed, so that they do not get overly worn out. We also have the ability to close one of our 8 natural turf fields within the season of play, we rotate which field is closed to grow in turf and do repairs. In May there is a two week closure that the Turf Maintenance crew utilizes to overseed, aerate and topdress with sand, in August there is a 3 week closure for aerating, overseeding and repair. We have staff on site that will do repairs, such as filling low areas or laying sod, throughout the season. We paint the lines every week and the soccer is mowed once a week, the softball complex is mowed twice a week.” – Head Groundskeeper, City Parks and Recreation Sports Complex

“My primary goal is a safe playing surface. No holes and no bare spots. I also want a good looking field. This is reached with a good maintenance practices such as fertilizing, overseeding, aerating and consistent mow schedule.” – Grounds Coordinator, Public School

“Our main goals for fields are to always have them in playable condition. Since our programs are for recreation, not much time is spent on turf, condition, type, etc. As long as it is cut and maintained, we seem to keep people satisfied. A more important aspect for us are the infields. Keeping those in shape and in playable condition is much more a focus for us, especially after we've had rain. We have renovated a few fields and are now going to Bermuda as opposed to fescue. We find it's better suited for our environment. To achieve our goals, we have one guy that maintains fields. We have winter months so there are dormant days. When working the fields, we must make sure the fields are properly crowned, dragged, grass out of infield, lined, etc. Again, the turf is secondary because our focus is fun more than serious activities so priorities are different. Also, time and budget restrains keep us from doing/spending more on turf than say, a high school.” – Parks Manager, City Parks and Recreation Department

“Safety always first, playability/consistency second, and aesthetics last. Safety is basically just attention to detail, when we see something that needs to be addressed we look at it. More often than not it doesn't cost much money to correct. Playability and consistency is kind of along the same lines. We try to stay in a routine with what we do everyday. Doing things at around the same time, the same maintenance practices, etc. each day. With a small staff this is hard to do at times as other things on the field or stadium may take precedent, but we make it work. Aesthetics is achieved through keeping a schedule on maintenance practices, the fertilization program, and taking extra time to make things "crisp." We achieve our goals in this regard by having a budget that is acceptable for doing what we are trying to do, but not overdoing it on the spending. It is a tough balance sometimes, but more often than not having a field that looks good to the eye means that we have put the detail in our first two objectives. Rarely does it look real nice but have major safety issues and play poorly.” - Head Groundskeeper, Minor League Baseball 'AA'

“Provide a safe surface for players and still provide a aesthetically pleasing field for fans. I reach these goals by staying on a comprehensive turf plan and doing whatever it takes to provide that. I preach consistency. To provide a top quality field you have to stay on top of things 365 days a year.”- Grounds Foreman, City Parks and Recreation Dept.

GOALS FOR A SPORTS FIELD
Coaches Perspective

“The primary goals for our surface, are to provide a top level playing surface that is aesthetically pleasing and safe. We reach these goals by planning our cultural practices along with our budget. Depending on what type of budget we will have for the year, we will know how hard we will have to work on saving the field or maintaining the field. It is always a \$\$ issue. Whether it's a school district, public works or private group, it's always about \$\$\$. You are always expected to do the most with as little as possible. Some field maintenance practices are what they are, and they cost what they cost. You may be able to save \$50 or \$100 here and there, but a lot of the time you get what you pay for. If you get too frugal, you will have a weak field. Spending more does not mean you will have the best field. Spending smart, even if it's a bit more, will yield the better results especially if you have a sports turf manager that knows what they are doing. Their work, when done properly, will last longer because of a healthier turf. In the long run you will save money and have a better and easier maintenance program.”- Coach, Club Soccer Team

“I expect our home field to have no users except for on game days, it to be watered everyday, and cut two times a week. We have a grounds crew who we work with and come up with a schedule based on our games. Our recreation dept., who controls the fields, blocks off the game field for the entire season.” -NCAA Div. II Men’s Soccer Head Coach

“Primary goals for playing surfaces are one: Flat surface, two: smooth surface, three: grass short, and four: moist grass (not dry). Reaching the goals: not overtraining on one area, proper watering and mowing for the grass, and when it rains, stay off the surface to avoid damage to the grass unless you have a water filtration field.”- Coach, High School and Club Soccer

GOALS FOR A SPORTS FIELD
Athletic Director/General Manager Perspective

“My expectations for the field are a clean playing surface in terms of appearance and how it plays. How we get there is by having a top notch grounds staff and a budget to support them.”- Minor League Baseball (A) General Manager

Cultural Trends for a Multi-Purpose Field
Sand Based Bermudagrass- Coastal Climate- San Diego, CA

