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## Football Practice Techniques that Help to Minimize Field Wear

*Wear and field overuse are two conditions that can cause the most hazardous and unsafe playing conditions on your football field.*

*Following are some basic techniques to help move player activity around the field for more even wear and some techniques on improving playing conditions. For additional information, contact the STMA at ph. 800-323-3875, or [STMAinfo@STMA.org](mailto:STMAinfo@STMA.org) for a referral to a local STMA chapter volunteer in your area for advice.*

### Practice Tips

- Change daily the location of practices on the field.
- Use a rotation pattern laid out in 4 quadrants.
- Use a portable goal and move it around the field, thus limiting wear in the area of the mounted goal posts.
- Have players do their individual warm-ups off of the field.
- Execute team drills outside of the painted numbers.
- Move off of the 20 yard line and start practice plays on the 25- or 30-yard line.
- Create two practice fields perpendicular to each other, outlining each in a brightly-colored field paint.

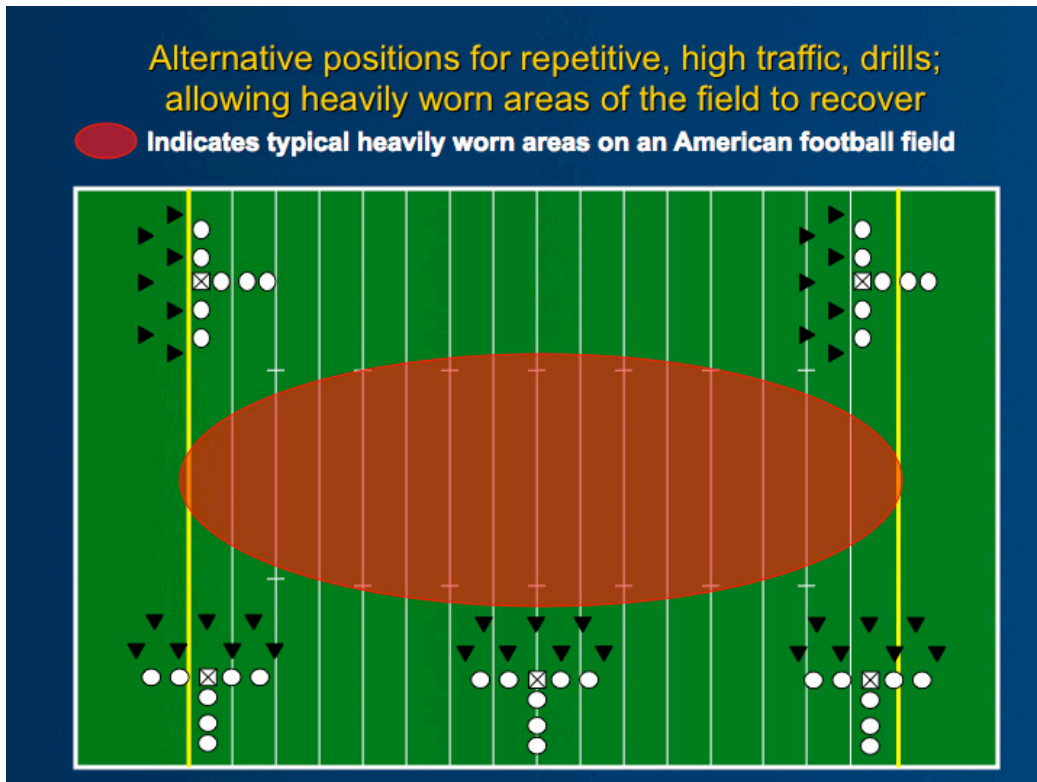
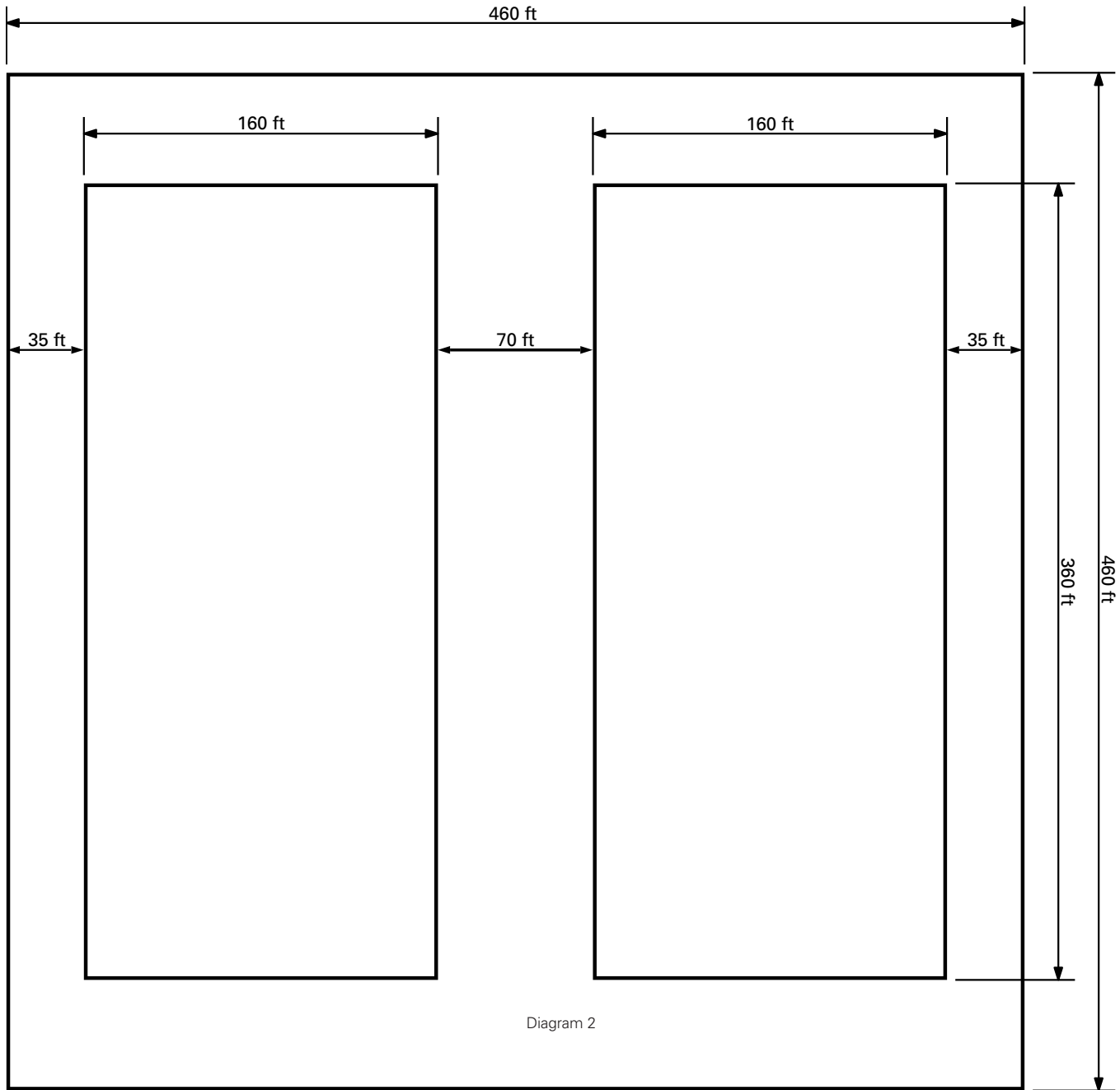


Diagram by Jason Henderson, Ph.D., University of Connecticut

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## Practice Field Layout



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## More Field Layouts and Management Techniques

To produce safe, playable conditions throughout the football season, a customized field maintenance program must be implemented all year long. To help you develop a customized program, contact a local STMA sports turf manager.

Following are a few strategies to help keep conditions playable as the season progresses:

- Spread seed in wear areas before games and practices.
- As the season goes on, let the grass grow longer. The longer grass will help protect the crowns of the plants from the player's cleats and allow for more grass mass for the players' safety.
- If you only have funds to fertilize your field once or twice, then fertilize the field in July/August and September/October. It is wise to fertilize the fields leading up to and in the first month of the playing season to help promote new growth during the activity period.
- When making plant protectant applications of any type, be sure to explicitly follow the label instructions on the application rates, timing, efficacy period, etc.



Football practice field layout using less than 100 yd. fields. Photo courtesy of Darian Daily, Sports Turf Manager, Paul Brown Stadium



Football practice fields painted East to West. Photo courtesy of Darian Daily, Sports Turf Manager, Paul Brown Stadium, Cincinnati



Football practice fields painted North to South. Photo courtesy of Darian Daily, Sports Turf Manager, Paul Brown Stadium, Cincinnati