

SAFE program truly win-win

Though their thoughts weren't pursued by the media as vigorously this election season as in 2000, "soccer moms" (a euphemism for swing voters female or male) are still very much a part of our American landscape. Any reader who has spent time around these moms and dads knows they are passionate about their children and their futures.

Many soccer moms and other parents today are guilty of micro-managing their kids' lives, over-scheduling them and preparing them for an Ivy League education they'll probably never get. But when is the last time you heard a soccer mom ask, "Is this field safe enough to play on?"

No one knows better than the readers of this magazine that too many American playing fields lack the proper maintenance programs or are maintained by untrained individuals. All too often poor turf conditions diminish the quality of any game and negate peak performance. Even worse, poor field conditions contribute to unnecessary, painful injuries. Losing a game is one thing, but losing a season or career is another. Injuries happen and are part of sports, but they don't have to happen due to the condition of the playing surface.

The Foundation for Safer Athletic Field Environments (SAFE) was created to provide research, educational programs, and scholarships geared to sports fields. "SAFE is embarking on a Ground Level Campaign to provide more up-to-date research and education so athletes at all levels will have safer playing surfaces to enjoy the game," says STMA executive director Steve Trusty. "Industry support now will allow SAFE to move well beyond the current industry for funding and we will all benefit from more awareness of how to maintain safer playing fields.

"Your children and grandchildren deserve a playing field as safe as the ones the pros play on. SAFE's goals are to help provide that through research, education and scholarships," Steve adds. For information on how you can get involved in this worthwhile endeavor, call 800-323-3875.

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Readers please note I have a new address and phone number: PO Box 280, Dauphin, PA 17018, and 717-805-4197. Email address remains eschroder@aip.com.

Finally, it's mea culpa time for this editor. Keen-eyed readers might have thought they were reading a boating magazine last month because the headline for this column read "Used correctly, crumb rudder can help." But alas, we are a turf, not a surf, magazine and the column was on using crumb rubber as a soil amendment. My apologies to all for that error.



Comments always welcome.
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