

from the sidelines

# Construction specs 101

**Time really does** go by faster as you age. It's difficult to believe that July is here already, which means time for our annual Football Issue. Of course softball or soccer or lacrosse (America's next big game?) contests are still being waged on many readers' football fields. Raise your hand if you have worked your plan to assure some "down time" for that turf before the gridders start tearing it up.

Last spring Tony Strickland, CSFM, sent me a list of construction specifications for football and soccer fields. Tony's company builds athletic fields; he also has built and managed a large sod farm, and has built several large athletic field complexes in the southeast. Here are some of Tony's definitions and product descriptions:

**Topsoil:** Friable surface soil, if included, which is reasonably free of subsoil, rocks, stones, sticks and other debris more than 2 inches in diameter and without weeds, roots and other objectionable material.

**Sub-surface soil:** That soil directly below the topsoil being existing in place soil and/or properly compacted imported soil, both being stable as a supporting medium and acceptable as a part of a rootzone for Sports Field Contractor.

**Sand:** USGA Greens sand or sand meeting the USGA specification per particle size analysis, or pre-approved sand.

**Lime:** Dolomitic lime, stone ground to meet agricultural standards containing a minimum of 85% carbonates.

**Fertilizer:** A commercial mixed grade fertilizer including 100 lbs. of nitrogen, 200 lbs. of phosphorus and 300 lbs. of potassium.

**Rootzone:** The combination of topsoil, sub-surface soil, sand, lime, and fertilizer lightly blended into a loose homogeneous mixture; the sand being approximately 85% of the mixture.

**Sod/Sprigs:** [For example] certified Tifway II Hybrid Bermudagrass produced under the rules and regulations of the Georgia Crop Improvement Association, Inc. The sod/sprigs shall be harvested from vigorously growing, properly fertilized field(s) with at least one full growing season before harvesting. Sod shall be harvested in 30-inch width rolls or larger and the harvest netting shall be removed upon installation.

**Warranted:** The specific area(s) of sod harvested and sod installed during the dormant season that later does not demonstrate reasonable re-growth of stolons to sufficiently re-establish an acceptable playing surface; therefore, is subsequently replaced by the Contractor at no cost to the Owner.

**Laser Grading:** Shall include the use of a land leveler that is equipped with a laser controlled hydraulic system that automatically raises and lowers the implement. An agricultural type tractor to reduce compaction shall tow this implement. Laser grading shall be a multiple step process beginning with the sub grade and continuing with each layer of amendments including the topsoil layer (if included), sand layer and the final rootzone. Each of these four (4) individual layers will require a laser grading process and will meet the following degrees of variation to desired slopes and elevations: the sub grade +1/2 inch, the topsoil layer +1/2 inch, and the finished surface grade +1/4 inch.



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