

5 extra minutes

By Kerry Page

In my 22 years as a sports turf manager, I have shared advice with a lot of managers, supervisors, and employees of parks, fields, and sports facilities. But the most important advice ever given to me came from my grandfather. I can still hear him saying, "The difference in being first class or second class is 5 minutes."

He made this statement one day while watching me work on a flower bed. I was hot and tired and ready to get through. Granddaddy was a very simple, plain spoken man. He looked at my flower bed, said his piece, and walked away. I looked at him as he walked off, looked back at my work and thought, "What is he talking about?"



Kerry Page at work.



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The difference in being first class or second class is 5 minutes.

But as I got older and started working on sports fields, I realized exactly what he was saying to me. Something can look good, but spending 5 more minutes working would make it look great. I began to apply that statement to everything I worked on.

My fields always looked great and I received a lot of praise from the people who use them. But I wanted to be even better so I elected to apply this motto to my entire life. I began to improve my relationship with God, and with my family. I developed an idea about what character really is and I started to practice my beliefs. I began to give God 5 minutes more to work in my life. And I gave my family that extra 5 minutes.

Soon this spilled over to the way I treated people. I gave everyone those 5 extra minutes to explain, teach, or learn. I strive to make them feel

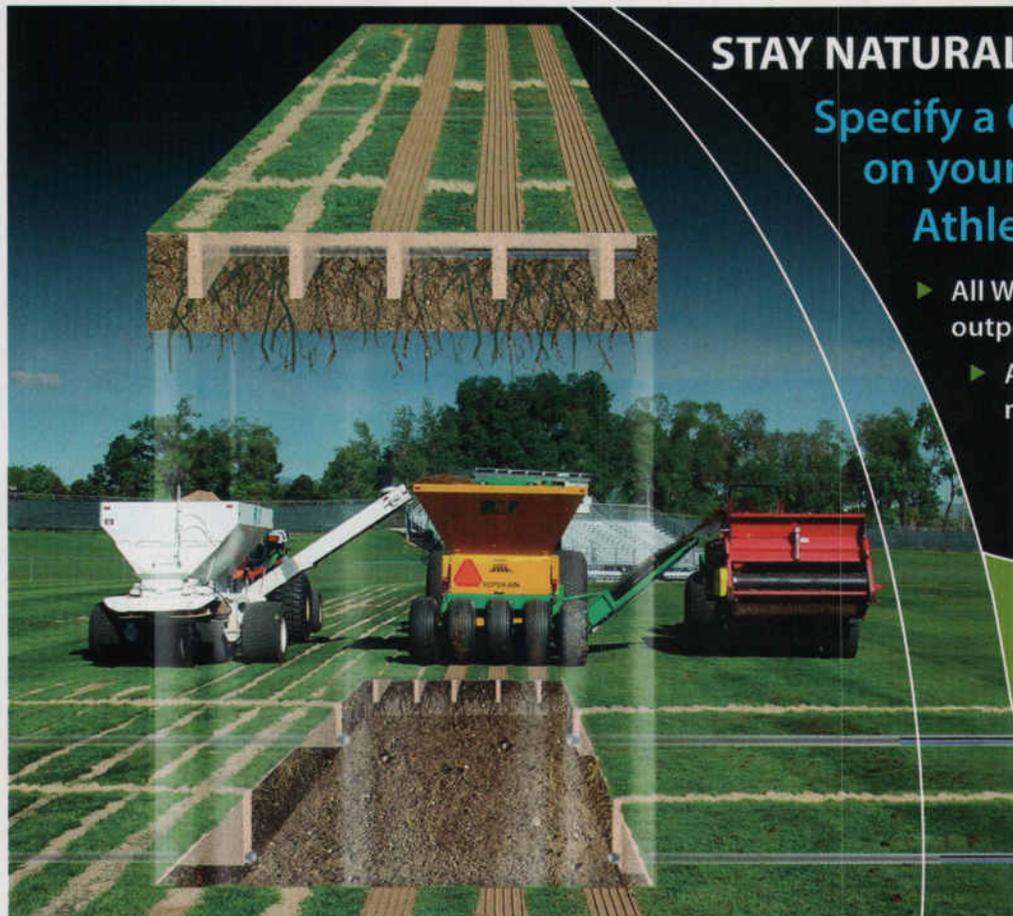


Kerry with sons Nathan and Jonathan.

first class. The return reward is that lots of people improve their own life and I have a part in that improvement.

Yes, my grandfather was right about those 5 minutes. And he was right too, when he said that when we die, they will put that turf on top of your grave, so, "Grow the best grass you can grow." ■

Kerry Page is Athletic Fields Supervisor, Itawamba Community College, Fulton, MS.



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