

Maintaining men's lacrosse fields

SHAWN MAHONSKI, sports turf technician, Towson University

Towson competes at the Division I level in men's lacrosse. They compete at home on a FieldTurf surface installed a few years ago. On synthetic surfaces, I always stress to those installing a new field that they inlay all the lines. On a grass surface though, everything should be measured from the center of the field. After the out-line, we'll first paint all the lines that cross the field sideline to sideline, and then add the wing area lines and creases. It's important not to forget the face-off square at center field. We paint a 4x4-inch square in a contrasting color for this.

Our team does practice on grass in the fall. Also, we have huge lacrosse camps in June. There are not many options for keeping grass in wear areas, usually inside

the crease and at face-off. We try moving the field side to side, much like many do for soccer. We'll seed with perennial ryegrass seed all through the fall to try to get something to grow. In the end, we re-sod those areas almost every year.

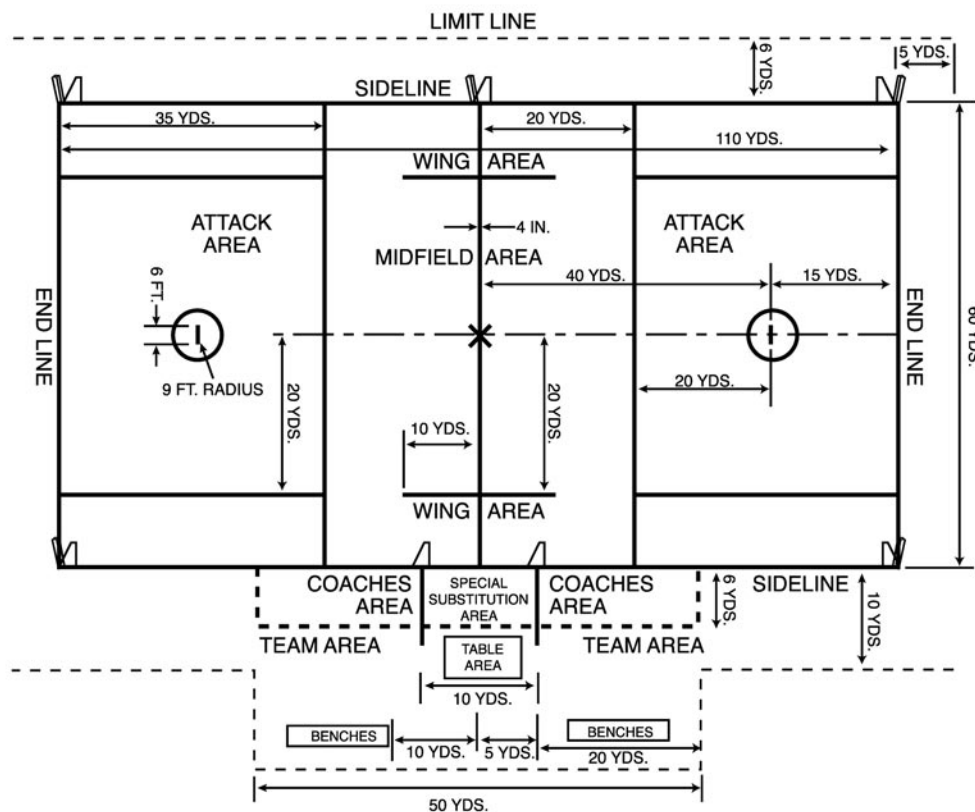
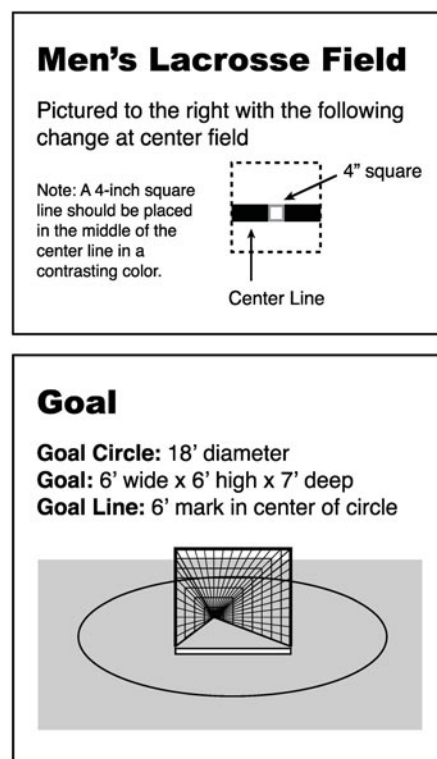
JESSE PRITCHARD, CSFM, sports turf manager, University of Virginia

Our men's lacrosse team plays in Klockner Stadium, a sand-based, Patriot bermudagrass field that is heavily overseeded with perennial ryegrass in the fall. Klockner is home to the University of Virginia men's and women's soccer programs in the fall and our men's and women's lacrosse teams in the spring. Men's lacrosse can bring in up to 8,000 fans per game.

Laying out a youth men's lacrosse field

is actually quite easy. With three people the field can be measured, strung and painted in less than an hour. Laying out a women's lacrosse field is a completely different matter and quite difficult without any previous experience (see June 2009 *SportsTurf* for laying out women's lacrosse fields.)

There is a reason there are only 10 Division I men's lacrosse programs that compete on natural grass fields: keeping grass growing on a lacrosse field in the Mid-Atlantic region in January, February, and March is nearly impossible. We treat three areas on a men's lacrosse field differently than that of a soccer or football field. The team bench areas and attack areas are needle-tined after every game and seeded with additional perennial ryegrass starting March 1. The area inside the crease will



Courtesy of Pioneer Athletics

break through the sod layer after three or four games. At that point we will dig out the sod and some sand and pack in mound clay. We treat this area the same as we do a baseball or softball home plate area in order to make sure all the balls have true hops. We repair the holes dug from the goalie after every game. The faceoff area in the center of the field we try to move up and down the midfield line to spread out the wear.

From what I can gather, the only grass fields in D1 lacrosse are at Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, Duke, Rutgers, Penn State, Ohio State, Fairfield, Brown, and VMI.

MEN'S FIELD DIMENSIONS

A lacrosse field is 110 yards long and can be from 53 1/3 to 60 yards wide. The goals are 80 yards apart with a playing area of 15 yards behind each goal. The length of the field is divided in half by a center line. An 18 ft. diameter circle is drawn around each goal and is known as the crease. A rectan-



>> **Klockner Stadium** is a sand-based, Patriot bermudagrass field and home to the University of Virginia soccer and lacrosse teams. Photo by Jesse Pritchard, CSFM.

gle, 35 yards by 40 yards surrounds each goal area and is known as the goal area. An "X" is marked in the center of the field. There is a special substitution area on the sideline, next to the timers table. Access field diagrams below for a clearer picture. The goal is 2 vertical posts 6 feet apart, joined by a top crossbar which is 6 feet from the ground (a 6'x6' goal). A line is

drawn on the ground between the posts in order to indicate the plane of the goal. This line becomes known as the goal line. Attached to the goal is cord netting, which is fastened to the ground 7 feet behind the center of the goal. The boundaries are determined by the natural restrictions of the field. An area of 120 yards by 70 yards is desirable. ■

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