

# LOGO AND OTHER FIELD PAINTING TIPS FROM A TOP PRO

WITH ALL OF THE PAINTING I HAVE DONE on athletic fields and for special events, I never had the opportunity or request to paint solid endzones on a football field. In fact I have discouraged several folks from doing so since most of the seating in high school football is not conducive to being seen from the low angle; I recommend placing them in the middle of the field where most of the seats are. I also recommend that we do a helmet as I have a helmet stencil and can usually freehand the team's logo inside of the 20-foot space. That way, after the game it always looks like a helmet rather than some messed up smear from playing on a wet field.

Also the money it costs to make a stencil is not in most schools' budget and if I freehand it on grass, it will only last a couple of weeks and the school usually doesn't have anyone to

repaint. I have painted wolves in both endzones on a synthetic field, but just the letters. I laid out the letters by measuring the start and stops for the width of each letter and used strings on the top and bottom to set the height of the letter. But with the "O" and the "S" I had to use my ellipse formula to create the font. The S was actually made from two ellipses overlapping each other.

Last summer one of my largest accounts asked me to layout two football fields end to end for a passing 7 on 7 tournament they were hosting. No big deal, I thought, as passing leagues are normally lines every 20 yards for a first down. But when they sent me a drawing of what they wanted 2 weeks before the event, it was basically two NFL fields end to end, so I had to create some needed skills and organizational planning.





endline and literally leap frogging to precisely measure cross string all the way down the both fields with 15 feet in between. I like painting along the side of the string instead of on it so the string isn't loaded with paint that can leave whip marks. Also, I like using the left side of the nozzle or shield as a guide as I can see it better, but you have to measure 2 inches off the yard lines and have a 4-inch spray to be accurate. The sidelines, end lines and goal lines are measured and painted to the inside.

Once all of the lines are painted the sideline strings are moved to the top of the Number plus the thickness of the stencil: 27 feet for high school, 60 feet for college and 18 feet, 9 inches for pro. The numbers should be at least 4 inches from the yard line to allow for double striping, but if your numbers aren't 4 x 6 feet a foot away would make them appear to be larger.

I use a PVC pipe stencil for the yard marks and usually paint the numbers and the side yard marks at the same time down the field. One person can move them, but having two people allows a set to always be ready while the other is being moved. It helps to have two sets of zeros and arrows as they will get loaded up with a lot of paint.

Once the numbers are painted on one side I move to the other side and repeat the process the other way. Try and start on the end that you will be cleaning or loading the stencils up afterwards. Once the numbers and outside yard marks are painted, move the string to the hash location and set accordingly to your stencils edges.

I like to use three helpers if possible; one on each end move a set of 15 yard stencils and the other moves the paint machine up another 5 yards. They keep leap frogging all the way down and switch to the other side. When double striping, I like to use both strings, because if you have a line a little off the col-



Since most NFL crews take about 2 days to achieve this task, I was given 2 1/2 days to complete the job; this didn't leave any time to have endzone or logo stencils so my objective was established. I was able to sneak out to the grass fields and mark and layout the field size and yard lines but it was a pretty tight time to paint as the fields are in use nearly every day.

I don't have any full time employees but I do have a great selection of my son Andy's former high school classmates. They love coming out to the plush, manicured ryegrass, sand-based turf. We started out by stringing the sidelines with a light coat of paint, (this is so that there will be less possibility of tracking paint when doing the yard lines) then starting at one

ored double strip really stands out. When I paint two to four fields every Thursday and Friday, the lines aren't always straight.

Next for the project was the layout of the end zones; they wanted the logo in each of the four endzones with the two different fields in contrasting colors, so one field would have a red background with black letters and the other black endzones with red letters.

I started by laying the top and bottom strings at the proper height across the endzone, marked the center and set the tape at both the top and bottom. The font was pretty simple, so I marked the start and stop of each letter, and for the O's I had to radius the ends at half the width of the letter. I used a string all the way down and marked the letters accordingly and used the top and bottom string as a guide to complete the letter.

The best tool to use is the Trac-Cut product I sell to outline the letters; it attaches to the airless nozzle guard and the disc can be adjusted so the spray that you have barely makes contact with the rolling shield and gives a clean, sharp paint edge. Use a wide angle nozzle to fill in the letters and background, such as a 615 or special order 815. I outlined the letters in white and went the other direction to get a clean edge on both sides. The customer only needed a 3-foot white border instead of 6 feet, so I found it easier to repaint the sideline in the 4-inch line and paint the outside line in a 4-inch line and walk the entire

perimeter about 5 times with a wide spray, with one person moving the machine, one holding the hose and me painting the border. That way I didn't have as much over-spray or streaks.

The center logos were another matter; I had to use my grid method to lay it out. First I printed the logo on a preprinted grid and laminated it. I simply mark the start and stop of the straight lines of the 7 and marked where the other lines intersected. Once the basic outline was marked, I filled in the logo and outlined it. The weather was great so the paint dried rather quickly and allowed me and the crew to get to the next step without any delay.

After the job was completed and the teams started playing, I was allowed to get on the roof with special permission to take pictures. What an impressive site! I was not aware of the magnitude of the event, which brought some of the top high school football players in from around the country. I was extremely proud to be involved and complete the project on time. By the way, the customer called me last month and want to know if I could do it in 1 ½ days this summer. I managed to get a ½ day back and will have to sneak out and get some references marked so I can get right on it. ■

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