



## Cooper Stadium Construction Project 2010

Nearly four years ago, a conversation began amongst the board of directors of Lake Country Soccer to look into the feasibility of the purchase and installation of synthetic turf fields at Lake Country Soccer. Back then, it was merely a conversation with sketchy details and limited information or direction in which to proceed.

A wish list began to develop with ideas on enhancing and improving Cooper fields #1 and #2 which would include but not limited to; synthetic turf on both fields, upgraded lighting on Cooper #1, upgraded seating on Cooper # 2, upgraded press box that would service field #'s 1 and 2 and upgraded score clocks field #'s 1 and 2. As quickly as the conversation began, it slowly withered away over time.

At some point roughly two years ago, the conversation was re-ignited. This time, it included ideas on fund raising and cooperating with Springfield Soccer Club, Springfield Public Schools, The Park Board and other area entities which have used the fields over the past few years. Seemingly, the conversations stalled once again, until news broke of the all turf complex which debuted in Overland Park, Kansas in the fall of 2009. Talks accelerated as to what Lake Country Soccer needed to do to enhance and improve fields here in Springfield.

Jan Stahle conversed with Harry Cooper who, once again, offered to make a sizeable donation; this time, for synthetic turf purchase and installation. The donation would cover nearly ½ of the cost of turf purchase and installation. Then, Jan approached the McQueary family, who offered to match Cooper's donation for turf purchase and installation. The McQueary family has close ties to Greenwood Laboratory School and Lake Country Soccer. This all came about in January of 2010. The final agreements include field naming rights granted to Greenwood Laboratory School; with the stadium serving as the school's home field for practices, games and camps. And just like that, the project was off and running.

The next few weeks included road trips by Dan Wichmer and Kelly Ross traveling across Missouri conducting site visits at soccer complexes which had turf fields installed by the leading turf manufacturers. Additionally, many information sessions were held with various turf representatives who provided critical elements of the purchase and installation process from start to finish. A timeline had been established as to when the project needed to be completed. A great amount of information had been accumulated in a very short amount of time related to turf matters.

As the contracts and legal matters were being hammered out, what began as a simple conversation a few years ago has transpired to the reality of the changing landscape at Lake Country Soccer. Ground was broken on June 16<sup>th</sup>. Since then, the goals, player seating and light poles have all been removed. Unsuitable top soil continues to be hauled off. The project is progressing on time and on schedule.

There is still a bit of fund raising work that needs to be done. The two large donations are not enough to fully cover the purchase of lights along with the labor and materials for installing upgraded lighting. All of the other additional upgrades on the wish list will have to wait as well including score clock, press box and any enhancements/improvement to field #2 until such time that sufficient donations can be raised to continue the improvements.



Kelly R. Ross; Executive Director  
Lake Country Soccer

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