

# Father, son help with game on the line

*Clackamas company helps keep coaches, teams on the field*

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ATHLETIC FIELD DESIGN / THE CLACKAMAS REVIEW

This job on the Nike campus near Beaverton sometimes requires more than just Mike and Andy Hebrard. On larger jobs or busier times, they enlist the help of student athletes from local schools.

**If you've attended a football, soccer, lacrosse or nearly any outdoor sporting event in Clackamas County, you've most likely seen the work of Mike and Andy Hebrard, the father and son duo behind the Clackamas business, Athletic Field Design.**

Field design includes the building and maintenance of sport surfaces from breaking ground, to event ready, including the artistic graphics, zone and boundary lines and logos.

Mike's inspiration for Athletic Field Design started years ago as a coach in Amarillo, Texas, when he was offered a summer position on the baseball field, warming up catchers and helping the groundskeeper get fields ready for games.

"We'd get so much feedback from players and coaches about the field quality that I started asking around for advice about ideas for enhancing fields," he said.

That included making a field more durable, safe and attractive for events. During the years, instead of getting advice from others, Mike has become a valued consultant in the business.

"From my experience, I knew technology had come a long way from using bags of chalk and gasoline burns to line fields," he said.

## **'The 9-1-1 of field issues'**

When Mike and his wife Kim moved back to Portland many years ago, he worked alongside old sports buddies to help find fieldwork. Soon after, he was in charge of fields for more than 10 Portland schools and obtained work with Nike and local Little League programs. Word-of-mouth advertising about his business spread like grass on the fields.

In 1993, Mike was able to leave a full-time job with a seed company and focus on Athletic Field Design, which specializes in field design, maintenance and customized graphics, as well as training and consulting.

Once a job is commissioned, top quality soil, fertilizers, seed, irrigation and landscaping equipment are used to take an area from rugged dirt to playable turf.

“Field design is one of those areas where a lot of organizations utilize their own staff to try and save funds,” Mike Hebrard said. “But more than once I have referred to AFD as the 9-1-1 of field issues. It can be that a coach forgot about a game, bad weather wiped out the lines or a team needs to include a last-minute logo.”

Each day, he keeps track of all game results and knows where he might be needed. If a team makes an unexpected advance to the playoffs, for example, his company will call asking when and where he can help. That sometimes takes the company far outside Clackamas County.

“We’ve traveled from Clackamas to Texas to Georgia and all over in between,” Hebrard said.

### **Somebody will notice**

When Andy Hebrard graduated from college last spring, he headed home to work with his father.

“When I started this business, a young Andy would help me pick up rocks and debris on the fields while I did most of the work,” Mike Hebrard said. “Now he does almost everything I do. He has a great eye for free-hand drawing where I rely more on the computer generated measurements for accuracy.”

When Mike and Andy lay out a graphic, they follow computer-generated measurement guidelines. They then use special paints and sprayers to create the design on the field.

“We start with a general outline and then fill in the spaces with colors designed specifically for that particular logo and how long the customer wants it to be there,” said Andy Hebrard. “We follow strict procedures for turf painting because logos and lines are distinct and finite in color and size. If it’s wrong, everyone notices.”

That includes sponsors, players and spectators of an event, Andy Hebrard said.