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## Sports Turf Students Visit New Class Project

Tuesday, 21 April 2009

In addition to the Ohio State sports turf management class being offered online to industry professionals, it is an official class offered in spring quarter for 3 credits. Each year as part of the class the students work with Columbus Public Schools (CPS) to renovate one of their athletic fields. Previous schools have included Brookhaven's baseball field and Eastmoor Academy's football field, called "Griffin Field" after Archie Griffin, its famous alum. This spring, the students will be renovating Linden McKinley's baseball/football field. A noteworthy alum of Linden McKinley is Buster Douglas, a former World heavyweight boxing champion.

Recently, twenty two students taking the class took a trip to Linden McKinley High School to look at the fields and discuss options for renovation. Frank Dengg (front, kneeling) is the landscape superintendent with CPS and has worked with us on all the projects so far. He met with the students and talked with them about the challenges they face and how they take care of the athletic fields at the 16 high schools in the CPS district.

The fields are native soil with a mix of perennial ryegrass, Kentucky bluegrass, and some fescue. In high traffic areas, prostrate knotweed is present, having germinated and emerged in the last couple of weeks. Prostrate knotweed is a summer annual that dies out in October during football season. It is too late to control it with a preemergence product so the class will look at ways to get rid of it without harming desirable grass seed that's put down. In addition, they will perform cultural practices on the field and get it ready for the 2009 season.

This is a tremendous team effort between Ohio State, CPS and local helpers. Matt Williams (formerly of the Cincinnati Reds and Columbus Crew, now Ohio State turf program coordinator) will be instructing the students on how to build a baseball mound. John Mott (Superintendent, OSU Intramural Fields) will teach students how to paint lines and logos, and Brett Tanner (Director of Stadium Grounds, Columbus Crew Stadium) gets involved each year teaching students how to use equipment.