

# Home field advantage: Groundskeeper is a perfectionist at his craft

[Craig Shoup](#), Reporter Published 3:19 p.m. ET Sept. 8, 2017

*Hull keeps Fremont athletic fields in prime shape*



(Photo: Craig Shoup/The News-Messenger)

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FREMONT - For the past four years, Ross athletics have had a distinct home field advantage, thanks to former Little Giants baseball player Cory Hull.

Hull said he works with coaches in all the fall and spring sports to determine how they want their fields to look or play.

"It's kind of like a home field advantage," Hull said. "I will come to the soccer coach and ask if they want a tight field where they pass a lot, or a bigger field where they can use their speed more."

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“My job is to make the fields safe for the teams and aesthetically pleasing to the eye.”

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Cory Hull, head groundskeeper for Fremont City Shools

Hull always stays within Ohio High School Athletic Association regulations, but said soccer allows for wiggle room in field dimensions.

"Must be doing something right," Hull said. "The soccer team is off to great start."

Hull likens himself to a jack-of-all-trades, being the only groundskeeper for the district, though he said custodians and maintenance workers at the schools help with lawn care.

As the head groundskeeper, Hull can be a perfectionist, and tries to make the fields the best he can.

"I look at my job from two perspectives," Hull said. "My job is to make the fields safe for the teams and aesthetically pleasing to the eye."

And Hull seeks feedback from coaches and players to ensure the fields are up to the highest playing standards.



**Cory Hull, the head groundskeeper for Fremont City Schools, installs new nets on the Ross tennis courts.** (Photo: Craig Shoup/The News-Messenger)

"There have been some players who may have twisted an ankle and will come to me and ask if I can take a look at the field," Hull said.

Although Don Paul Stadium, home of Ross' Little Giants and St. Joseph Central Catholic football teams, has artificial turf, it does not reduce the workload for Hull.

Instead of mowing, lining and painting a grass field, Hull is tasked with sweeping the turf before Ross home games.

The sweeper, Hull said will clear debris such as rocks from the surface, filtering out anything other than the black rubber pellets and the turf.

After driving across the field with the sweeper, Hull then brushes the turf with a broom-like machine that will "fluff" the field.

Hull said he has always been interested in maintenance, having spent time after baseball games and practice working on the baseball field when he was at Ross High School.

"I didn't even know something like this existed when I was in school," Hull said of being a groundskeeper.

Once he realized he could find a career in groundskeeping after graduating from Ross in 2006, Hull went to Owens Community College for his degree and was able to intern in with the Toledo Mud Hens — a minor-league affiliate of the Detroit Tigers baseball team — and the Sylvania Recreation District before accepting a full-time job with Sylvania Recreation in 2009.



**Fremont City Schools groundskeeper Cory Hull prepares to do some maintenance work on the turf field at Don Paul Stadium. (Photo: Craig Shoup/The News-Messenger)**

Although he learned a lot and enjoyed what he was doing, Hull said something was missing.

"I was always in charge of the bullpen mounds, and I liked doing other things," he said.

Before Hull, athletic fields for Ross sports were taken care of by coaches, maintenance workers and custodians, something Hull said was not working.

"I am the first of my kind at Ross," he said. "Before I got here in 2013, the department did not exist and I thought, 'How can a Division-2 school district not have a groundskeeper?'"

Hull takes his job seriously, but loves having fun on social media.

After Ross athletic director Chad Berndt created a Ross athletics Twitter account that is really serious, "I thought why not have a fun one," Hull said.

To let his personality and sense of humor shine, Hull created a Twitter account [@FRGroundsdept](#) where he will share photos of fields or departments he is working on, and showcases his attention to details.

One touch, for example, was adding the F-R interlocking logo to the soccer field.

Boys game tonight [pic.twitter.com/BuqKgh4oFZ](https://pic.twitter.com/BuqKgh4oFZ)  
— Ross Grounds Dept. (@FRGroundsdept) [September 5, 2017](#)

"It was a rainy day and I just made a template of the logo so I could start adding it," Hull said.

Now the logo is seen near the corner kick area on the varsity soccer field, and behind the pitching mound on the boys baseball field. "I just like doing those little touches," Hull said. "Last year, for senior day for baseball, I put all the seniors' names in paint in the outfield. I will see some of the kids on Twitter using a photo of that on their background, and it makes me happy."

The perfectionist in Hull comes out, no matter what sport he is working on during his day.

Got nets up, all I see are the cracks on surface. Not severe enough for playability, severe enough make me think about it. [#groundskeeperprobpic.twitter.com/5KpRzIUcSn](https://pic.twitter.com/5KpRzIUcSn)  
— Ross Grounds Dept. (@FRGroundsdept) [September 6, 2017](#)

Hull also takes whimsical jabs at other athletic departments, including posting a photo of uneven lines from a practice football field at Sylvania Southview before Ross played the Cougars in football on Sept. 1.

Every line... [pic.twitter.com/19y9umLRvj](https://pic.twitter.com/19y9umLRvj)  
— Ross Grounds Dept. (@FRGroundsdept) [September 1, 2017](#)

That is the perfectionist in Hull that makes him strive to give students at Ross the best playing surface possible, and maybe inspire new kids to play.



**Fremont City Schools head groundskeeper Cory Hull tightens new nets he installed at the Ross High School tennis courts. (Photo: Craig Shoup/The News-Messenger)**

"I want to give them something to play on that I never really had," Hull said. "If one kid looks outside at the field from school one day and decides to play a sport because they liked that, that will me make me happy."

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