

From: Rick Mello

Date: February 12, 2020 at 3:32:35 PM EST

Subject: Support for the proposed track and turf infield

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to voice my support for the proposed track and turf field at the MVRHS.

As a lifelong Islander who attended the MVRHS, and who's daughter is a current student, I am embarrassed by the quality of the field hockey field that my daughter has played on at the MVRHS.

It was difficult to watch her play four years of field hockey on the MVRHS's non-uniform, dirt-patched, uneven, sometimes shaggy field. In addition to witnessing players from all sides tripping and falling over tufts of grass or large divots, on more than one occasion my daughter's **face** was injured as a result of absolutely hideous caroms of the ball, 100% caused by the poor playing surface.

It was even harder to attend games off-island - games which were played on turf - and see how field hockey is really meant to be played. The game moved with a fluidity so foreign to our kids. The stark contrast of the playability and the abundance of turf fields elsewhere provided keen insight as to why so many other teams in the state have the upper-hand when playing the Vineyard.

My comments are not meant to disparage anyone taking care of the fields at the MVRHS. The fields just get too much use and are at the mercy of the harsh New England elements which results in a torn-up, patchy playing surface. Given the amount of use between all of the teams' games and practices which includes so much heavy, cleat-laden traffic combined with the effects of the weather, it would be impossible for anyone to keep grass growing and the surface even.

I feel that the new track and turf field would be such an incredible asset to the Vineyard's sports teams, and that no individual's opinions or personal bias should prevent or interfere with the progress already made towards obtaining this asset for our children and the Island. They deserve it.

Thank you,

Rick Mello III

Lifelong Islander

MVRHS Class of 1992

Father

Coach