Sports field design is about more than a set of plans; it is about creating the experience of fourth and goal, a penalty kick in overtime, a last second game-winning Hail Mary, a home run in the bottom of the 9th with the bases loaded, or the celebration of a child's first victory as part of a youth sports team. Draper Aden Athletics exists to create athletic facilities that provide these breathtaking, edge-of-your-seat moments unique to sports. We engineer the experience for fans, players, parents, and coaches at first class sports facilities where memories are created, dreams are born, and athletic programs flourish.

Engineering these experiences, made possible by superior athletic facilities, involves much more than simple field and drainage design. Our personalized approach to planning and development relies heavily on input from owners, coaches, fans, players, and maintenance personnel. Our goal is to create a destination that is right for you, with all of the customized amenities and features to allow those special moments in sports to happen. Before the lights come on, we consider lighting impacts on surrounding neighborhoods, television broadcast requirements, and sport-specific placement. Before the crowd roars, we pay careful attention to parking requirements, access, bleacher placement, and features to enhance the fan experience. Before points are scored, your field must be designed specifically to meet your intended use, for proper drainage and irrigation, and to allow flexibility in layout so that athletes are always playing on a premium surface. Realize your vision and create a premium facility with Draper Aden Athletics. Working together as a team, we can plan, design, build, and enjoy those truly special experiences that occur in sports.
For the first time in 90 years, Spider Football is now back on campus in a big way. Creating a modern and expanded 8,700-seat stadium in the footprint of an outdated 1,500-seat soccer facility led to many challenges. The new E. Claiborne Robins Stadium had to be designed to fit in a limited space around the existing track and buildings, while meeting strict environmental, LEED, noise, and light pollution standards. In addition, construction had to have virtually no impact on students and faculty attending U of R.

Execution of the project required it to be done with minimal disturbance to the adjacent newly refurbished track and synthetic turf playing surface, which serves as the centerpiece of the new stadium. In addition, improved storm drainage and pedestrian circulation was an essential component of the design. Throughout the design, detailed traffic control, parking, and emergency service plans were developed for game day implementation to address neighborhood concerns raised during the project concept and program development.

Through the collaborative efforts of Draper Aden Associates, University staff, the student body, alumni, local residents, the zoning attorney, and other members of the design and construction team, the stadium was brought back to campus. The E. Claiborne Robins Stadium was completed a month ahead of schedule to host the Spiders’ overtime victory in the 2010 football season opener.

I would like to thank them and the entire design and construction team for helping to bring Spider football back to campus after 90 years.

Andrew McBride
University Architect
The Richmond Kickers Youth Soccer Club (RKYSC) was envisioned as a place for children to play youth league soccer and experience the joy of sports. However, developing this new 45-acre athletic complex at Ukrop Park required innovative solutions in order to construct it within budget. Initially, Draper Aden Associates was brought into the RKYSC project to help refine the scope and budget through Value Engineering. These Value Engineering efforts resulted in innovative site modifications to address environmental concerns, materials selection, and renegotiated construction contracts. A unique element of this process included a new lighting plan which provided more light with fewer fixtures and light poles. Our geotechnical engineers also helped to mitigate unsuitable fill material to create a balanced site, which eliminated the cost of transporting excess dirt.

During construction, our field technicians provided Quality Control for the installation of both synthetic turf and sodded athletic fields. Two of the sodded fields were redesigned from their original synthetic turf concept for cost savings, but can be easily retrofitted to synthetic fields at a later date. Additionally, the fields are laid out to allow repositioning, which virtually eliminates worn spots on the playing surface as a result of heavy foot traffic.

The completed RKYSC facility consists of 7 lighted athletic fields, serves as the home of the Richmond Kickers Youth Soccer Club, and hosts a variety of soccer games and competitions. Not only did Draper Aden Associates deliver the project within budget, but we were integral to engineering the experience of children scoring their very first goal.

Rob Ukrop
President, RKYSC
Saint Gertrude High School (SGHS) turned to Draper Aden Associates to re-envision and revise their master plan for a 13.13-acre piece of land. The original concept included a track and field stadium, athletic training facility, and parking to serve the undeveloped property. However, SGHS wanted to explore additional opportunities for use including field and playing surfaces their athletics programs desperately needed.

In a collaborative effort between SGHS and Draper Aden Associates, the re-envisioned concept and subsequent design included an artificial turf field, a multi-purpose natural turf field, a softball field, six tennis courts, an athletic training facility, concessions, an events pavilion, and an interpretive walking trail throughout the Outdoor Athletics Center.

The new complex now provides a home for all outdoor athletic programs at a single location which gives Saint Gertrude a home field identity. Additionally, the athletic center allows family and friends to attend events at a central location, while serving as a recruitment and retention tool for prospective and current athletes and is built to facilitate up to four sporting events at one time.

They listened, they heard us and the design that they came up with was better than we imagined. They promised turnkey and that is what they delivered.

Susan Walker
President, St. Gertrude H.S.
On the heels of a soggy Thursday Night Football game against Georgia Tech, Virginia Tech’s coaching staff, athletics department, and alumni realized it was time the Hokies played on a field worthy of a program rising to national prominence. The poor soil conditions, outdated drainage system, and web of underground utilities meant creative thinking and innovative design would be the key to drying out the often-flooded Worsham Field. Draper Aden Associates worked alongside numerous vendors and contractors to install a state-of-the-art modular turf and drainage system. This system allowed for drastically improved drainage, a flatter overall playing surface for improved performance, technologies to improve turf growth, and a segmented base to allow worn field sections to be replaced with ease.

The first home game of the following season, the Hokies hosted a sell-out crowd that roared as the opening kickoff approached. The Virginia Tech Hokies were now set to play like champions on their new premier turf field that could withstand all the rain the Blacksburg skies could produce.

“Their ability to lead the process and seamlessly work as an integral part of our project team was a big factor in the overall success of these showcase projects for the University.”

Todd Shelton
Senior Project Manager
VT University Design & Construction
In the highly competitive world of college football, simulating game-time conditions is a vital part of preparing and installing a game plan for your next opponent. Prior to 2014, poor field conditions caused by flooding and erosion prevented the Hampton University Pirates Football Team from doing just that. Often, the existing natural grass fields were so impacted by bad weather that the Team had to hold practices in an indoor gymnasium during periods of heavy rain.

To provide the players and coaches the facilities needed to foster a winning program, Draper Aden Associates worked with the University to address flooding and replace the natural grass field with an updated synthetic turf playing surface. The design scope involved site layout, grading and drainage, and stormwater management to accommodate Hampton University’s signature blue track. Construction and installation began in May 2014 and by July, the Pirates were able to practice on the fields, regardless of the weather, and prepare to face William & Mary in the season opener.

"You can’t expect a football team to go out and win a football game, not practicing outside and having to practice inside in the gym,” Maynor said. “That’s going to be huge for our football program and the direction we’re trying to take it, where we won’t miss a practice.

quote from Dave Fairbank/Daily Press article
Every day each of us has the opportunity to leave our mark on the world. Creating a Lasting Positive Impact through engineering, surveying, and environmental expertise is the primary focus of Draper Aden Associates. We are more than just a set of plans, we are a way to achieve.

The dream of creating a Lasting Positive Impact began in Blacksburg, Virginia in 1972 when a civil engineer and a surveyor collaborated to improve their local surroundings. Since then, our company has expanded to Charlottesville, Manassas, Newport News, Richmond, and Virginia Beach, Virginia and Fayetteville and Raleigh, North Carolina, with the goal of helping these communities, as well as the entire Mid-Atlantic region, realize a sustainable future.

Draper Aden Associates’ aspirations and capabilities are growing every day. Whether it involves the creation of a water distribution system for an underserved community, restoration and reclamation of an environmentally degraded site, preservation of precious natural resources, sensitive development of new communities, or helping to enhance the campuses of institutions where the next generations will learn, what we do today can be looked back upon with pride tomorrow.

Draper Aden Athletics provides a game-changing approach to sports field design. In addition to helping you meet your immediate athletic project goals, we approach planning and design in a way that aims to achieve a Lasting Positive Impact.