

SPORTS

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PAL Club upgrading fields

Club makes fields a better place to play

BY SEAN GIGGY
sgigg@h-ponline.com

Work is currently underway to renovate and improve the baseball fields for the 2010 season at the Huntington PAL Club.

Huntington-based On Turf Sports, LLC has teamed with the PAL Club to update the quality of the baseball facilities in hopes to increase interest and draw tournaments to Huntington.

All three fields at the PAL Club are being made larger with extended infields and longer base paths.

"They [On Turf] came to us and presented us with a plan," said PAL Club secretary and treasurer Tom Hughes. "We're mostly volunteer right now and it takes some of the workload off because they can be the PAL's representatives when play is going on."

So far, 210 tons of aggregate—a fine stone used on the infield surface—has been brought in to raise the surface of the playing fields. The pitching mounds will also be raised



ROB EDWARDS / The Huntington Herald-Press

IF YOU BUILD IT — Dennis Dean works on the infield with the Huntington PAL Club, which is currently renovating its little league fields for the 2010 season. Work is expected to be done by spring.

to normal baseball field standards.

Upgrades are expected to be completed before the start of the 2010 season and On Turf co-owner Mark Green thinks kids will enjoy playing on the updated fields.

"Plan is to have every-

thing done by next spring," Green said. "We're going to make it a better place for the kids to play. We just want to see the PAL program get better, get larger and help all the community in Huntington. We think we've got a lot to offer with our background, so we can

get out there and help out." Drawing out-of-town teams to the area for tournaments was the main reason the PAL Club decided to improve the fields, but officials also hope to increase the participation within the PAL baseball leagues.

Roughly 350 kids participated in PAL baseball last season, the highest number since its founding nearly 35 years ago.

Expectations are that the renovations will help that number be even higher this year by providing kids an amazing baseball experience.

"We want to grow. We would like to grow and I think as the quality of the fields get better, the overall program should improve and hopefully we draw more kids in," Hughes said. "The tournament play was also a big attraction for us to get outside teams come in and generate some income."

Fixing up the baseball diamonds isn't the only improvement the PAL Club hopes to make to its baseball program in the coming years, either.

An unfinished gymnasium will eventually be transformed into an indoor practice facility for baseball players, Hughes said.

Gymnasium renovations are just in the planning stages, but the PAL Club hopes to start moving with the idea once the baseball upgrades are complete.