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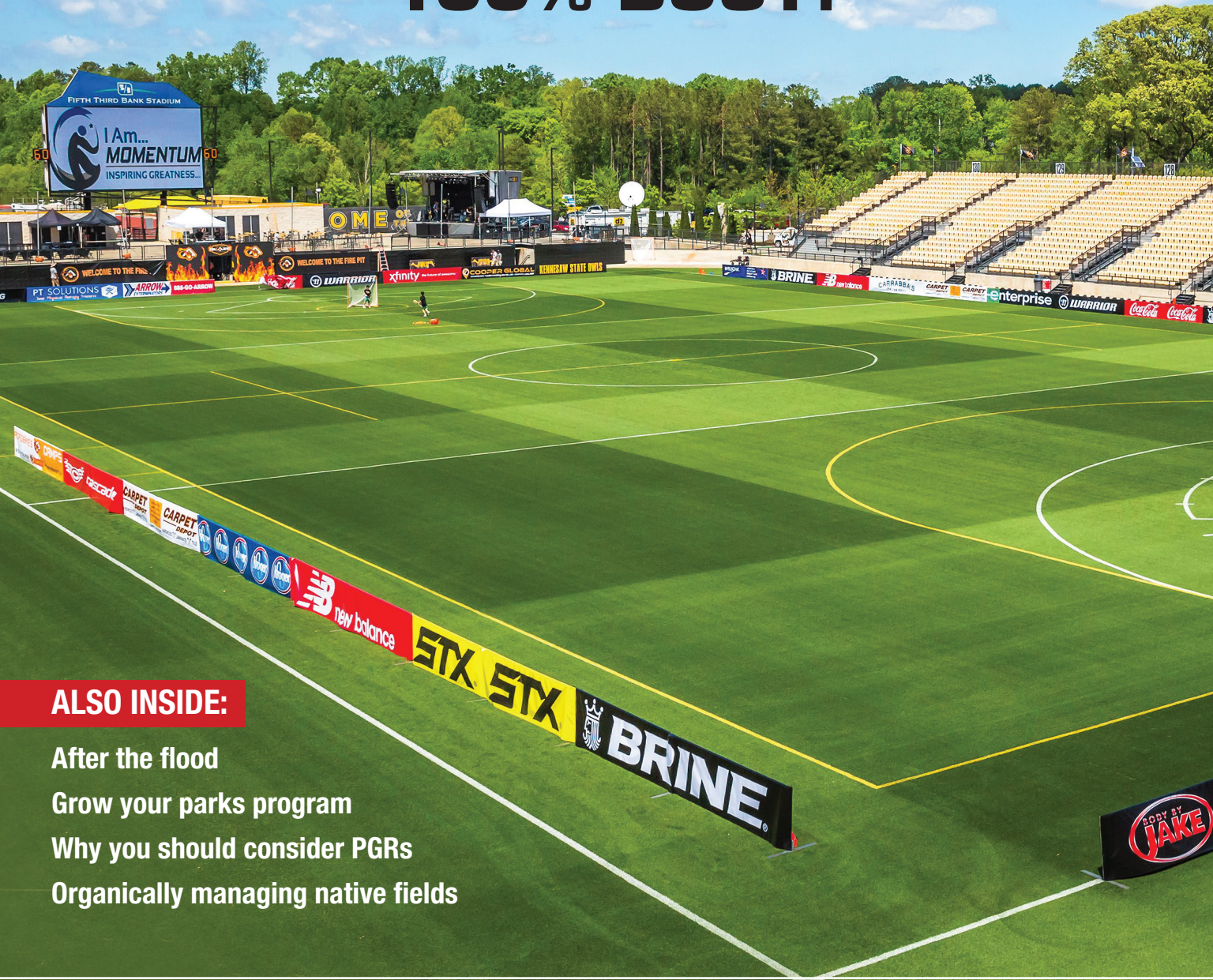
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“MORE THAN A GAME” BUILDS KIDS’ BASEBALL DREAMS

Editor’s note: This article was supplied by Turface Athletics.

Dreams require only imagination. But for dreams to become reality, it takes initiative, dedication, and tangible resources—things that, unfortunately, are in short supply in many communities.

More Than A Game is a charity founded to solve these problems. Since 2012, More Than A Game has been bringing the joys of sports to underserved places both inside and outside the U.S. through instruction, equipment donations and, most noticeably, field construction.

“The idea for More Than A Game came out of the baseball program at our alma mater, Marshall University,” says Tim Fanning, President. “Our founder, Marshall Murray, and I were introduced by one of my former players, Josh McConnell, while they were playing baseball at Marshall. At the time I was coaching high school baseball at Glenwood HS in Phenix City, AL. Community service was always a big part of my philosophy as a coach so I was extremely interested in his ideas for giving back.”

After graduation, Murray headed back to his home state of California and MTAG was born by starting the Walnut Creek Crawdads summer collegiate team. They performed schoolyard clean-ups, equipment drives and local service projects. In the summer of 2012, Fanning reached out to Murray and expressed interest in combining their efforts to serve underprivileged kids on an international level. Their first trip, to Panama, underscored the need for quality playing fields where kids could learn and enjoy the sport of baseball.

“It was in January, 2013, at the American Baseball Coaches Association coaching conference, that we met Jeff Langner of Turface Athletics. We told him about our experiences in Panama and our long-term visions for the organization, and he immediately expressed an interest in helping us.”

That same year, More Than A Game returned to the jungles of Panama, this time with ten



tons of Turface MVP, an infield conditioner manufactured by Profile Products, the parent company of Turface Athletics. The company also donated the funds necessary to transport the conditioner to the site in the country’s remote Northern Province.

“That’s when we began to take off as an organization,” Fanning says. “Since that time we’ve either built or renovated baseball diamonds every year. We’ve done projects in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, as well as several in communities across the U.S. Turface Athletics has been a partner in every one.” For 2017, More Than A Game plans to do one international field project and several more within the United States. According to Langner, business manager for Turface Athletics, the company’s involvement is an ideal way to extend the sport

of baseball to groups of kids, boys and girls alike, who would otherwise be playing in the streets, if at all.

“Turface products are used in the majority of professional ballparks in the United States,” he says. “Putting our packing clays and infield conditioners on community fields does more than provide a safe playing surface. It also lets kids dream about playing the game at a higher level, on the same kind of field as professional athletes.”

“Turface Athletics was the first major company to step up as a partner,” says Fanning. “We’ve gained many other corporate sponsors since the beginning, but the Turface Athletics name gave us credibility. When you’re attached to a brand like that, it opens people’s eyes and opens doors for us.”