

It's been a little over two weeks since Cumberland University began renovations at Nokes-Lasater Field in preparation for making the former home of the Blue Devils their own in time for the 2012 college football season.

Moving briskly, CU employees, student-athletes and private contractors have swarmed over the 46-year old facility cleaning, digging, painting, mowing and in general giving the 5,000-seat stadium a new look.

"Our people are locked in," said Cumberland athletic director Ron Pavan, "Coach (Dewayne) Alexander, his coaches and players are over there every day. Folks can just drive by and see some of the changes from the street."

Pavan noted some of the visible changes include the removal of the old goal posts, painting of the equipment building and coaches' offices, pressure washing the West grandstands and the stripping away of the old blue paint on the East grandstand.

The playing surface itself has received plenty of attention, with much more to come including spraying, top-dressing and aeration. Strips of artificial turf in the players' boxes have been removed and will be sodded.

The rock wall at the North endzone was removed as a safety precaution with dead or dying shrubs lining both endzones were taken out.

The "track house" is being converted into a headquarters for the football trainers / sports medicine program; the baseball locker room and hitting facility is being converted into a visiting team locker room while the softball locker room will become a dressing area for game officials.

Pavan also said Coca-Cola would be renovating both concession stands in an effort to greatly enhance the game-day experience for football fans.

“We look at Nokes-Lasater Field as a gold mine for our University,” Pavan said, “our footprint is expanding, our visibility will rise to a new level. We’re very thankful to the Wilson County School Board for allowing us to take this step.”

Soccer assistant -- Cumberland women’s soccer coach Gavin McKinney announced the hiring of former Belmont University player and coach Eric Susewind as a full-time assistant coach for the Bulldogs for the 2012 season.

Susewind has served the last five seasons as an assistant at his alma mater, training and working with goalkeepers daily, assisting in the planning and execution of daily training sessions, recruiting and overseeing equipment management and maintenance for the Bruins.

The Houston, Texas, native was a four-year starter at Belmont and two-time Second Team All-Atlantic Sun Conference selection. He served as a team captain for three years and also earned Atlantic Sun Academic All-Conference honors as well.

Susewind’s responsibilities at Cumberland will include coaching the team’s goalkeepers and serving as the head coach and recruiter for the newly-formed junior varsity program for the Bulldogs.

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