

## BENCHMARKING 101:

# HOW DO YOUR FOOTBALL FACILITIES MEASURE UP?

Benchmarking your football facilities against those of competing schools is an important step in ensuring your program remains competitive and attractive to athletes, coaches, and recruits.

Athletic administrators should make it a regular practice to tour other facilities, especially prior to the launch of a capital campaign. You need to be constantly benchmarking your facilities against those of your competitors to try to find any edge in recruiting because recruiting is king!

From the blue bloods to the new bloods, every head coach desires to have their own space solely dedicated to training, feeding, and taking care of the most elite athletes in the world. These players must be developed properly in order to win championships.

Standalone football facilities have become the standard in college football. Having a facility where players and staff can thrive is critical to hiring great coaches and recruiting talent.

But there are measures you can take now to determine where you can get the most bang for your buck. Following is a step-by-step guide on how to effectively benchmark your football facilities:



# BENCHMARKS

## 1. Identify Comparable Institutions

Research and identify a group of peer institutions, both within your conference and beyond that you consider direct competitors. These institutions should have similar resources, budgets, and football programs.

## 2. Gather Information

Collect detailed information about the football facilities at these peer institutions. This can include data on locker rooms, strength training facilities, recovery and rehabilitation centers, meeting rooms, practice fields, and player lounges.

You can gather this information through publicly available sources, official university websites, and media reports. If possible, try to connect with colleagues in similar positions at other schools to gather insights and arrange in-person tours whenever possible.

## 3. Create a Comparative Analysis

Organize the collected information into a structured document or spreadsheet. Categorize each facility area and provide detailed descriptions of the facilities at each peer institution. Include factors such as square footage, equipment quality, technology integration, and overall aesthetics.

## 4. Identify Key Considerations

As you assess the facilities — including your own — consider the following key factors for each area:

**Quality and Upkeep** Evaluate the overall quality, maintenance, and cleanliness of each facility. Are the facilities well-maintained and up-to-date?

**Technology and Equipment** Assess the level of technology integration and quality of equipment in each area. Are there advanced training tools and technology in place?

**Recruitment Impact** Consider how the facilities impact the recruitment of athletes. Do the facilities provide a strong selling point to potential recruits? Are there elements that have broad appeal for those ages 15-22?

**Player Experience** Evaluate how the facilities contribute to the overall player experience. Are the facilities conducive to player development, well-being, and team cohesion?

**Competitive Edge** Determine whether the facilities provide a competitive advantage in terms of performance, injury prevention, and overall team success.

## 5. Score and Rank

Develop a scoring system or ranking mechanism to objectively compare your facilities against those of peer institutions. Assign numerical values to different aspects of each facility area and calculate an overall score for each school. For example, a range of 1-5, with 5 being the highest possible grade. This will help you visualize the strengths and weaknesses of your program relative to others.

## 6. Identify Areas for Improvement

Analyze the results of your comparative analysis to identify areas where your facilities are lagging behind your competitors. These are the areas that require immediate attention and potential improvement efforts.

## 7. Develop Improvement Strategies

Once you've identified areas for improvement, strategize on how to enhance your facilities. Establish your priorities and create a wish list. This could also involve budget allocation, fundraising efforts, or partnerships with donors and sponsors.

## 8. Implement Changes

Execute the strategies you've developed to improve your facilities. This might involve staging your upgrades in phases depending on available resources and scheduling requirements. You can consider the spectrum from facility upgrades and refreshes up to complete renovations or entirely new construction depending on the needs you've identified.

## 9. Continual Assessment

Regularly revisit the benchmarking process to ensure that your facilities remain competitive. Facilities standards will evolve over time, and you should strive to stay ahead of the curve.

## 10. Promote Your Improvements

Once you've made improvements to your facilities, actively promote these enhancements to prospective athletes, coaches, and the general public. Use social media to reach your recruits and conventional media to alert the broader community, alums and potential boosters. Showcase your commitment to providing top-tier facilities that support athlete development and success.



By following these steps, you can benchmark your football facilities against competing schools and make informed decisions to enhance your program's overall competitiveness.