

## OHIO STATE PLANS GRASS FOR FALL OF '90

When John Cooper left Arizona State University to become head coach at Ohio State University, he started to miss the natural turf at Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe. The eight-year-old artificial surface at Ohio Stadium in Columbus was aging. Cooper immediately began to lobby athletic director Jim Jones to convert the stadium back to grass.

The odds were against him because the stadium is used almost constantly throughout the year for intramurals, soccer, softball and other sports in addition to football games and practices. He knew that natural turf could not withstand that kind of abuse.

But he persisted, and last month the school announced it will become the third Big Ten Conference team to convert to grass after the end of this year's football season. For most of this decade Indiana's Purdue has been the only conference school to have natural turf, the original P.A.T. field at Ross-Ade Stadium. The University of Iowa just converted Kinnick Stadium to P.A.T. this spring.

"Given my choice," states Cooper, "I'd prefer grass. I think you're better off playing football on grass." It appears that his choice has been approved, not just for the stadium, but for a new grass practice field on campus as well. The new, lighted practice

field is designed to take some of the load off Ohio Stadium.

The university has enlisted the support and advice of Dr. John Street and Dr. Karl Danneberger in its agronomy department as well as O.M. Scotts' agronomist Eugene Mayer for the project. Mike McBride, superintendent of Muirfield Village Golf Club in Dublin, OH, was a major proponent of the conversion to grass.

"The plan is either to seed or sod the field next spring with a mixture of Kentucky bluegrasses," says Danneberger. "The type of construction should be decided within the next two months. We think that Michigan (University of) will also make the switch in the next few years."

## HORSES AT SANTA ANITA WILL RUN ON TURF FIT FOR GOLFERS

Santa Anita Park in Arcadia, CA, recently borrowed the specifications for building a green from the United States Golf Association in reconstructing its turf track. The only difference between the USGA greens specs and the 9/10-mile-long track is the incorporation of interlocking geotextile grids into the top six inches of rootzone.

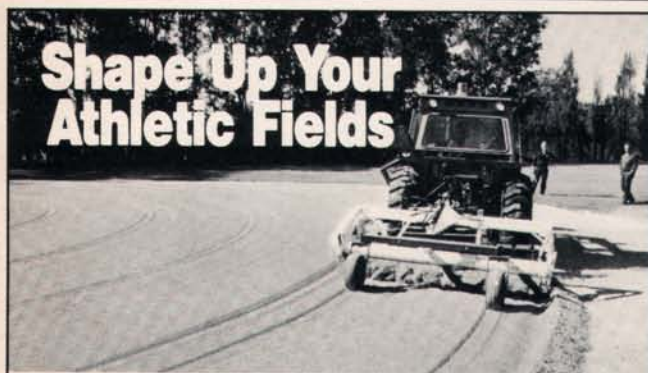
"The new track is the culmination of months of research and millions of dollars

in renovation," states Clint Granath, director of facility management for the famous race track. "The old turf course was totally excavated and widened to 80 feet from 65 feet. This required a whole series of associated changes, including increasing the size of the tunnels leading to the track. Altogether, more than \$3.2 million was spent on the project."

Santa Anita is the first track in the U.S. to incorporate the mesh elements (Netlon) made in England and to follow USGA specifications so closely. Dr. James Beard, professor of agronomy at Texas A&M University in College Station, recommended the combination based upon his involvement with a similar track surface at the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club.

"The only major difference between the way we'll maintain our track and a golf green, is the cutting height will be higher," Granath explained. "It's really a ten-acre, curved golf green with grids mixed into the topmix."

In May, the course was excavated to a depth of 20 inches with the subgrade sloping toward the infield. Six-inch perforated drain pipe were installed along the inside curve and connected to catch basins every 100 feet. The drain pipe are covered with four inches of pea gravel, followed by a two-inch choker layer of coarse sand. "The choker layer prevents the finer sand above



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