Reliant Stadium was site of a series of international soccer matches before this NFL season began. These matches, as US turf managers are finding out, can be played only on natural grass. For one game the crew only had 6 days to put in a suitable replacement.

Installation included an 86,000-square foot ring and grid drainage layer, called Draincore2, which was installed in 2 days.

"We had to move extremely quickly and this was the only option," says Mike Courter of Airfield Systems, LLC, designers of the temporary grass field at Reliant Stadium. "They [Reliant Stadium] needed something that would live up to FIFA (Federal Internationale de Football Association) standards, but could be installed in a flash."

Colorado State has tested this product to carry 58 gallons per minute of water per foot width.

In comparison, a pipe and gravel drainage system, or french drain, can carry 18-24 gpm per foot width," says Kevin Wright, president of Invisible Structures, Inc., manufacturers of the product.

Draincore2 is made from recycled polyethylene and injection molded into a system of 1-inch hollow rings connected by a grid. At Reliant, the existing concrete floor with drainage lines was covered with the Draincore2, then covered with a permeable geotextile fabric layer, and topped of with professional sod. The sod seams were filled with sand, the sod was washed, and the field was ready for its first match.

Turf provider Turfgrass America leased the Draincore2 system for the project.

A day after the games the entire system was taken down and removed and Reliant Stadium's concrete floor was cleared. Airfield Systems, LLC is seeking a permanent home for the Draincore2.

This article was supplied by Invisible Structures Inc., 800-233-1510.