

Artificial turf: a fact of life

Editor's note: SPORTSTURF asked companies currently offering artificial turf products to provide readers with some information about them. Here we share the responses we received.

GeneralSports Turf Systems

GeneralSports Turf Systems built seven synthetic turf fields in 2003. The company's original product was GameDay Grass MP, a synthetic infill system; last year they added GameDay Grass XP and XPe, systems that use the latest in yarn technology to add durability. The new systems also can be custom engineered to meet the specific performance characteristics.

GeneralSports Turf is the only synthetic turf company headquartered in the Midwest. The company develops, designs, constructs, and services synthetic sports fields. Its primary markets are high schools and small to mid-size colleges, where multiple sports are being played on a single surface and therefore require enhanced durability.

Though initially focused on the Midwest, the company has quickly gained business in other regions of the country. Among the projects outside the region was the recently completed multi-purpose athletic field for Lafayette High School in Brooklyn, NY. It was a project underwritten by Take the Fields, a nonprofit organization funding the conversion of 50 city athletic fields from scrub grass to synthetic turf.



Michigan projects completed in 2003 included high school athletic stadium fields for Carlson High School in Gibraltar, Thornapple Kellogg in Middleville, and Martin Luther King, Jr. in Detroit. Other projects included building a football and soccer stadium field for Garden

City Community College, in Garden City, KS, (pictured) and two indoor soccer fields for the Lake Country Soccer Complex in Springfield, MO.

The athletic director at Garden City High School, Bill Weatherly, reported a similar experience. "The GeneralSports Turf group was super cooperative with us. If we had any questions, they were quick to get us the answers and we never had any problem getting in touch with any of them. Their prices are very competitive and they do a fantastic job with the color schemes. Our field really stands out. Everybody who's seen it has just been blown away."

GeneralSports Turf Systems/248-601-2200

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(above left) Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX

(above right) PIAA AAA State Championship game at HersheyPark Stadium, Hershey, PA

FieldTurf

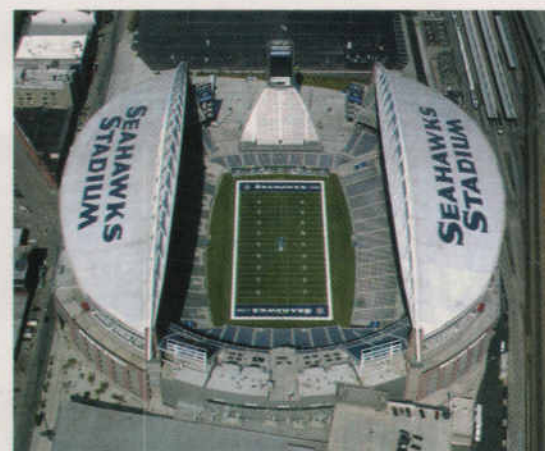
The best surface for athletic contests is good natural grass. And synthetic turf should be like grass not carpet. FieldTurf's inventors are former players and coaches. They approached the challenge from a completely different perspective. They wanted to develop a synthetic system that offered the beneficial biomechanical properties of natural grass, combined with the best attributes of a durable synthetic system: all-weather playability, low maintenance, and unlimited playing time.

The idea was simple but the technology to make it happen was not simple at all. After several years of hard work, after trials, tests, consultations with players, coaches, trainers and doctors, sample plots, equipment modifications, and countless formulations, FieldTurf was born.

FieldTurf is dramatically different from traditional synthetic turf. The most striking difference is the fiber surface is soft, silky, like new blades. Players can slide, tackle, and tumble on FieldTurf's unique blend of specially treated polyethylene fibers without fear of abrasions. Rug burns are a thing of the past.

But FieldTurf is much more than just the absence of abrasions. Unlike traditional turf, FieldTurf does not rely on an underlying shock pad for safety, resilience and player comfort. Rather, like its natural grass cousin, FieldTurf's grass fibers are surrounded and stabilized by a special blend of "synthetic earth," a patented mixture of smooth, rounded silica sand, rubber granules, and Nike Grind made of re-ground athletic shoe material.

The rubber granules are a key component. Tire rubber is cryogenically frozen, shattered into smooth, clean, rounded particles, sized and shaped to stay "in suspension" with the sand, which is of a similar size, shape and weight. The sand and rubber are precision layered to guarantee uniformity, with an installation process that is



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also patented.

The result: A stable, resilient, uniform, shock absorbing surface.

FieldTurf's patented system is now used by: Seattle Seahawks, Oakland Raiders, Kansas City Chiefs, Green Bay Packers, New York Jets and Giants, Detroit Lions, Houston Texans, St. Louis Rams, New England Patriots, plus more than 30 NCAA installations, including Nebraska, Kansas State, Oregon, Washington, and Washington State.

To ensure you get the optimum performance and appearance of your field, the following maintenance procedures must be performed on a regular basis using the recommended maintenance equipment.

A complete grooming of the field should be done every 4-6 weeks. The Supergroomer is a multi-purpose piece of equipment that allows you to sweep the field of debris, aerate the surface, use tines for a deeper clean, and brush the surface.

FieldTurf is also the only manufacturer to offer their very own line of specialized maintenance products. FieldTurf has designed products such as FieldTurf Scrub, Gum Remover, and Liquid Anti Static Conditioner. All of our products are environmentally friendly and will not negatively affect your field.

FieldTurf also recommends Pioneer's Titan II Permanent paint, formulated for permanent markings of lines. This paint has exceptional durability and has been designed with less binding adhesives to facilitate removal and is excellent for temporary markings of lines, logos, hash marks etc. The TITAN R-Remover is a solvent that works hands in hand with the Titan II's to remove the paint. Both products are perfectly suited for the use on both indoor and outdoor FieldTurf fields.

The recommended chalk is from AMS Coating Systems and is available in a variety of colors. It consists of a liquid marking chalk, and can be removed with over the counter solvents from a hardware store. FieldTurf highly recommends the use of Simple Green or Graffiti Remover.

FieldTurf/800-724-2969

Sportexe (Momentum)

It's a whole new game on a brand new field at The University of Southern Mississippi. The Golden Eagles have installed Momentum turf by Sportexe as the new synthetic field surface at M. M. Roberts stadium.

David Hansen, Senior Associate Athletics Director, says it was only after consider-



able research that Southern Miss chose Momentum. "We sought a product that would enhance performance and ensure a safe, consistent, durable surface. After exhaustive study, we found it best met our desires."

Momentum also was chosen by both the NFL's Baltimore Ravens and University of California Golden Bears for use in their respective home stadiums.

Sportexe/905-892-6000

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StrathAyr Turf Systems

StrathAyr are sportsturf problem solvers. StrathAyr innovations include removable natural turf modules, removable artificial turf modules, natural turf construction, immediate play repair systems, and portable cricket wickets.



The StrathAyr ModulAyr System, removable natural turf, is in use at Reliant Stadium, Houston. The 8 x 8-ft. modules were moved out of the stadium eight times during the 2004 NFL season. The StrathAyr System is in use at Tad Gormley Stadium, New Orleans; Kix Field, Minnesota; Singapore Racecourse and Sydney's Olympic Stadium.

StrathAyr Turf
Systems/sales@strathayr.com.au

DD GrassMaster

Desso DLW Sports Systems' DD GrassMaster system combines nature and technology. Natural grass surfaces and root systems are being reinforced by synthetic fibers, acting like indestructible grass blades. The amount of artificial grass fibers added is approximately 3 percent, leaving your turf looking and feeling completely natural.

There is no increased risk of injury and the physical demands on players are no higher than on traditional natural grass. This invention offers you a way to protect the natural grass while preventing traditional disadvantages of natural turf.

A DD GrassMaster surface is suitable for different sports, in fact it's suitable for any sport that is played on natural grass. Consequent, professional maintenance of the surface is necessary, very much the same as for natural turf, e.g., fertilizing, reseeding,

mowing, etc.

As the grass recovers very quickly, verti-draining is virtually superfluous due to the good water permeating characteristics of the fibers. Few repairs are needed after a game, because worn turf or damaged areas are rare. The maintenance work is required to ensure the playing quality of the top layer and to keep the costs per playing hour as low as possible while maintaining optimum safety.

The lifetime of a DD GrassMaster pitch depends on the maintenance. A sand-based field can last more than 20 years, a DD GrassMaster field certainly lasts as long.

In 2000, the Philadelphia Eagles chose to install DD GrassMaster. "Three years later, the first American football match was played in the brand new Lincoln Financial Field, against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers", explains Tony Leonard, Sports Field and Landscape Manager for the Eagles. "The Denver Broncos already had the system installed and their positive experience helped convinced the Eagles as well."

Desso DLW Sports Systems/ (ptabor09@hotmail.com)



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cage. A-Turf features three infill and two conventional synthetic grass systems ideally suited for football, soccer, lacrosse, field hockey, baseball and multi-sport.

A-Turf/888-777-6910

Airfield Systems

Airfield Systems, Edmond, OK, provides patented drainage solutions for sports field applications worldwide. The unique advantages to an Airfield system under natural turf include a much faster installation than gravel and a 1-inch void space beneath the soil for the exchange of oxygen resulting in healthier turf. No water collects on the field surface as an Airfield system moves water more rapidly than any other drainage system available.

Maintenance time and costs are cut.

In an artificial turf installation, an Airfield system enhances player safety with a lower G-Max rating, and eliminates the migration of rubber infill material due to flooding. Additionally, installers find that using the Airfield system not only cuts their installation time, but requires less planning as each field goes down the same way regardless of the sub-base or region. **ST**

Airfield Systems/405-359-3775

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Covermaster/800-387-5808

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