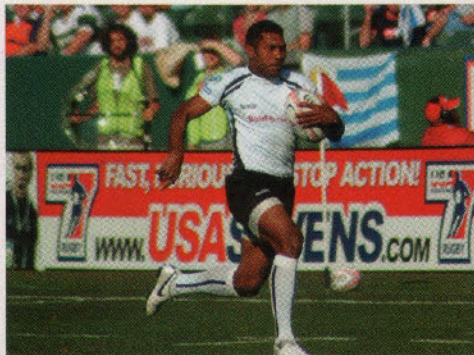


# Busy Waters handles SEVENS rugby



Rob Wagner, Dropkick Photos

**K**yle Waters is director of sports turf and grounds at the Home Depot Center complex in Carson, CA. In between soccer matches and video shoots, Waters hosted the USA Sevens rugby tournament in February, which saw 44 games involving 240 athletes over 2 days.

## Did you do anything differently to prepare for the tournament?

**Waters:** There was really nothing we did special for rugby other than green out the soccer lines 3 days before the matches started. We had a soccer match on the Wednesday before, followed by a 3-day soccer commercial shoot starting the Tuesday after the SEVENS. So in a matter of 5 days we went from soccer to rugby then back to soccer.

## How did you get it all done?

**Waters:** We lined for soccer on Wednesday afternoon before the match. Then on Thursday, Kevin, Ben, Phillip and Jesus painted all the soccer lines green; measured out a rugby field and lined it. Then we installed the field posts for rugby, took down the soccer goals and painted the rugby logo on the center of the field.

**You mentioned that you really never experience an off season. What is your**

**normal, if there is a normal, maintenance schedule to keep your turf healthy and looking good?**

**Waters:** Here at the Home Depot Center we really don't have an off season that might occur for a one-sport stadium. If we aren't hosting soccer, rugby, football, tennis, track, or lacrosse then it's a concert, X-games or film shoot.

There is no such thing as normal maintenance and never will be because the schedule changes so often. I basically plan month to month and sometimes that is even hard. We stick to a very intense foliar program on the stadium using Floratine products and basic granular fertilization on the outer practice fields. We aerify all the fields at least 1-2 times per month and in a normal year plan on replacing the middle of each field once time with sod from all the traffic.

**What's the craziest special event you've been involved in, and why was it so crazy?**

**Waters:** The craziest event was having the San Diego Chargers, X-Games, J.P Morgan Tennis tournament and US Cycling all within the same week. We were responsible for keeping the Charger's 5 practice fields painted and mowed. This included coordinating moving out of 8,000 yards of

dirt from inside the soccer stadium, installing 150 irrigation heads, and resodding of 130,000 square feet of sod for the soccer match in 4 days. All that while also maintaining the plants on Center Court and in the Velodrome for cycling.

We could only move dirt out during hours that didn't affect the tennis players or the football operations, so most of that was done late at night and early morning. My crew was split up and for almost a week I didn't see some of the guys because I was working inside the stadium and they were maintaining the football fields and the other five soccer fields. We made it through the events but only due to the proper planning and the guys on the crew putting the facility and events first. Fifteen to eighteen hour days during that time were not uncommon.

We played a soccer match Saturday night, thanks to the help of Kurt Kitchens of JPD hauling out the dirt from the X-games course Sunday and Monday; Bill Barkshire laser leveling the field starting at 2 AM Tuesday; Neal Beeson of Sports Turf Facility Management and Matt Hart of Rain Bird helping reinstall the irrigation heads; Tom Stafford of West Coast Turf and his crew installing sod all day and night Wednesday and Thursday; and the HDC crew sanding seams and rolling the turf after installation! ■