



# Diamond Nation complex all synthetic

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**PANNING 65 ACRES**, the Diamond Nation complex in Flemington, NJ consists of six new A-Turf synthetic fields, creating the largest baseball and softball complex on the East Coast, according to synthetic surface provider A-Turf.

Four fields are 90 feet and two are 60 or 70-foot fields. Each of the larger fields is designed so that they can be converted into two Little League-sized fields, each with its own backstop, dugout and bullpens. This feature gives the complex the ability to host up to 12 games

simultaneously and the versatility to have both baseball and softball games.

Diamond Nation will play home to the Jack Cust Baseball Academy, as well as the new Jennie Finch Softball Academy. Cust, the Oakland Athletics designated hitter, is from Flemington; he, along with his two brothers and father have operated one of the largest youth baseball facilities on the East Coast since 1997. Diamond Nation is across the street from the original facility, which features three AstroTurf fields along with indoor batting cages and a

health and fitness center. In the winter, a dome is put over all three fields. The entire academy and complex is now more than 700,000 square feet and attracts some of the most talented teams and players in both youth and college and high school showcase tournaments.

“Diamond Nation is the start of a new era of baseball. Serious athletes looking to take their game to the next level now have a state-of-the-art facility, delivering a playing experience like no other,” said Cust. From the new A-Turf fields to the indoor training facility, Diamond Nation will cater to competitive tournaments for athletes of all ages, as well as offering one-on-one training with top coaches and instructors.

Installation took place (and continued) during one of the wettest springs and summers for New Jersey. The project included more than 80 trucks worth of material, making pre-planning for shipping and staging crucial to a successful outcome.

Each A-Turf field is engineered specifically for the unique demands of baseball and softball and are designed with a slight reduction in fiber pile height and a modest increase in the weight of sand in the rubber and sand infill to match the ball roll and bounce of natural grass, says the company.

“Having a hand in creating a truly unique baseball and softball experience is what A-Turf is all about,” said Jim Dobmeier, A-Turf



founder and president. “As a baseball player, a coach, and most importantly as the company behind the Diamond Nation fields, my days are spent raising the level of play and giving athletes the opportunity to succeed.

“We are definitely seeing growth in the number of synthetic baseball and softball fields being installed,” Dobmeier said. “Traditionally, the athletic field business has been oriented more toward oval or rectangular-type fields for football, soccer, lacrosse and field hockey. But over the years, we have seen an increase in demand for synthetic grass fields for baseball or softball. In some cases, the design is for a larger, multi-sport field, which includes baseball or softball. In other cases, we are building stand-alone fields, specifically designed for that sport. ■

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