

Houston's Minute Maid Park first to roll out Platinum TE paspalum

SINCE MINUTE MAID PARK OPENED IN 2000, the Houston Astros have always sought creative ways to improve their game day product and facility. This innovative thinking has continued this offseason, as Minute Maid Park will now feature a new playing surface, recently installed by Astros groundskeepers.

On November 23 last year, Astros groundskeepers, led by the Director of Major League Field Operations Dan Bergstrom, began to roll out 2.3 acres worth of new sod in an effort to improve Minute Maid Park. The new sod, named Platinum TE Paspalum, is the first of its kind to be installed in any sports facility in the world.

"The Astros grounds crew has embraced the challenge of keeping a beautiful stand of turf under the roof of Minute Maid Park," said Bergstrom. "We expect to keep our playing surface in top-notch condition for our players, and we are excited to have the latest technology and turfgrass genetics with our new [turf]."

Platinum TE Paspalum is a turf that works well for Minute Maid Park's conditions due to its lower sunlight requirements. Compared to the sod used in previous seasons, the Platinum TE Paspalum should have a green-



er color, an improved wear tolerance and an increased tolerance to the shade at Minute Maid Park.

Platinum TE Paspalum is bred by Turf Ecosystems, LLC, which aims to develop new turfgrass cultivars and maintenance products that are better suited to both performance expectations and environmental limitations. ■



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