

INFINITY PARK, *Glendale, Colorado*

WHY STMA SHOULD CONSIDER YOUR FIELD A WINNER?

The season opened this year on March 3, 2013. We had a fair amount of snow in February and one corner of our field remained frozen through January and February. We were hoping that the corner would thaw out enough to have a safe playing surface, however with 2 weeks until the season opener we were forced to come up with a different plan. We had to rent a heating system that they use to thaw the ground before they pour concrete. The system was very labor intensive and also expensive to rent. The thawing process took about a week to complete but we were able to get in the scheduled game and made sure the field was safe for play.

March and April ended up being our biggest snow months and the snow always seemed to come the day before our matches. We were forced to plow the field multiple times in order to make sure the games were played.

The field was rented to Maggpul on June 29. They hosted a farewell to Colorado and had approximately 4,500 people on the

field. The event went well and there was very limited damage from tents vendor booths and concessions.

Another challenge that we had was Colorado State University asked to host a spring scrimmage at Infinity Park to try and rally the Denver alumni. The field was already scheduled for rugby tournaments the following day so we had to figure out how to effectively and efficiently flip the field from football to rugby. We spoke directly with the CSU coaching staff and convinced them that since it was only a practice to leave the goal post where they were. This made the field 10 yards shorter than a normal field but no one knew because we did not paint numbers on the yardage markers. The evening after the practice we painted the football lines green (big thanks to Bret Baird of Dick's Sporting Good Park on green paint selection) and then restriped the field for the next day.

The biggest challenge of the year came after the Serevii and Glendale invitational sevens tournament. On the playing surface we had 42 games in a 2-day span. The field held up to all the play very well but did need a lot of divots filled throughout the following week.

- **Level of Submission:** Schools/Parks
- **Category of Submission:** Sporting Grounds
- **Sports Turf Manager:** Noel Harryman
- **Title:** Manager Turf Operations
- **Education:** Bachelor's Degree in Business Management
- **Experience:** 2002-2003 Landscape Supervisor (Fresh Aire Enterprises); 2002-2007 Material Supplier Manager/Designer (Landscape Solutions); 2007-2009 Project Manager (Graff's Turf Farms); fields worked on include Coors, Invesco, Dicks, Folsom, Wrigley, Infinity Park, Haymarket; 2009-2011 Assistant Turf Manager, City of Glendale; 2011-Current Manager Turf Operations 2012 City of Glendale
- **Staff:** Josh Bertrand, Gene Hazlett, Vickie Allen, Kevin Brown, Matt McCord, Jody Yonke, Joe Fererra, Christi Clay, Corey Williams, and Chris Roozing.
- **Original construction:** 2007
- **Renovation:** Irrigation replacement on the playing

surface. The laterals had to be lowered because they were not installed according to the specs. The lines were punctured to deep tine aeration. The sod was stripped out along the laterals running east to west on the field and then new sod was installed. We were forced to use thick cut sod in order to be able to play on the surface shortly after the renovation. The renovation was done because of the punctured irrigation lines and because the original installation did not follow the irrigation specifications. The lines were anywhere from 4-8" depths. By lowering the laterals we are able to deep tine aerate up to 12" depth and still be safe. The city has also thought about putting in the Desso system in the grass and would not have been able to entertain this system without lowering the lines. The renovation went very well in 2011 and not at all noticeable at this point. In hindsight I would probably push to have the entire field pulled out and laser leveled and a complete resod. Pulling out a 4 foot wide area is difficult to get a

perfect grade. We still notice a few imperfections.

- **Turfgrass variety:** Midnight, Awesome, Impact, Nu-Destiny-Kentucky Bluegrass (70%) Caddieshack, Accent, Top-Gun-Perennial Ryegrass (30%)
- **Overseeding:** Overseeding is done with Kentucky bluegrass. The pitch is overseeded four times a year (last week of March, first week of May, mid-June, and the last week of August). The first three overseedings were done with 10#/1000sq.ft. and the last overseeding in August was done with 15#/1000sq.ft. The seed mix is Midnight, Awesome, Impact, and NuDestiny Kentucky Bluegrass. For divot repair we use a 1:3:1 ratio of pregerminated seed, USGA Sand, and fertilizer.
- **Rootzone composition:** 92% Sand; 8% other (4% silt, 2% Clay, 2% organic matter)
- **Drainage:** GraviTURF designed by Dan Almond of Millennium Sports. Using 4-inch ADS drain pipe, located on 15-foot centers, set in pea gravel, 10 inches below surface.



Equipment List

- Buffalo Turbine-Cyclone PTO blower
- Graco Fieldlazer
- John Deere -4520 Tractor with cab
- 400X loader with bucket, pallet forks and 6' plow

- Toro ReelMaster 5610 reel mower
- 2000 Aercore Aerator
- Gator XUV w/ V-plow
- Lely 1250 Fertilizer Spreader
- Rain Bird - Maxicom Central Control System, 1800 series pop up head, 7005 series rotary head and ESP-Site-

- Sat-40 sprinkler controller
- Toro- Aerothatch 83/Seeder 93
- Pro Sweep 5200
- Workman Sprayer 200 gallon
- Workman 3300 (2)
- Ty crop MH-400



Infinity Park

Rugby is a unique sport in that the game must go on. Games are played regardless of any limiting factors. There could be a foot of snow on the ground and they will still play. The culture of rugby is that the players are tough and if there is an injury that is just part of the game. For example, during a rugby game if a player is hurt the play does not end until the ball is kicked out of play.

Editor's note: Noel Harryman and his colleagues in Glendale also won the Sporting Grounds category last year. We asked Harryman to comment on his success and the interesting dynamic between his facility and the City of Glendale. Here is his response:

"Glendale is a unique city to work for and is a town where change is always expected. The city is always looking for ways to make our city different and looking for future opportunities to set us apart. Our crew is no exception to this status quo; we are responsible anything and everything that happens within the public works department. This includes the water distribution system, parks, streets, pitch, and my personal favorite, the sanitary and sewer collection system. Since we are responsible for collection and distribution throughout the city we are also required to hold licenses in both these areas.

"Our crew is crossed trained and very capable of taking on any task in any of these given areas. One week we might be doing a water line repair and asphalt and the next we might be forming and pouring concrete. This also presents some very major challenges since we tend to have multiple crews running five different directions in order to accomplish every-

thing that we set out to do. One reason that this is a challenge for me is maintaining consistency of how things are done on the pitch. The way that I have worked through this challenge is to always document sprayer calibration, fertility programs, mower height, aeration, and everything else under the sun. I think that documenting not only gives a record of what we have done in the past for success but more importantly what strategies failed and how to change our process to make them successful.

"For me this Field of the Year is recognition of our crew and their tireless dedication to hard work and their pursuit of perfection. There have been countless hours spent making sure that everything is perfect for games and practices as well. Our goal is to give our athletes the best product possible to make them successful. Our city management team trusts us to make decisions on the playing surface and is always concerned how many hours the field is being used. This trust allows us to make the best decision possible not only for the short term but also future of our facility. Our coaching staff also plays a key role in maintaining a quality surface. The coaches that we have are more than willing to move drills around and even use a practice field whenever possible. There is a great deal of pride in the facility and what are small city has to offer.

"I was asked, 'What do you different that makes you successful?' I am surrounded by people that all have the same goal as me. We all want to continue to promote the sport of rugby and we want to make sure that we have a world class facility and experience when playing here." ■

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