

The field hosts 20 home footgames and four to six soccer games each season.

sections of the baseball and softball fields. They do one light practice on the game field each week, usually on Wednesday, to work on the kicking game and coverage. The freshmen team plays on Thursdays and the Junior Varsity and Varsity teams on Fridays. The field hosts 20 home football games and four to six soccer games each season."

The football season ends with the playoff games in early December. Regular season play for boy's soccer, also a fall sport, ends in late October, though playoffs could extend play. Girl's soccer is one of the spring sports, which begin on Feb. 1. The football field rest cycle generally extends from the last December playoff game into early February.

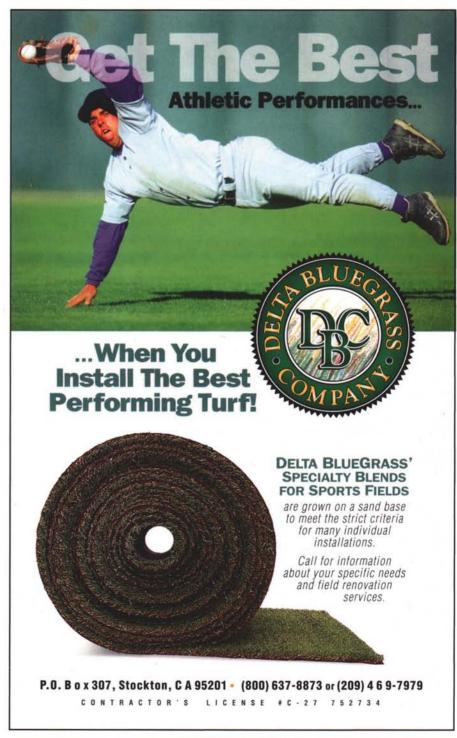
Roberts says, "Temperatures usually start dropping in mid-October. The bermudagrass goes through a slow phase down turning from a deep green to a lighter green and finally hitting a yellow brown. The field was overseeded this year in mid-October with a mix of annual and perennial ryegrass at the rate of 6 pounds per 1,000 square feet. Ryegrass phase out is not a problem. Even at this elevation temperatures can be as high as 100 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer time."

Along with the field renovation, a 5/8-inch layer of crumb rubber was installed in both team boxes to reduce turf wear. The turf grows back through the rubber, protecting the crown of the plant and helping to maintain a higher soil temperature, thus delaying dormancy. Colfax High School has a standard inground irrigation system. The football field is equipped with Hunter I-

25 heads with new scrubber valves. Until 1995, the irrigation system used treated water which, with California water rates, added considerable expense to the field maintenance budget.

Roberts says, "We developed an innovative solution to this problem, working with our water supplier to convert to untreated water which we could buy at a fraction of the cost. The water agency did the conversion at no cost to us since they benefited by having more treated water to sell for home development in the area.

"The water comes from higher up in the mountains and flows through a series of natural ditches and man-



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Along with the field renovation, a 5/8-inch layer of crumb rubber was installed in both team boxes to reduce turf wear. The turf grows back through the rubber, protecting the crown of the plant and helping to maintain a higher soil temperature, thus delaying dormancy.

made canals into a canal about 200 feet higher than the high school elevation. The system is unique in that no pumps or electricity are needed. The difference in elevation alone enables us to get 57 pounds of pressure at the heads. We use a hydraulically actuated filter that senses the back pressure on the screen when impurities build up and rotates to clean off the screen. Thus we have a great irrigation system for very little cost."

Another cost-saving measure used on the Colfax High School football field was the construction of the new stucco press box and concession stand. In 1995, funds were "We had one game in wet conditions the last Friday night of October and post-game conditions were so good you couldn't even tell they had played."

bequeathed for the athletic program. The school developed a plan to replace the existing building with a structure that met all modern standards. This plan was approved by the Division of State Architects. The funds were applied to the purchase of the materials. Under the direction of Roberts and spearheaded by one very dedicated volunteer, arrangements were made with local contractors to donate their time and equipment to the project. District personnel pitched in during the summer of 1997 to complete the structure for the first football game of the season.

Roberts also has developed an equipment-sharing partnership with

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a couple other school districts. Major equipment purchases are coordinated, with one district purchasing the topdresser, another district purchasing the aerator, etc., so all the cooperating districts have the use of top quality machines without overextending their budgets.

Roberts says, "The field continues to do very well in 2000 despite wet conditions. The bermudagrass is now fully mature. We had one game in wet conditions the last Friday night of October and post-game field conditions were so good you couldn't even tell they had played. That's due primarily to the great team of groundsmen within the district and on site. The main players from the beginning of the project were Ed Campbell, Jason Campbell, Trinidad Garcia, Ron Uno and Phil Godman, and their dedication to the field continues. Stan Sindell has moved to the position of District Head Groundsman and is integral in keeping it going. It takes a huge commitment on everyone's part to make it happen.



Crew members take a moment from their busy schedule to pose for the camera. Say cheese!

"We went into this project with the safety of the athletes our prime objective. That we've cut our injuries due to turf quality conditions to zero is a testimony to what effective sports turf management can accomplish." Bob Tracinski is the business communications manager for the John Deere Worldwide Commercial & Consumer Equipment Division headquartered in Raleigh, N.C. He serves as public relations co-chair for the national Sports Turf Managers Association.



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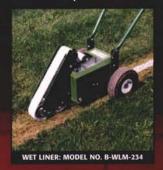


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