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Just as a precaution, since we had heard a storm might be coming, we covered the field the night before the game.



Imagine our surprise when we arrived at the field.



The storm hit hard, first a 1-inch layer of ice, topped by 3 inches of heavy, wet snow.



Jeff Macko, Dorsey Lawrence, and the rest of the grounds staff could not have been more pleased by the way their crew responded.

Getting prepared for '07 College Cup

Cary, NC and SAS Soccer Park are home to the 2007 College Cup, the NCAA men's soccer championship. Keith Jenkins, CPRP, the athletic facility supervisor for the Town of Cary Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources, and Jimmy Simpson, the

facility expeditor, answered some questions about preparing for this year's tournament:

SportsTurf:

1. How have you changed or will you change your field maintenance schedule for 2007 to prepare for the College Cup in

November? Is your number of events less than last year in leading up to Cup matches?

Simpson and Jenkins: We have been fortunate to host several college cups at SAS Soccer Park, including last year's Women's College Cup. Our field maintenance schedule for the 2007 Men's College Cup will not be



Above: SAS Soccer Park was home to the 2006 Women's College Cup, the NCAA women's soccer championship.



The newly formed USL Division One Carolina Railhawks play all of their home games at SAS.

very different from last year's schedule.

Prior to last season's Women's College Cup, we increased our number of aerifications and topdressings to help facilitate the firming of our playing surface, improve surface drainage, and to also increase both stand density and root density of the turf.

We have had a slight increase in the number of events we are hosting this year. The newly formed USL Division One Carolina Railhawks are now playing all of their home games at SAS, and several international matches have been hosted here in 2007 as well.

SportsTurf: What, if any, consultations have you had with the NCAA regarding the field itself?

Simpson: Currently, the only consultations I have had with the NCAA regarding the field was a conference call during which the committee asked questions about our maintenance practices and efforts to continually improve the playing surface at the park.

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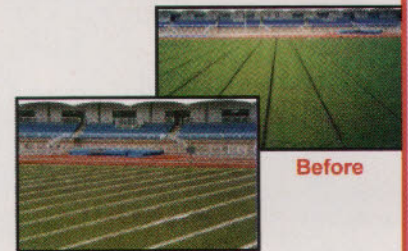
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FACILITY & OPERATIONS



The overall experience for players and spectators is of the highest importance.

SportsTurf: What type of turf is featured at SAS Soccer Park? Drainage system?

Simpson: SAS Soccer park has 419 Bermuda that is overseeded with perennial ryegrass. The field itself is completely flat with a 10-inch sand/peat rootzone and drain lines that are on 15-foot centers. We have a six-zone irrigation system on our stadium field that is fed by an onsite pond. The pond is supported by four wells that pump water into it 12 hours a day.

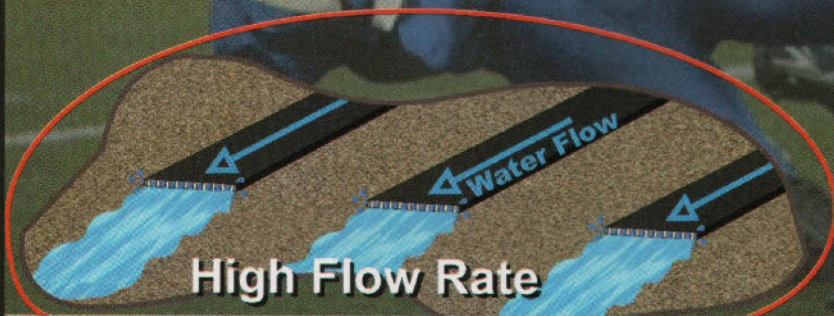
SportsTurf: What would be included on your "recommended checklist" for turf managers who host soccer tournaments?

Simpson: At SAS, we have many weekly tournaments on our outlying fields. Our preparation checklist does not change whether it is a recreation game or international soccer match we are hosting. At the top of my checklist is anything that is related to the safety of players or spectators. Safety is our number one priority, and I feel that it is our responsibility to pro-

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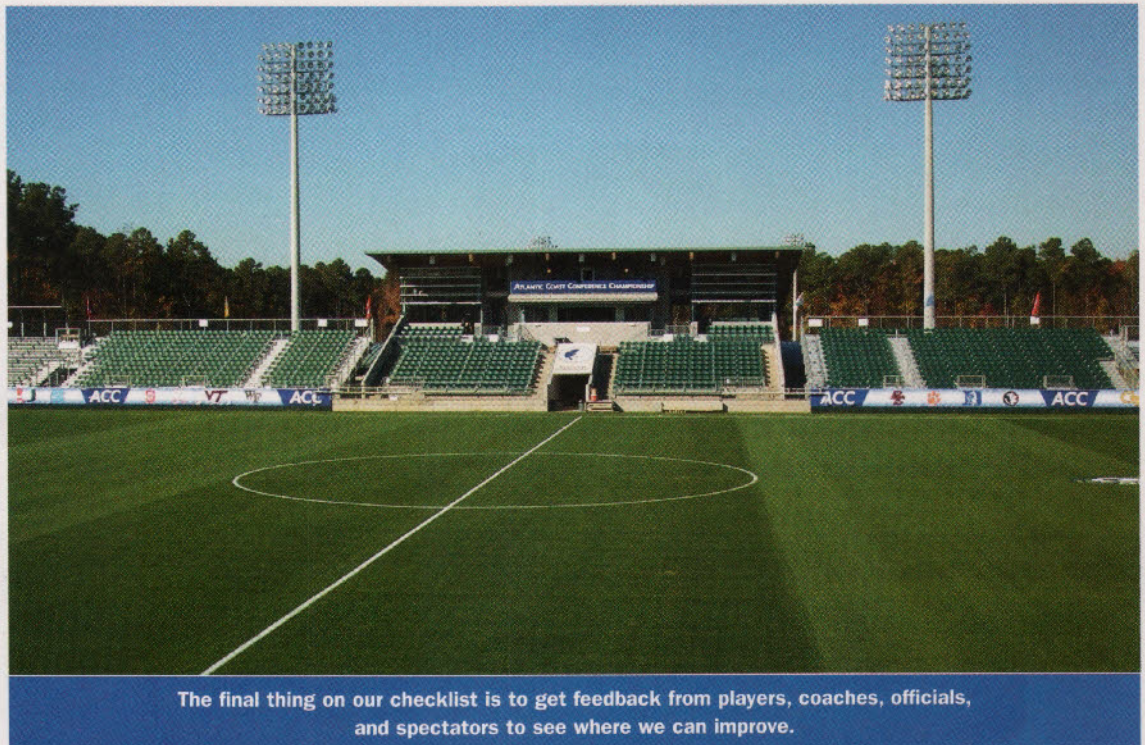
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vide a safe, smooth playing surface with anchored goals.

The next thing on the list is the aesthetics of the fields and facility. We strive for an overall consistent and well maintained "look" for all events at SAS. This includes everything from having straight lines on the fields to how the benches are placed on the sidelines. After the fields are complete, we then take our "look" to the entire park. From the parking lot to the restrooms, the overall experience for our players and spectators is of the highest importance.

The final thing on our checklist is to get feedback from players, coaches, officials, and spectators to see where we can improve as a facility. ■



The final thing on our checklist is to get feedback from players, coaches, officials, and spectators to see where we can improve.



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Top 5

Painting Recommendations, Part 2



Eric Fasbender, CSFM, University of Oregon

We asked several top turf managers for their “Top 5” recommendations when it comes to painting or marking their football fields. We shared some last issue; here are some others:

Jay Warnick, CSFM on field painting

I have learned especially of late that painting a field is not just about a paint machine and some liquid that comes in a 5-gallon

bucket. It is part of the field system and contributes or detracts from the overall quality of a field in the same way that mowing, fertilizing, and aerating can.

Field managers should realize the potential that painting will have in relation to the safety, playability, and aesthetics of any playing surface. Here are some tips:

Safety. Poor quality paint applied repeatedly on a field will lead to turf die-back, which in turn will impact the footing and stability of

the field. Also, paint applied with improper equipment and technique can lead to a change in surface abrasion, hardness, and footing on natural and synthetic surfaces.

Playability. Field managers have the important responsibility of “setting up the game board” by using painted lines and markings. Field markings establish the parameters by which the game is played and poorly applied field markings can impact the quality of an event, and even more serious; the eventual outcome.

Aesthetics. Few things convey the professionalism of the sports turf manager more to the public than the sight of a freshly mowed field of deep green turf with gleaming, crisply painted white lines. Add to those bright, colorful logos, and the feeling of pride that comes over fans and players and your staff is unmistakable.

Jay Warnick, CSEFM is a former NFL turf manager who now works for World Class Paints.

Top 5: Painting infill fields

1. Be sure that you are using “infill friendly” paint.

Sometimes it is overwhelming to think about all the paint that is on the market and available to the sports turf manager today. If you have to paint an infill surface like we do at the University of Oregon, there are some things that you will want to check before you start letting the paint fly.

There are many national suppliers that offer special paint that is manufactured specifically

for artificial fields. Some of these are removable and others are permanent. It will also depend on the brand how you get the removable paint off. Some require only soap and water while others will need to be treated with a solvent and scrubbed to remove them. Whatever type of paint you decide to use, make sure that you understand the consequences involved with what you put on your field to mark it (this goes for grass too). I would also be remiss if I didn't mention that it is also a good idea to check with the manufacturer of your synthetic surface to see if they have any recommendations on field marking paint.

2. Use a base coat for brighter, more vibrant colors.

If you have ever painted an endzone or mid-field logo and rushed to the top of your stadium to see what it looks like, only to be disappointed with the intensity of the color, try using a base coat before you put down the good stuff.

I first learned this trick when I was a student

at the University of Tennessee and I have carried it with me every step of the way. The dark green color of turf will have a tendency to dull some of the lighter colors like yellow, orange, and red. By putting a white base coat down before you paint, you will increase the vibrant look of the colors. We will spray a primer coat before we paint any of our mid-field logos for the first time each season or when we start to see the logos fade because we have not had a game in a while. With this method, your logos will look better and you will have to use less paint in the process.

3. Use a cardboard or Lexan “shield” when painting logos and numbers.

There is nothing worse than painting a logo, stepping back to admire the work you just did, only to notice a yellow halo in the direction the wind was blowing. Making a shield out of cardboard or Lexan can easily prevent this.

What ever you use to protect against overspray, it should be flexible enough to contour to any logos or numbers that you have on your

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- Reduces installation time
- Reduces irrigation requirements
- Extends playing season
- Eliminates standing water
- Reduces maintenance costs
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field and it should be high enough to catch any over-spray that might be created. We use a 3 x 6-foot piece of 1/8-inch plastic signage that was left by one of our advertisers. It is perfect because it is flexible and is lightweight, making it easy to handle. We will paint all of our yard lines and once that has been completed, we have one person spray the paint for our logos and the other will hold the shield.

We also use smaller pieces of plastic for detailed logos that we have to put down. Using a shield will help your colors and logos stay true and looking good for game time.

4. When painting in the rain, aerosol can save the day!

I have had to become really familiar with this one living in the Pacific Northwest. It rains in Eugene about seven or eight months out of the year and we still have to have our practice and game fields looking their best even when the weather is the worst. We quickly learned that by using aerosol spray cans, the paint was practical-



The University of Georgia logo, courtesy of World Class Paints

ly dry once it hit the turf. Even in steady drizzle we could walk across lines and logos shortly after they had been painted and not track any of the paint across the field. We now keep a full aerosol inventory of White, Black, Lightning Yellow and Duck Green on hand just in case the weather does not cooperate.

5. The tape measure is your friend.

Measure twice, paint once! I honestly believe that there is no tougher task for a sports

turf manager than the initial layout of a football field. This is probably because if you make a mistake measuring one of the yard lines it gets compounded 20 times. Measure twice, paint once is one of the credos for the Duck's crew!

We have standard benchmarks that we use to layout all of our fields. We triangulate the field corners and yard lines based on fixed points that are on our concrete field border. Once the field has been laid out and strung, we go over all the dimensions with our measuring tape one more time to ensure everything is correct. You do not only want to double check your field dimensions, but also any logos that will be going on your field. Be sure that they are square and centered left to right and up and down. If you take the few minutes to double check your layout, there will be less chance you have to spend hours correcting a mistake.

From Eric Fasbender, CSFM University of Oregon

Tip top shape

The best single piece of advice I can give is to work with a supplier that can support you on all facets of sports field striping: supplying field striping specific paint for the budget and surface you are working with, quality line striping equipment, custom stencils, etc. Sometimes you run into challenges where there is just no substitute for good advice. By working with someone that is experienced with the challenges unique to sports fields you can avoid having to learn a lot of things the hard way.

One of the most common problems I see is users not monitoring the condition of their airless spray tips. As a tip wears the spray pattern goes from a flat fan shape to a rounded shape. The rounded pattern delivers a lot more paint to the middle of the stripe than needed, wasting much of the paint. One of the many benefits of using high quality field striping specific paints is decreased spray tip wear. Lower quality paints have abrasive filler materials in them that increase the rate of tip wear.

And while we are on the topic of tip wear, make sure you keep the pressure set only as high as necessary to atomize the paint (assuming your sprayer offers pressure controls). Excess pressure is sometimes used because it can help blow grass clippings off the area to be striped. In fact, by only using enough pressure to atomize the paint will still clear the turf under the spray pattern. ■

From Mark Malloy, Director of Marketing for Airlessco.

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QUICK TIPS

- Mow before painting
- Keep mowing to a minimum after painting
- Water the mowed area after painting
- Mix paint thoroughly
- Make sure paint machine, tips and screens are clean
- Always strain any paint!
- "Dot" your stencils with aerosol, it dries fast, doesn't puddle on the plastic
- Keep stencils off turf as much as possible
- Paint logos from the inside out

From Greg Narmour, World Class Paint



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British combat soccer compaction

The UK is the home of soccer, and for many years it was accepted that part of the game was skidding around in mud in the winter months and coping with erratic ball-bounce on uneven, compacted pitches in the summer.

Modern turf maintenance practices have improved British soccer fields beyond recognition. However, the increase in the number of games played, particularly the growth of international competitions, has led to significant changes in the construction of fields, and the grasses used.

The demand for more durable, resilient sports surfaces has led to a growth in the popularity of stabilized rootzone mixtures but, in use, they can become hard and compacted. A reduction in hardness can be a major factor in reducing impact-related injuries to players, as well as maintaining the original characteristics of the playing surface.

To address these problems, SISIS Equipment has developed the SISIS Aer-Aid system, a tractor-mounted aerator that injects air directly into the rootzone.

Hardness tests on three different fields at a British Premiership soccer club, on natural turf, natural turf grown on a fiber-reinforced rootzone, and turf reinforced with artificial grass fibers, showed significant improvements to all after treatment with this system.

In dry weather, the system creates thousands of fissures, maximizing water use by the root system, rather than just creating channels to the drainage layer.

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