

ATTENDANCE DOUBLES IN NEW BUFFALO STADIUM

The value of a "major league stadium" for minor league baseball is being proven in Buffalo, NY. The attendance so far this season at Buffalo Bison games has averaged two-and-one-half times more in the new Pilot Field than the previous year in War Memorial Stadium. At the current rate, the Pittsburgh Pirates Class AAA team will be only the second team in minor league history to top the one million attendance mark.

Pilot Field, built with \$30 million in state, local and private funds, opened at the beginning of the Bisons 1988 season. During the first 36 games, an average of 15,000 out of the 19,500 seats in the new stadium have been filled with fans. The average in War Memorial Stadium was about 6,000.

It is no secret that Buffalo Bison owner Robert Rich wants to build attendance to prove that the city will support a major league expansion franchise. Pilot Field was designed by HOK Sports Facilities Group in Kansas City, MO, to be expanded to 40,000 seats. Its appearance follows the tradition of Ebbets Field, Comiskey Park and Wrigley Stadium, explained project architect Ben Barnert. One big difference is those historic parks were constructed without 38 luxury suites and a 3,500-seat club level.

The field is 72,000 square feet of Kentucky bluegrass/perennial ryegrass sod

installed hurriedly last fall to give it time to knit before the first snow fell. The sod contains Victa, Bristol and Merit Kentucky bluegrasses and Pennfine perennial ryegrass. Star Landscaping of Buffalo installed the sod. John Danforth Company of Buffalo installed the Toro automatic irrigation system. Cowper Management, Inc., was the principal contractor for the stadium.

Roger Bossard, head groundskeeper for the Chicago White Sox, consulted with stadium officials to assure that the field met major league standards. More than 6,500 feet of drain pipe was installed in a vein-like pattern to remove excess water.

OREGON COLLEGE INSTALLS GRID IN BENCH AREA

Linfield College in McMinnville, OR, fields one of the best football teams in Division II of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). Coach Ad Rutschman has compiled a 150:34 won/loss record over 19 years, including three championships. The value of football to the college has been enormous. College administrators felt it was time to do more to make 60-year-old Maxwell Field a gridiron fit for champions.

The natural turf field at the stadium takes a beating during the rainy football season.

Regular reseeding with perennial ryegrass keeps it covered for the five or six regular season games and post-season play, but the small bench areas between the track and the field didn't hold up.

Several alumni are seed growers in the Willamette Valley so artificial turf was out. The coach and the alumni wanted grass in the bench areas, not carpet or covers. So when the field was renovated this spring, Coach Rutschman agreed to test a plastic interlocking grid system from Chempath. The grid was installed on both sides of the field, covered lightly with soil, seeded and topdressed. By June, the bench areas were indistinguishable from the rest of the field. The real test comes in September when the Wildcats open their season at Maxwell Field.

ROYALS ADD DORMITORY TO TRAINING SITE

The Kansas City Royals have begun construction of a dormitory at its spring training facility located on the grounds of Baseball and Boardwalk, a baseball theme park near Orlando, FL. The 37,000 square foot facility will house 200 players along with staff.

The Royals trained at the theme park for the first time this past spring. The center has six fields including a 6,500-seat stadium.

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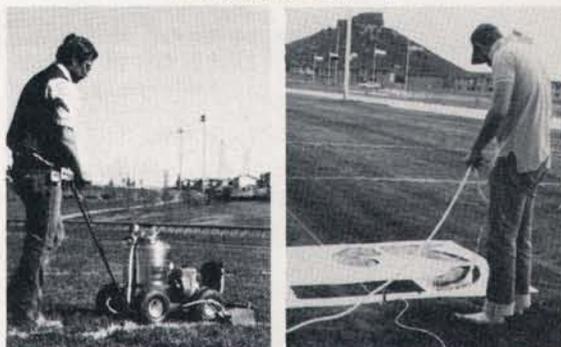
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