

PAT PARK SURVIVES FIRST FLOOD



The PAT team for Del Amo Park was (l. to r.) Don Morgan, Jim Eagle and Dr. Bill Daniel.

Just days after the Prescription Athletic Turf System (PAT) had been completed at Del Amo Park, Carson, CA, nature gave it a test. A downpour sent salt water pouring over the banks of a drainage canal adjacent to the four-acre park, flooding the fields below.

Within hours, the flood water had been pumped off the fields and much of the salt in the foot-deep, sand root zone had been flushed out with fresh water. By the second day, the fields were once again occupied with hundreds of soccer and baseball players.

Until this spring, flooding and salt-water intrusion made it impossible to maintain healthy turf in the busy city park a few miles from the Pacific Ocean. In 1983, Tuto Iglisous, park maintenance supervisor, contacted Dr. William Daniel, coinventor of the PAT System, to see if it could be practical for an entire park. Daniel's company, Turfgrass Services Inc., had never installed a PAT system of that size before, but Daniel and regional licensee Don Morgan put together a plan for the park. After four years of trying, Park Director Howard Holeman gained approval for the system and work got underway last fall.

The job was supervised by Texas licensee Jim Eagle and was completed in February. Del Amo Park was the first PAT system to use submersible pumps in a sealed concrete tank. The new suction system can remove 1,400 gallons of water from the sealed root zone each minute if necessary.

The park has both both subsurface and surface irrigation systems. Moisture sensors located in specific locations around the park automatically turn on or shut down both irrigation systems. The final touch was washed Santa Ana bermudagrass sod.

While the lined subgrade slopes toward the pump system, the fields are perfectly flat. Carson residents now boast of Del Amo Park instead of making excuses for the salt-stressed turf. Power, water, telephone and irrigation components in the soil will be spared the corrosive effects of salt.

Del Amo Park officials are pleased to know that a copy of their pump system is being installed at Soldiers Field in Chicago, IL. For once, a park is setting an example for a professional stadium, instead of the other way around.



Park roughly graded prior to installation of drainage, subirrigation and sand.

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