



“As much as it’s used, it’s just like any field in that it gets worn down,” said Consalo. “In previous years, we tried to install sod to build it up but we found we were doing that every year and were still having drainage issues.”

Turface® Helps Launch Future Football MVPs

Turface

Situation

When you’re preparing players for the “Super Bowl of High School Football,” your field’s performance and appearance is imperative. As the annual practice field for Ohio players training for the Big 33, Hershey High School in Hershey, Pennsylvania knows the importance of a quality field. The Big 33 brings together outstanding Pennsylvania and Ohio high school athletes every year and is considered the nation’s finest scholastic all-star football game. However, in recent years, the field’s native, hard soil and the area’s heavy rainfall made it difficult to keep the field dry. When Hershey High School’s groundskeepers decided to rebuild the football field in the spring of 2006, they used PROFILE Products LLC’s Turface®, giving players a forward pass onto greater heights.

Problem

Having its football field used by future NFL stars is but one aspect of Hershey High School’s strong football schedule, which includes numerous school-affiliated football programs. According to Ed Consalo, director of building and grounds for Hershey High School, the football field sees continuous use from March to November. Consalo added, with such use comes maintenance challenges.



Solution

In considering alternatives for his field maintenance, Consalo consulted with Davis Landscape LTD, a general contracting firm in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, for a redesign solution. Davis Landscape turned to Fred Mohr, turf seed business manager for Seedway LLC.

“The field consisted of heavy clay soils that had very little crown, resulting in poor drainage and heavy compaction,” said Mohr. “Because of these conditions, the sod they planted every year had difficulty establishing a good root system.”

Mohr was convinced that Hershey’s field was a prime candidate for an infusion of Turface. Standing up to intense athletic traffic, Turface is a granular soil amendment that can be mixed with topsoil to help provide solid, safe footing throughout the year by absorbing excess water. Turface’s particle size is ideal for native soil fields. It prevents muddy, torn-up turf, it conditions the soil to resist compaction and it adds permanent water and air-holding space to prevent turf damage and aid in turf recovery. Turface can also be used for topdressing as well as to dry up mud and standing water in problem areas of the field.

Mohr worked with Charlie Vestal and Dan Fick, Profile’s regional sales managers, to determine the appropriate amount of Turface needed for the football field rebuild.

“In looking at the needs for Hershey’s field, we knew they were dealing with less-than-ideal growing conditions combined with some major use,” said Fick. “Under these circumstances, we knew Turface would work great because it helps poor soil grow healthy vegetation and reduces soil compression on high traffic fields.”

Mohr was sold. Beginning in early April 2006, Mohr’s crew brought in new top soil and regraded the field with a 12-inch crown. Mohr then worked with Vestal and Fick to deliver two trailer loads of Profile’s Turface, which was incorporated into the top five inches of topsoil. After a new irrigation system was installed, the field was sodded during the last week of April to the first week of May.

Results

Consalo is pleased with how Turface has performed on the football field.

“Given the short amount of time that we’ve been able to use the field, it’s been working great,” said Consalo. “We’ve had some rainy days and the water hasn’t been staying on the field.”

“The players have also noticed a difference in the field when they play on it,” Consalo continued.

“They thought it was soft and that it felt great. They’ve been really happy with it.”

Mohr said that Hershey High School has been so pleased with the Turface that they’ve used it recently in constructing a new multi-purpose field. Tackling a general lawn area, crews upturned the grass and Seedway provided topsoil incorporated with two trailer loads of Turface. After installing an irrigation system, Seedway finished seeding the field in early October. Mohr said the school plans to rebuild one athletic field per year for the next three years—all of them incorporating Turface.

Mohr said working with Profile’s Fick and Vestal in helping Hershey High School solve its soil challenges has been extremely beneficial.

“Dan is a very dedicated sales representative and helps his distributors promote Turface products any way he can,” praised Mohr. “Charlie is one of the most knowledgeable sports field consultants I know. I have learned a lot about sports field construction and maintenance by working with him.”

By combining the latest in soil conditioning technology and years of field experience, Hershey High School and Profile have ensured that the next Joe Montana or Dan Marino won’t need to worry about field safety—just their future careers.

Key Product Properties

Turface®

Standing up to intense athletic traffic, Turface works great for topdressing and maintenance and as an amendment to poor soils during construction. Ideal for native soil fields, Turface provides numerous benefits:

- *By absorbing excess water, Turface prevents muddy, torn-up turf.*
- *Turface conditions the soil to resist compaction.*

Field & Fairway™ Emerald

Field & Fairway Emerald contains the same benefits as Turface but in a smaller-size, green-colored particle. Applied as a topdressing, this porous ceramic material prevents slippery, wet conditions and extensive wear and tear. Poured directly onto muddy, wet areas, it instantly absorbs excess water, making the surface dry, safe and playable. Its emerald color disguises worn areas until new turf grows back.



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