



Athletic Field Design

Yes, There was a World Series

By Mike Hebrard, Athletic Field Design

Since most of the country was not able to get in the flow of playoffs and World Series, the Portland area fans were given quite a treat. Alpenrose Stadium at Alpenrose Dairy in southwest Portland was chosen last winter to be the World Series site of Girls Major (11 - 12 years old) Softball to be held in mid-August. Teams from the Philippines, Czechoslovakia, Canada, and four regional teams from the United States were present. The West was represented by a local favorite, Centennial, from southeast Portland.

Since the facilities at Alpenrose include one major lighted and two non-lighted fields, there are many games played at Alpenrose throughout the year--rain or shine. Since the World Series was a major event for the people of Portland, Mike Hebrard of Athletic Field Design was called in to spruce up the playing fields. Hebrard originally renovated the major Alpenrose field in 1989 and prepared it for the Girls Western Regionals in



1992. Constant use and play have left the field in poor playing condition.

Hebrard began in late June by aerating the entire outfield and infield using a Ryan LA 28 aerator. Once the aeration plugs had dried, Hebrard used a Ryan Mataway Slice Overseeder and incorporated a quality blend of International Seed Perennial Ryegrass called "PHD" at 10 lb/1,000 sq ft. to increase turf density. Because the irrigation is of a quick connector style, the germination percentage was poor and the aeration seeding procedure was repeated 5 weeks before the commencement of the first tournament game to ensure maximum turf color and density--all the while, league, district and state playoff games continued during the renovation process. Even some sod cutting and turf repair was completed moments before the games began. Scotts Hi Maintenance Fertilizer 31-3-10 was applied ten days before the World Series was to begin to give the players and fans the best color and quality in turf. A Jacobsen Tri-King reel mower was used to mow the outfield daily during the tournament and a National 25" walk-behind reel mower was used to mow the infield daily.

The front of the dugouts were severely compacted and worn. One-half inch Atlas Tract rubber mats were installed in front of the dugout entrances and the remainder of the bare spots were sodded with similar varieties of PHD supplied by Willamette Turf Farms. A simple turf repair tool that cuts 4" x 4" x 4" cubes of sod was used to repair thin and bare spots in the infield area. Plugs were removed from near the outfield fence and placed in worn areas. Soil was used to fill in plugged areas and reseeded. Simple nail drags were made to break up compaction and refloat skin areas to give a uniform and smooth playing surface.

A Smithco "Allstar" was used after each game to regrade and pack the skin areas. The Allstar is a three wheel hydraulic operated vehicle that has mid-mount down pressure with a flat blade or spikes and a flag drag on the rear to cut high spots and fill in low areas and pack. At the completion of the 3rd inning of play, Hebrard and his crew of Wilson High Baseball players, Jeff Kromer, and Matt Phillips, would hand drag the infield while the players moved on to the grass during the pitching warm up.

World Series logos as well as the Alpenrose rose were painted on the field to add the big league atmosphere. Hebrard also used paint supplied by J.S. Sports Turf Products to paint the foul lines in the dirt. During tournament play, excessive chalk builds up in the base lines and, after time, leaves an unsightly white residue. The 2' x 2' nail drag was used to maintain the base lines.

The tournament was almost a standing room only affair for every game with the finale placing the local favorite Centennial in a must win situation with two time World Series defending champion Waco, Texas. Centennial had a dramatic come from behind win to force the "if" game. But Waco's experience prevailed and won their third straight World Series.

Alpenrose will play host to the Girls Major Softball World Series next year and probably for years to come, with hope of attracting the Girls Senior (13-14 years old) Division in the near future. With the ongoing major league baseball strike, media coverage and attendance was at a premium as Hebrard's goal was to make the field look and play the best on the final day of the tournament. With the final game over, Hebrard said all it took was time and money. Most of the special tasks can be achieved at low cost and minimal time involved if the proper equipment is used and time used wisely.