Success Story:

PROBLEM:
Coaches, athletic directors and turf manufacturers require a high-quality shock pad for use under synthetic turf on field hockey pitches.

SOLUTION:
ArmaSport turf underlayment shock pad provides a smooth, consistent surface that coaches like for its safety and longevity benefits.

ArmaSport® and AstroTurf: A Winning Combination in Collegiate Field Hockey

Something is underfoot with collegiate field hockey

Increased interest in field hockey has given way to a lot of conversation about what is the best playing surface for the game. AstroTurf System 90, which includes a 3/8 inch ArmaSport® shock pad made by Armacell, continues to set the standard.

Since 1976 when the International Hockey Federation (FIH) made it mandatory that all major competitions be played on artificial pitches, colleges have followed suit, making artificial pitches the norm on collegiate fields all over the country.

While there are many artificial surfaces to choose from, the choice typically involves the same criteria:

- Consistency. Coaches and players want a surface that offers the truest ball roll and minimizes ball bounce. This allows players to predict what the ball is going to do, thus maximizing their own skills. Consistency also enhances the speed of play, now a much coveted aspect of the game.
- Safety. The system should include a shock absorption pad to minimize the physical impact on players.
- Longevity. Field hockey pitches are an investment, one that is increasingly important to schools as the game becomes more and more popular.

armacell®

Engineered For Success.

Stanford University installation in progress

These are the criteria that have made System 90 the most recognized system for high-level field hockey in the United States.

Top Choice Among Division I Schools

"System 90 is the surface chosen most often for the Division I, Ivy League, and Olympic playing fields we install," said Andy Belles, International Business Manager & Field Hockey Director for AstroTurf. "It's what the Maryland Terrapins, one of the most successful teams in the NCAA and ACC, have played on for two decades," said Belles.

In addition to being the field of choice among many top collegiate teams, including Penn State, Stanford, and UC Berkeley just to name a few, System 90 is also certified by the FIH as a global category pitch. It is widely recognized for its durability, a function of both the turf fibers with knitted backing and the ArmaSport closed-cell elastomeric pad. System 90 turf fields are warranted for eight years but are known to last as long as twelve or even fifteen years.

Even the American Sports Builders Association (ASBA) has recognized the merits of the System 90 solution. System 90 and ArmaSport were used in the construction of the new Dr. Christine H.B. Grant Hockey Field, in Iowa City, IA, which was recently recognized with a Distinguished Sports Field Facility by the ASBA. Among other aspects, fields are judged for this award based on drainage, base construction, and surface.

Facilities with AstroTurf System 90 and ArmaSport

Duke University

Stanford University

University of Iowa

University of Louisville

University of Maryland

University of Richmond

University of Virginia

Brown University

College of William and Mary

Columbia University

Ohio State University

USA Field Hockey National Training Center 2013 – Virginia Beach

Field Science

While some sports utilize a higher pile turf with rubber infill pellets for shock absorption, turf fields that are exclusively for field hockey typically utilize a lower pile height. A shorter pile is preferred in order to achieve a smooth ball roll (one that mimics a hockey puck on ice). Lower pile turfs do not have enough height to accommodate infill and therefore must be glued to

ArmaSport installation on the University of Iowa Hockey Field

Unrolling ArmaSport at the University of Iowa Hockey Field

a foam pad for shock absorption and then applied to the field surface. Without this pad, hockey fields with low pile artificial turf would not meet FIH standards.

"The Armacell pad is very good in terms of consistency," said Belles, explaining that the ball can behave quite differently depending on the type of pad chosen.

For field hockey, it's important that the pad be consistent in thickness, density, and smoothness.

ArmaSport is composed of nitrile rubber (NBR) / Polyvinyl chloride (PVC), which gives the material just the right amount of compressibility to enhance game play. The thickness is consistent throughout each piece, so that seams are virtually imperceptible by sight and by feel. It also meets ASTM F355-01 for Shock-Absorbing Properties of Playing Surface Systems and Materials.

Artificial field hockey surfaces must be watered before and during halftime of the game. The wetted surface helps make the ball cling to the surface for more controlled play. Like all pads used for high-level field hockey play, ArmaSport can be perforated with holes so the excess water can drain through the surface. Even that is a science.

"With System 90 we've learned the best hole pattern, configuration and diameter to facilitate drainage," said Belles.

What Top College Coaches Are Saying

Of course, when it comes to sports, it's what the players and the coaches have to say that matters most. The System 90 fields at Brown University and the University of Virginia continue to earn praise from players, coaches, and visiting teams.

"It's really making a huge mark for Brown sports in general. The AstroTurf surface is so fast. Kids come here and it's amazing – there's nothing to compare it to," said Shannon McSweeny, a Class of 2015 field hockey co-captain and goalie at Brown.[1]

Michele Madison, head coach for the UVA Cavaliers and inductee into the National Field Hockey Coaches Association Hall of Fame, says there's a reason why UVA chose the AstroTurf system not once but twice.

"Virginia is committed to have the best facility, so that's why we have it," said Madison.

If anyone knows her way around a hockey field, it's Madison. During her 10+ years as head coach at UVA, she has led the Cavaliers to seven NCAA Tournament berths, including national semifinals appearances in 2009 and 2010. Prior to her career as head coach at UVA, which began in 2006, Madison coached field hockey at Temple University. She has also served as assistant coach for the US National and Olympic teams. She's seen it all, and knows how drastically fields can vary.

"Some are hard, some are bouncy, some are slippery," said Madison, who credits the smooth, consistent surface of System 90 for helping her players enhance their skills. She has also observed that the players get much less fatigued playing and practicing on the UVA surface than they do other fields that don't have the same shock absorption pad.

Ultimately, it's the quality of play that makes Madison a fan of the System 90 surface.

"It's very fast and very flat and that's why I like it. We love our field."

1. http://giving.brown.edu/stories/new-energy-browns-sports-complex

ARMACELL LLC

TEL: 1 800 866-5638
FAX: 919 304-3847
E-MAIL: info.us@armacell.com
INTERNET: www.armacell.us

Installation options on stone, asphalt or concrete

armacell®

Engineered For Success.

| Turf | 5377 | Success Story | 5/2015 |

Printed in United States of America