

Turf Report

Home Depot Center Carson, CA



**Turf and Grounds
Superintendent**
Kyle Waters
Home Depot Center
Carson, California

Operator and Developer
AEG
Los Angeles, California

Turf Supplier and Installation Contractor
West Coast Turf
Palm Desert, California



Extreme Installation

A typical sod installation usually consists of a few pallets of turf and a couple workers easily laying small rolls by hand in a homeowner's yard in an hour or two. However, sod installation at the Home Depot Center has proven to be anything but typical.

Developed on a 125-acre site in Carson, California, the Home Depot Center is a premier athletic training and competition venue that contains state-of-the-art sport facilities and field stadiums, which are covered with 25 acres of turfgrass. With a year-round, jam-packed schedule, sod needs to be quickly interchanged on the fields to accommodate the various events and to provide optimum playing surfaces.

Coordinating the interchange while ensuring the turf is always in top condition requires careful management and planning from experienced professionals. The Home Depot Center found that individual with Kyle Waters, turf and grounds superintendent for the facility. And Waters has the perfect partner with West Coast Turf.

Opened in June 2003, the Home Depot Center has a 27,000-seat soccer stadium, an 8,000-seat tennis stadium, a 20,000-seat track and field stadium, 30 tennis courts, nine soccer training fields and a bevy of baseball, volleyball and other sports facilities. Although it was designed as an official U.S. Olympic Training Site, its versatility has also won bids to host numerous national and international sports competitions. The X-Games (a multi-sport event focusing on extreme sports) are held at the center each year and it is home to the Los Angeles Galaxy, Los Angeles' Major League Soccer team. In addition, the Home Depot Center is the practice facility for the San Diego Chargers and Rose Bowl teams. It also hosts several concerts every year.

"Because of the extreme use we've got here, it's inevitable that we need to replace some of the grassed areas from time to time to keep it in the shape I want it to be," said Waters.



Motorcross races were held in the stadium five days before a Los Angeles Galaxy soccer game.

Bull's-Eye Bermuda at a Glance

Uses

Almost anywhere: Sports fields, golf fairways and roughs, home lawns, schools, parks and housing developments

Color

Blue-Green

Texture

Coarser than Tifway; finer than common bermuda

Performance

Improves footing; compact growth creates great ball lie

Disease Resistance

Excellent

Mowing Height

½" to 2"

Cold Tolerance

Moderate

Heat Tolerance

Excellent

Drought Tolerance

Excellent

Shade Tolerance

Moderate

USDA Zones

7 through 11



Waters grasses 10 of the venue's surfaces with West Coast Turf's Bull's-Eye Bermuda sod.

"The Bull's-Eye holds up great," he said. "We did a lot of research before deciding on the variety and we've been very happy with it."

"My turfgrass needs here are unique," Waters continued. "It is important that I have a relationship with a sod company that understands that—West Coast Turf does. I need good sod. I need a lot of sod. And I need it delivered and installed in tight timeframes."

Waters cited a project in 2005 as a good example of West Coast Turf's ability to accommodate his scheduling needs. After the X-Games were over, the main soccer field where the motorcross races were held had to be turned around for an L.A. Galaxy game in five days. Beginning on Sunday right after the X-Games, crews worked through Monday evening hauling out 8,000 cubic yards of dirt that filled 625 semi-truck loads. Waters and his staff worked through Tuesday night to strip the field, till it and reinstall approximately 75 irrigation heads. A laser-leveling contractor came behind Waters' staff to level the field.

Early Wednesday morning, West Coast Turf arrived with 25 trucks containing 575 rolls of Bull's-Eye Bermuda. This big roll, thick cut sod is 42 inches wide and 1-inch thick. Using West Coast Turf's state-of-the-art installation equipment, the crew installed half of the sod on Wednesday—working till midnight—and finished laying the remaining sod on Thursday. By Saturday, the L.A. Galaxy had a major-league-worthy field for their soccer match.

"We've got so much going on here that we don't have time to shut down a field for four to six weeks to

install standard-cut sod," Waters said. "I need to get the field in fast—even if it means laying sod under the lights at midnight, which we do. West Coast Turf will custom-harvest the thick-cut sod for me. Without the thick-cut sod, we'd have to build another five or six fields to fulfill our play schedule."

Tom Stafford, West Coast Turf sales representative, said accommodating Waters' schedule is only part of the challenge in providing him timely, custom turf.

"The Home Depot Center puts us to the test every year," said Stafford. "We need to ensure healthy and mature sod with a good root structure and uniform

harvesting of the product so we know it will grow-in quickly and easily. After that, you've got to have an efficient installation crew. Our guys are experts at this. They've installed sports fields for us all the way from Los Angeles to Miami. They've done everything from Super Bowls

to high school fields and they know how to get it done."

Stafford said the Home Depot Center's demanding, atypical sod installation schedule is "proving ground" for what is possible in the sod industry.

"A lot of people in the industry do not realize that you can lay sod and play on it in a day or two," said Stafford. "It's not the norm but we can do it with the right planning and product. The Home Depot Center is a perfect example of that as it's in constant use."

Stafford continued, "With careful management and willing partners, there is nothing to prevent field installations—no matter how unusual the circumstances—from being the best fields possible."

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Kyle Waters, Turf and Grounds Superintendent, Home Depot