

Scotts® helps QSAC earn its stripes

QSAC, Brisbane QLD

With 30 hectares of world class sporting facilities, the Queensland Sports and Athletic Centre (QSAC) is one of Australia's busiest sports facilities.

When the 1982 Commonwealth Games came to Brisbane the city marked the event by building a new multipurpose stadium. After the games the stadium was home to the Brisbane Broncos and more recently became the Queensland Sports and Athletic Centre (QSAC). It now hosts the Telstra A Series athletics, Queensland State Athletic Titles, the Australian all-schools Athletics, and is used as the junior pre-departure training location for the Olympics. It has even hosted Davis Cup ties between Australia, Brazil and Russia.

The Queensland Academy of Sport Women's Soccer team trains in the main stadium, and in 2004 it hosted an international soccer tournament between New Zealand, Australia, China and Korea.

Like putting on a winter jumper

Phil Burke is the Head Groundsman at QSAC, and leads a team of five maintenance staff. Maintaining the turf in the stadium and surrounding areas is a year-round challenge which requires the support of leading turf treatments. But it's a challenge they meet with startling success, as anyone who has played in the main stadium or even just seen the quality of the turf will tell you.

The parent grass used in the main stadium is a Legend couch – a warm season grass that gives a rich green colour throughout summer. At the end of April Phil Burke then oversows the Legend couch with a classic cool season Rye Grass blend, made up of Catalina, Quickstart and Scotts Divine.

Phil explained the choice of grass when we recently caught up with him at QSAC. "In winter the ground is used mainly by the Queensland Academy of Sport, so there's a lot of soccer being played – there are 388 training sessions per year.

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"The turf needs to maintain an international standard all year round so we oversow with 6kg of Rye Grass per 100m² and we sow an extra 1kg per 100m² in the areas that experience more stress. In the case of soccer this is in the goal mouth and through the centre of the field."

"Oversowing gives the turf more resistance to wear and tear throughout the winter and helps to keep a rich texture and appearance – a bit like putting on a winter jumper. In springtime we then transition out the Rye grass blend to leave the pure Legend again for the summer."

Keeping up appearances

Regular soil tests keep Phil Burke informed of the general health of the grass and the calcium levels. He can then apply the right products as the turf requires them. He uses Scotts granular fertilisers, Scotts Step High Magnesium and Sierrablen 25-1-8 plus iron, for the general maintenance of the grass.

When you visit the main stadium you cant help be impressed with the stunning appearance of the turf.

After intensive periods of activity, such as the winter soccer season, Phil Burke uses Scotts High Maintenance 31-1-8 plus trace elements to renovate the turf. This has a high nitrogen percentage so it provides optimum growth and helps maintain the rich green colour. He usually requires two renovation applications per year, otherwise he simply boosts the turf with growth hormones and liquid fertilisers as required.

Including the actual stadium turf, Phil's team has a further 30 hectares to maintain. MaxGuard 2G is applied throughout the peripheral greens and public spaces for general pest control. "We find that we can reach all the difficult areas using either a tow behind spreader or Scotts walk behind spreader called the AccuPro 2000. This is pretty handy for the hilly areas and tight spaces."

It's a professional's touch

When you visit the main stadium you can't help be impressed with the stunning appearance of the turf. Even with the day to day and season through season demands of the job, Phil's team still finds the time to present the turf in new and fun ways. One technique picked up from the European soccer fields and US baseball stadiums is 'leafing up' or 'striping up'.

This technique allows Phil's team to create stripes and other fancy patterns on the turf. They change the patterns whenever inspiration takes them, or whenever there's an important sports event.

Phil Burke brings a passion to the job which creates great results – he has an experienced and dedicated team working with him, and as an ex-athlete himself he appreciates a quality finish more than most. But what we realised at QSAC more than anything else is that with the right products and an innovative approach, Brisbane has a multi-purpose sporting centre that sets the standards for others to meet.



AccuPro Rotary Spreader

Scotts unique, state-of-the-art Helical Cone™ guarantees uniform product delivery onto the impeller for a consistent spread pattern over a wide variety of products, no matter what the particle density.



Deflector kit option makes application even more flexible

With the advent of combination fertilisers and herbicides the need for better application control is paramount. Scotts have developed a spring loaded side deflector shield, that when fitted in conjunction with a port shut-off control, enables spreading of product along garden beds and paths without unnecessary overlap.

Available as an easy to mount retrofit to the Scotts AccuPro 2000.



Growing success