

ROYAL MARINES CONDOR

ARTIFICIAL SPORTS PITCH

With the successful venture into sports pitch construction at Penicuik still fresh in our memories, Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) through their main contractor Turner Estate Solutions Ltd (TES), placed an order for the upgrade of an existing artificial sports pitch at Royal Marines Condor, Arbroath.

The existing pitch, for football and hockey, had been in use for 15 years and had reached the end of its useful life, and the Marines had requested that, if possible, could the new surface be used for both football and rugby. After consultation with the pitch manufacturer a suitable surface, meeting both FIFA and IRB standards was agreed.

To facilitate the rugby pitch, the existing enclosed area would need to be increased by 15m from 105m to 120m long. Trees and existing fencing were removed, as was the existing pitch and shock pad which both went to recycling, and construction commenced in late November 2013. Initial works progressed well, but the discovery of several unknown underground services and the wettest winter for several years it slowed to a halt. The ground was saturated and only the introduction of additional site drains allowed works to move forward.

The services were ducted, the site drains connected to the main drain and kerbs laid around the outer edge of the pitch. The pavement was constructed and finished with porous asphalt to match the existing surface and the fencing post concreted into place. With the surface checked for level, the shockpad, a 25mm deep rubber layer, was laid across the whole surface by internationally experienced specialists. This was then checked for level by an independent testing authority, on behalf of FIFA and the IRB.

With the tests passed, the laying of the 3G carpet commenced. The next two weeks saw a flurry of activity as the carpet was cut to size and glued together. The rugby and football pitch lines were marked, cut and glued into position, and the remaining fencing was completed.

Kiln dried sand and rubber infill were spread evenly across the surface and then brushed. The rugby posts were placed and levelled and the mobile football goals wheeled into position. All that remained was for the coring of the flags at the required positions for the both rugby and football and the pitch was completed. Final FIFA and IRB accreditation will be completed once the pitch has been in use for 6 to 8 weeks.

With the landscaping and seeding of the surrounding area and a final clean up of the adjacent car park, the site was handed over to the Royal Marines at an opening ceremony attended by both Arbroath Rugby Club and Arbroath Football Club.



Removal of the old pitch and shockpad
exposing the porous asphalt beneath



Waterlogged extension to the pitch area



Pitch extension, kerbed and in the process of having the porous surface course laid



First roll of carpet being cut prior to being glued to the adjacent rolls



Marking the pitch prior to cutting and gluing the lines



The finished Pitch

‘The Courier’

‘Wonderful’ new 3G pitch will help RM Condor team up with community groups



A new sports pitch has opened at RM Condor near Arbroath which will further strengthen its ties with the community.

The 3G astroturf pitch will be used by both the Royal Marines at Condor and sports teams including Arbroath Football Club and Arbroath Rugby Club.

The commanding officer of 45 Commando, Lieutenant Colonel Dan Cheesman, opened the venue, which was attended by the football and rugby teams as well as members of 45's own rugby and football sides.

Lt Col Cheesman said: “This week we marked the official opening of a new 3G astroturf pitch at RM Condor with the contractors, unit football and rugby teams and representatives from Arbroath football and rugby clubs.

“This wonderful new facility enables competitive team sports to be played up to and including full contact rugby in all weathers and at all times of the day under floodlights.

“As always, I am keen to welcome the local community on to Condor as much as possible and this fully synthetic playing surface that looks and feels like grass is another fantastic opportunity to strengthen ties between ourselves and eastern Scotland.

“The 45 Commando Group have just began the Force Generation training process so that we can assume the role of lead commando in May 2015 and be ready at a moment's notice should we be required around the world.

“As a result, our training year will be very busy and this astroturf will help maximise the huge physical and moral benefits of competitive team sports in the limited time available.”