

## **Poured In Place: Not Just for Playgrounds Anymore**

**By Brian Connolly**

Poured in place unitary seamless safety surfacing continues to be an ideal application to provide cushion protection for critical fall height requirements. It is an option playground designers often turn to since it provides a unique appearance while accommodating the fall protection needed and mandated.

There are, though, limitless applications for this product far beyond standard playground protection. Functionally and aesthetically, there are countless utilizations. For example, there have been many walking path installations of this product to provide additional soft protection for the body's joints.

There is another burgeoning application of poured in place that serves as an ideal solution to school sports surface needs, while providing safety, a clean look, and easy maintenance.

A recent installation of poured in place sport/safety surface was conducted at Louisiana State University's New Alex Box Stadium. LSU spent almost \$40 million to provide what they describe and many others believe is the best facility in the country. In fact, its design is award-winning, as the architecture firm was bestowed the prestigious honor of the Award of Recognition for Hospitality and Design in the Delta Regional Chapter by the International Interior Design Association.

By specifying poured in place as an application with this facility, it accommodated what the coaches and players were hoping would fulfill everything they wanted and needed. The poured in place sport/safety surface was applied in front of the dugouts along what is referred to as the inner warning track.

Interestingly, feedback on listing the reasons for installing poured in place from one of the Baseball Coaching Staff was the application was, "First of all, it's a maintenance-free surface. At most, you might sweep it occasionally. It does not require any dragging or constant edging."

He mentioned, "Also, it does not get dusty like most warning track material. Additionally, it's safe for the players to run on in foul territory. Finally, it's aesthetically pleasing because it gives the ballpark a nice, clean, symmetrical appearance, which is good for everybody, players and fans alike.

The durability of that product application is appealing, too, for baseball coaches and facilities managers. The LSU Coach went on to state, "We are all very pleased with the product, especially with how well it's holding up."

In this difficult economic climate, as budgets get slashed and tough decisions are being made on where to spend, poured in place has arisen as a viable option to resolve so many

issues—particularly safety, appearance, and maintenance—facing athletics departments and their facilities.

The LSU Baseball Coaching Staff member drove this point home by saying, “It (poured in place) is a top-notch product that belongs on a baseball field because it is the perfect balance between the natural grass to the warning track areas near the dugouts, bullpens, and walls. There is no question that I would recommend this application to anybody even considering building or renovating their current facility.”

Ultimately, then, it is not difficult to see how poured in place is an option for surface applications that can surpass some conventional uses we have all come to know.

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