

John Deere Sports Turf Solutions



1 Tornado.



6 inches of standing water.



1 team against the clock.



Twister

CARY, NC | WakeMed Soccer Park

WakeMed Soccer Park Has A Story.

1 Tornado.

It started as an ordinary spring day: Busy. "Maintenance is a year-round operation," says Jimmy Simpson, Facility Works Expediter. "Landscaping, athletic surfaces and all included. Our grass is currently cut at 5/8 of an inch, and we have groomers on our fairway units that we run everyday."

Keith Jenkins, the Athletic Facility Supervisor, remembers, "we had a professional game at the stadium that evening, which normally would kick off at seven o'clock." But at about 2:30, normal went right out the window.

6 inches of standing water.

"We're sitting there and it starts hailing," says Simpson. "You see water splashing and all of a sudden the whole window just went white. We all stepped in the concrete room and we closed the door."

And when it was safe to come out? "The field was completely under water. We have a flat surface here, so it requires completely internal drainage." Jenkins assumed "we were looking at some type of delay with our game that night."

1 team against the clock.

Everyone pulled together to deal with the emergency. Simpson and his crew "walked the entire park. We had a few of trees down, and took care of those." Karl Lewis from Revels Turf and Tractor, the local John Deere dealer, checked in – "to make sure everything was okay, and offer immediate assistance."

Jenkins says the fields took pretty good care of themselves. "By 5 or 5:30 the field was completely drained" – and it was a normal day again. "We warmed up at six," says Simpson. "And played the game at seven like nothing had happened."

As Jenkins sees it, "It's a testament to the way the facility is maintained year round. Our facility crew takes great pride in what they do. The last thing they want is to have a game or match canceled because a field is not playable."

Simpson is quick to share the credit as well. "We were able to respond to trees down, because our equipment was maintained and ready. We were able to take care of wash outs because our equipment was ready and our team was ready. And the constant maintenance they put into the surface really helped increase that drainage and keep the airflow there so that six inches of water could drain away in under two hours."



The Challenge

"If these fields could talk, they would all say, 'ouch,' because of the wear and tear they receive on a daily basis. We can have upwards of 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 user groups a day on a certain surface and we want to provide a safe athletic surface for our user groups and citizens at all times."

Jimmy Simpson

Facility Works Expediter
WakeMed Soccer Park

The Response

"This facility has about 30 or 35 pieces of John Deere equipment. The most critical piece they use here are the reel mowers. If they're not running, especially in the heat of July and August, the grounds won't look as good as they need to in the fall. It's been awesome, where I've been able to help them with the equipment they need. Part of it is that the durability of the John Deere equipment is second to none."

Karl Lewis

Local John Deere Dealer
Revels Turf and Tractor

John Deere Sports Turf Solutions

Every field has a story. Transform yours.

JohnDeere.com/SportsTurf



JOHN DEERE