



Building a Field for Champions

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For over 20 years, Howard High School of Technology (HHST) had been using an old stretch of field at Kirkwood Park, owned by the City of Wilmington, for football practice. In the winter, the ground was hard as rock. In the summer, rain would create muddy conditions, adding danger to the already unmarked field. As a result, the New Castle County Vocational Technical School District (NCCVT) sought permission from the City of Wilmington to improve the field by installing a partial artificial turf practice field.



EDiS Company took on the task of constructing the field for Howard High School, the only public high school in Delaware at the time without a practice field. The 50-yard (half size) field was placed in a dedicated portion of the park that allowed the best access, angle, and preservation of other existing playground amenities. The field required a unique design as the park didn't have enough space to accommodate a full-sized field. The result? The only 50-yard artificial turf field marked for football in Delaware.

The weather was excellent during the summer and therefore conducive to the construction process, especially considering the request for a contained stormwater collection and drainage stone base system underneath the field. The civil engineering design by **VanDemark & Lynch, Duffield Associates**, and **Geo-Technology Associates** combined different methods to stabilize the existing wet and uneven soil under the surface of the new turf field. The design required careful consideration of the site's environmental conditions and surroundings. By performing soil testing prior to bidding, EDiS Company was able to eliminate the guesswork from soil management, disposal, stormwater, and erosion control methods. Through this pre-construction exercise, the client saved time and money during the construction phase.



The new facilities included the 50-yard artificial turf field to be marked for not just high school football practice, but also soccer. The field was completed on time in late September 2019, paving the way for Howard's 2020 football season. In fact, they went on to win the Division II State Football Championship! The dedication of the field on October 17 brought members of the community and the city together to celebrate this enhancement to both Kirkwood Park and Howard High School.

