Oldest college track to be renovated

Historic Edwards Stadium at the University of California—the country’s oldest pure collegiate track facility—will be renovated soon as part of a $3 million project.

The stadium’s existing track and infield areas will be reshaped and resurfaced to accommodate both track and soccer competition. U.Cal officials feel the upgrade will make Edwards an attractive site for future NCAA and international track and soccer events.

CMX Group, Inc., of Phoenix, Ariz., is handling the project with the Cal Athletic Department as primary consultant and engineer. CMX recently handled the conversion of UCal’s Memorial Stadium from artificial turf to natural grass.

For the Memorial Stadium project, CMX removed the field’s 2-1/2-foot crown; installed Kentucky Bluegrass sod atop a specially-designed, sand-based, gravity-flow drainage system with fully-automated field irrigation technology.

“We had some interesting sub-surface issues,” says CMX President Mike Lloyd. “We had to avoid Strawberry Creek, which flows directly under the stadium. During construction, we also encountered natural underground springs, which had to be intercepted, and some unstable soil which had to be treated.”

The field at Edwards Stadium will feature a natural grass field system similar to that at Memorial.

Penn turf flies high

Three ounces of turfseed is going with Dr. James Pawelczyk when he blasts off in the Space Shuttle Columbia on April 2. Pawelczyk, is an assistant professor of physiology and kinesiology at Penn State University. The grass seed is from experimental lines of Kentucky bluegrass and perennial ryegrass developed at the university.

Dr. David R. Huff, assistant professor of turfgrass and genetics at Penn State, selected the seed types. He said genetically identical seeds will be kept on Earth to compare with the shuttle seeds. Huff says this is the first time turfseed has flown in space.

At the completion of the 16-day shuttle mission the seed will be planted, and one square foot of the resultant “space turf” will be installed at each of the 24 campuses in the Penn State system.

Students Charles C. Eagle, Michael S. Bell, Margaret M. Bloch and Michael A. Roofner suggested the turfseed which won over other suggestions such as taking along a cardboard Joe Paterno and a football.