

LINE MARKING AT NORTH YORK'S ESTHER SHINER STADIUM

D.C. Hanson

City of North York Parks and Recreation Department

Amateur and professional sports groups that play at Esther Shiner Stadium increasingly demand, along with a high quality playing surface, quality line marking comparable to that provided for professional sports organizations elsewhere. Shiner Stadium (formerly named North York Civic Stadium) has kept abreast of this demand through the purchase and use of "state-of-the-art" line marking equipment.

Wet Line Marking that utilizes pigment from white field marking paint and powered equipment for application is the costliest method of line marking in our operation. However, it yields the most accurate and aesthetically pleasing field layout. Dry line marking, while economical, is less permanent and more difficult to apply accurately due to the nature of the product and equipment. But in a period of shrinking budgets it has its place at Esther Shiner Stadium on outside fields that are used infrequently.

The equipment used to apply the field marking paint consists of two "Smithco Easy Liners" and one "Smithco Easy Rider" which have been adapted by the factory to apply paint. The "Easy Liners" are clutch driven walk behind units with a 10 gallon carrying capacity. A small compressor which operates between 40 and 50 P.S.I. provides a uniform flow of paint to the surface. The easy rider has twin 5 gallon tanks and is equipped with an air pump. The tanks and pump can be removed easily and field grading attachments can be adapted quickly for surface maintenance. A spray gun, complete with fifteen feet of hose can be adapted readily to the "Easy Liner" for use when laying down team logos, numbers and/or hash marks. It is not uncommon for stadium staff to utilize three line markers simultaneously when lay-

ing out the stadium field for football. The constraints that result from tight scheduling and inclement fall weather often leave too little time in which to complete the lining function with one liner only. Thus the need for additional liners to supplement the operation and provide back-up in case of an untimely mechanical breakdown.

The choice of field marking paint is crucial to the quality of line and subsequent turf damage that may result from overuse of the wrong paint. The paint should be water soluble and free of chemical pigments. But it should be well mixed by the manufacturer so as to reduce the amount of on-site mixing and enhance the flow characteristics of the paint. If your supplier offers quantity discounts it is advantageous to purchase 20-litre pails of paint. They stack easily for long-term storage and can be used to mix paint with water to obtain the optimum spray mixture for your operation.

The ideal spray mixture is one that is affordable for your use and yields the highest quality of line. Other considerations one would take into account would be:

1. The length of time between subsequent applications.
2. Time available to complete the line operation.
3. Will the event be televised?
4. Is the event high-profile?

Shiner Stadium staff use a mixture of one part paint to one part water which is mixed in a separate container. The mixture is added to the tanks through a wire mesh screen to filter out lumps and impurities that may clog spray nozzles.

Wet line marking should only be attempted when you are assured of at least 2 hours of dry weather. This period will be longer in times of high humidity and prolonged dampness.