



## Erie Vets Stadium turns colorful as project nears end

By Ed Palattella

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Logos installed on field, whose completion has been delayed due to late arrival of materials.

The installation of the artificial turf at Erie Veterans Memorial Stadium is still behind schedule, but the finish — whenever it occurs — will be bright.

The green turf exploded with brilliant shades of purple and yellow and red white and blue as contractors this week sewed letters and logos into the field, signaling the final stage of the project is finally near.

“Erie” and “Royals,” for the Erie High Royals, appeared, in yellow letters, in the north and south end zones, respectively. Both end zones are purple, matching the Royals’ colors of purple and gold.

At the center of the field, the crews installed the red-white-and-blue veterans-related logo, which is identical to the logo that was at the center of the 12-year-old turf that the new surface is replacing. And just south of the south end zone, in an area known as the horseshoe, the contractors started to install the Royals logo, including a crown.

The materials for the logos as well as the yardage numbers arrived over the weekend, after the Maine-based maker of the turf missed Friday’s deadline to have all the components delivered and installed.

The new completion date is Sept. 27, though the Erie School District’s executive director of operations, Neal Brokman, said a completion date of Tuesday remains possible, based on the pace of the installation crew.

The district had planned for the turf to be done this past Friday so that soccer teams and junior varsity football teams could start playing there on Monday. The delay in the delivery of the final materials forced the district to reschedule as many as 17 sporting events that had been set to occur at the stadium starting on Monday. The district will have to reschedule fewer events if the project is done by Tuesday rather than Sept. 27, Brokman said.

He praised the installers, who he said have been working around the clock once the materials arrived. Due to the delay in the delivery of the materials, the district has assessed damages of \$500 a day, since the missed deadline, against the manufacturer, NET Sports Group, of Saco, Maine. As of Wednesday, the damages amounted to \$2,500.

The contractual start date for the turf work was July 13. The turf was to be delivered on Aug. 15, but delays in manufacturing the playing surface led to arrival on Aug. 30, Brokman said.

The stadium is still scheduled to be finished by Oct. 12, when the Erie Royals football team will play its only regular-season game on the field. Erie High at the game will celebrate senior night and homecoming, and the Erie School District will rededicate the 10,000-seat Veterans Memorial Stadium, which opened in 1924 at 26th and State streets as a memorial to soldiers and sailors who fought in World War I.

The new turf cost \$434,000 and is one element of the \$2.6 million renovation of the stadium, which also includes repairs to the concrete and press box as well the painting of the walls and railings. The stadium repairs are part of the \$80.8 million building reconstruction project that the Erie School District launched this summer.

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