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Community Celebrates New Buckman Field

- Coalition of public and private partners brings popular athletic fields back to life with new synthetic turf and lighting -

Portland, Ore. (June 1, 2011) - [Buckman Field](#), closed for renovation since last fall, is back in play today thanks to a public-private partnership among the City of Portland, Portland Public Schools, St. Mary's Academy, Portland City United Soccer Club and NIKE's Places for Sports initiative. The field has been resurfaced with an innovative, all-weather synthetic turf that includes Nike Grind rubber reclaimed and refined from the manufacture of athletic footwear, and is now open to students from nearby Benson High School, St. Mary's Academy, the Portland City United Soccer Club, and Portlanders everywhere.

Buckman Field, which consists of two regulation-sized fields, was officially re-dedicated today with remarks by Portland Commissioner Nick Fish, NIKE, Inc. Vice President and General Manager of North America Elliott Hill, St. Mary's Academy President Christina Friedhoff, Portland Public School Superintendant Carole Smith, Portland City United Soccer Club Vice President Jeff Enquist, Portland Parks & Recreation Director Zari Santner and Benson Polytechnic High School Principal Steve Olczak. The event was emceed by Drew Mahalic, Oregon Sports Authority CEO.

Said Commissioner Fish, "The Buckman Field Project represents a great public-private partnership. It leveraged the resources of Portland Parks and Recreation, Portland Public Schools, NIKE, Portland United Soccer Club and St. Mary's Academy. The result is a professional grade sports field for our youth. Partnerships like these help us sustain and grow our world class parks system."

Thanks to the leadership of Fish and a combination of public and private resources, this \$2,372,000 project has been completed, with two new synthetic turf sports fields featuring Nike Grind as 50 percent of the rubber infill, plus improved field lighting. Funding included \$1,069,700 from Portland City United Soccer Club, \$517,300 from St. Mary's Academy, a \$200,000 commitment from the City of Portland, \$330,000 from NIKE, Inc. and \$255,000 from the Portland Public School Great Field Fund.

"Sport makes the world better. Outdoor play is essential for our health, and Portland students deserve fields that can be used year round." said Elliott Hill, NIKE, Inc. Vice President and General Manager of North America. "We are proud to be part of this inspiring project and partnership, which supports the present and future needs of so many kids and organizations."

At the dedication ceremony today, emceed by Oregon Sports Authority CEO Drew Mahalic, were students from Benson High School and St. Mary's Academy and Portland City United soccer club youth players, who played each other in two friendly soccer matches. Student athletes also participated in an hour-long testing session run by [SPARO](#) – Nike's performance division that provides a single-number snapshot of soccer-specific athleticism, allowing athletes to compare against teammates, target areas of improvement and help develop training programs. To ceremonially open the field, Portland Timbers goalkeeper Adin Brown took shots on goal from students.

Said Dave Carboneau, President, Portland City United Soccer Club, "The Buckman Field is a unique multisport complex that will serve the many needs of the Portland community. For Portland City United, the facility provides the opportunity to meet the growing demand for youth soccer. Its central location and easy access via public transportation will allow accessibility for many underserved areas throughout the city."

"Just like other Portland high schools, athletics is a valuable part of the St. Mary's Academy experience and until now, we haven't had a home field advantage for our soccer and lacrosse teams," says Christina Friedhoff, President of St. Mary's Academy. "We are thrilled to be part of the Buckman Field collaboration. This partnership helps St. Mary's build on its tradition of excellence in academics and athletics."

The two fields, located in northeast Portland next to Benson Polytechnic High School, are used by a number of groups, including Benson, St. Mary's Academy's soccer and lacrosse programs, the Portland City United Soccer Club, and other inner city sports organizations.

"We've seen first-hand just how much of a community asset an all-weather field is," noted Superintendent Carole Smith. "The addition of the Buckman Field gives students in the central east-side area a safe and beautiful place to exercise, play and compete and it brings us one step closer towards providing quality playing surfaces to all our students."

Nike Grind

Not only is the Buckman Fields project good for students, it saves tons of waste from going to waste, so it is good for the planet. In partnership with Sustainable Performance Solutions, and under the brand of Sole Revolution with Nike Grind, Buckman Field includes an innovative infill made of premium grade rubber. It is reclaimed and refined from the manufacture of sports footwear. This means the same rubber used in athletic shoes to play *on* the field, is now being used *in* the field. The material in Sole Revolution is as safe to play on as it is to wear, and is also a winner for sustainability.

Places For Sport/Great Fields

The Places for Sport is supported by Portland Public Schools and community partners to provide high quality fields and tracks at Portland high schools. The PPS Great Fields Fund will provide support, through an equitable distribution, for these field and track projects at each high school in Portland Public Schools across the city. With the support of Nike, Inc., other community partners, Benson (Buckman Field), Cleveland, Lincoln, and Roosevelt high schools have designed and installed artificial turf fields, with a project at Grant currently underway.

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