

Longhorns Transform Athletic Laundry Up Laundry Productivity, Quality & Ease-of-Use

By Haley Jorgensen



Athletic
Laundry Profile

The University of Texas (UT), in Austin, recently overhauled its 25-year-old athletic laundry for huge gains in productivity, ease of use and wash quality, according to Matt Rutherford, director of equipment operations. Located inside the Darrell K. Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium — home of the Longhorns — the facility handles an influx of laundry for all 18 Longhorn teams, some 500 event staff, and a host of club events.

“We have such a great laundry facility, we can use it for a lot of auxiliary groups,” said Rutherford, who consulted with Quintin Weaver, of Skyline Equipment (Skyline), on the laundry remodel. Skyline is a full-service laundry equipment distributor in Houston.

Laundry Equipment Selection

To handle the load, Weaver recommended a highly programmable Sports Laundry System® (SLS), which includes a 33- and seven 55-pound capacity washer-extractors and 10 75-pound capacity dryers. “One of our old washer/dryer sets had gone out so we replaced it with an SLS washer and dryer,” said Rutherford. “They got to be the ones I relied on and enjoyed using the most. They are simple and quick. So when it came time to replace all of our equipment, it was a no brainer. I wanted a room full of them.”

Higher Extract Speeds Equate to Greater Productivity

Thanks to washer extract speeds reaching 200 G-force and shorter wash/dry cycle times, the SLS equipment launched productivity, which allows Rutherford to focus on many other important tasks beside laundry. “Our typical wash cycle is 29 minutes, whereas in the past it was 49 minutes,” he said. “The rotation, spin speed, mechanical action and ability to hold temperature are all better. They get stuff cleaner.” The washer control system offers programming flexibility which allows Rutherford to use shorter cycle times without sacrificing

quality results by working seamlessly with chemistry (detergents, softeners, etc.), water temperature and mechanical action.

“Unlike lower-speed models, SLS Washers remove more moisture during extract, which results in shortened dry times,” added Weaver.

Programmability for a Precise Clean

Capable of processing up to 418 laundry pounds per hour, or 3,344 pounds per 8-hour day, the new facility is approximately 40 percent more productive than before, without any additional capacity.

To properly wash a variety of items and fabric types — from uniforms, loops and towels, to table linens and event uniforms — the washers are set with 12 programs. “Our soap company programmed the washers to fit the needs of each sport to remove clay, dirt or whatever,” said Rutherford. Anytime other programs are needed, they can be added.

UT’s washers offer up to 25 modifiable programs — each with complete control over automatic chemical/soap injection, number of baths, pre-wash, wash and rinse cycles, water temperature and levels, cycle times, rotation action and G-force extract speeds.

Similarly, the dryers feature nine programs to completely control heat, dry time and moisture levels. They feature Linen Life Extension, which automatically senses fabric moisture levels. When a preset moisture level is reached, LLE shuts off the dryer to prevent over-drying and damage to costly uniforms.

No Training Needed

Operation is easy. “It can be my full-time laundry person, or a freshman student that just started working here,” said Rutherford. “No training is needed to use the machines. You just enter the program number and press start. That’s so nice. We’ve got so much going on in our world, it’s nice not to worry about laundry.”

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