

Maintenance of The National Football Stadium

Belfast, Northern Ireland



Title of Contract	Maintenance of IFA National Football Stadium
CRL Contract Number	044377
Contract Value	£141,500.00 per Annum
Client	Irish Football Association, Donegall Avenue, Belfast, BT12 6LU
Where the works were carried out	National Football Stadium, Windsor Park, Donegall Avenue, Belfast, BT12 6LU
Start Date	01/06/2016
Completion Date	On-going
Consultants	Richard Hayden, Hayden Turfcare, Far Thorpe Farm, Causeway Garth Lane, Thorpe Audlin, Pontefract, WF8 3HD

After operating the stadium pitch maintenance themselves for the first two years after construction, the Irish Football Association took the decision to appoint a suitably qualified company to undertake the maintenance of the pitch, initially along with the nearby Midgley Park Training Pitch. In mid-2016 a maintenance contract was awarded to Clive Richardson Limited, who had originally constructed the pitch in 2014.

Clive Richardson Limited immediately undertook the entire maintenance of the stadium pitch along with the nearby training pitch, with dedicated staff members based full time at the National Football Stadium.

The following elements were included in the specification for the maintenance of the pitch at the National Football Stadium:

- All pitch maintenance including cutting and pitch markings.

- Preparation of the pitch for all matches and team training sessions.
- Divoting and post-match repairs.
- Supply of pitch staff to agreed levels for all events including domestic/international football and any other events requiring use of the pitch.
- Periodic pitch renovations.
- Supply of all equipment and chemicals/treatments for the pitch.
- The upkeep and management of the 3G surround to the pitch.
- Consultancy for external non-footballing events wishing to use the pitch and providing advice on the protection of the playing surface.

The summer of 2018 saw CRL undertake a major overhaul of the pitch surface. After various struggles with the extensive usage during the first four years, a decision was made to install a revolutionary hybrid carpet pitch. This would add stability and durability to the surface, whilst also aiding the use of the pitch surface for other non-football events. The old surface was removed and the hybrid carpet system installed following the completion of the 2017-18 season.

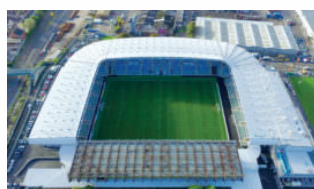
Following on from this, the first non-football event within the stadium, a huge night of boxing headlined by Carl Frampton, was held on 18 August 2018. 24000 fans attended the fight with many of them seated on the covered pitch surface.

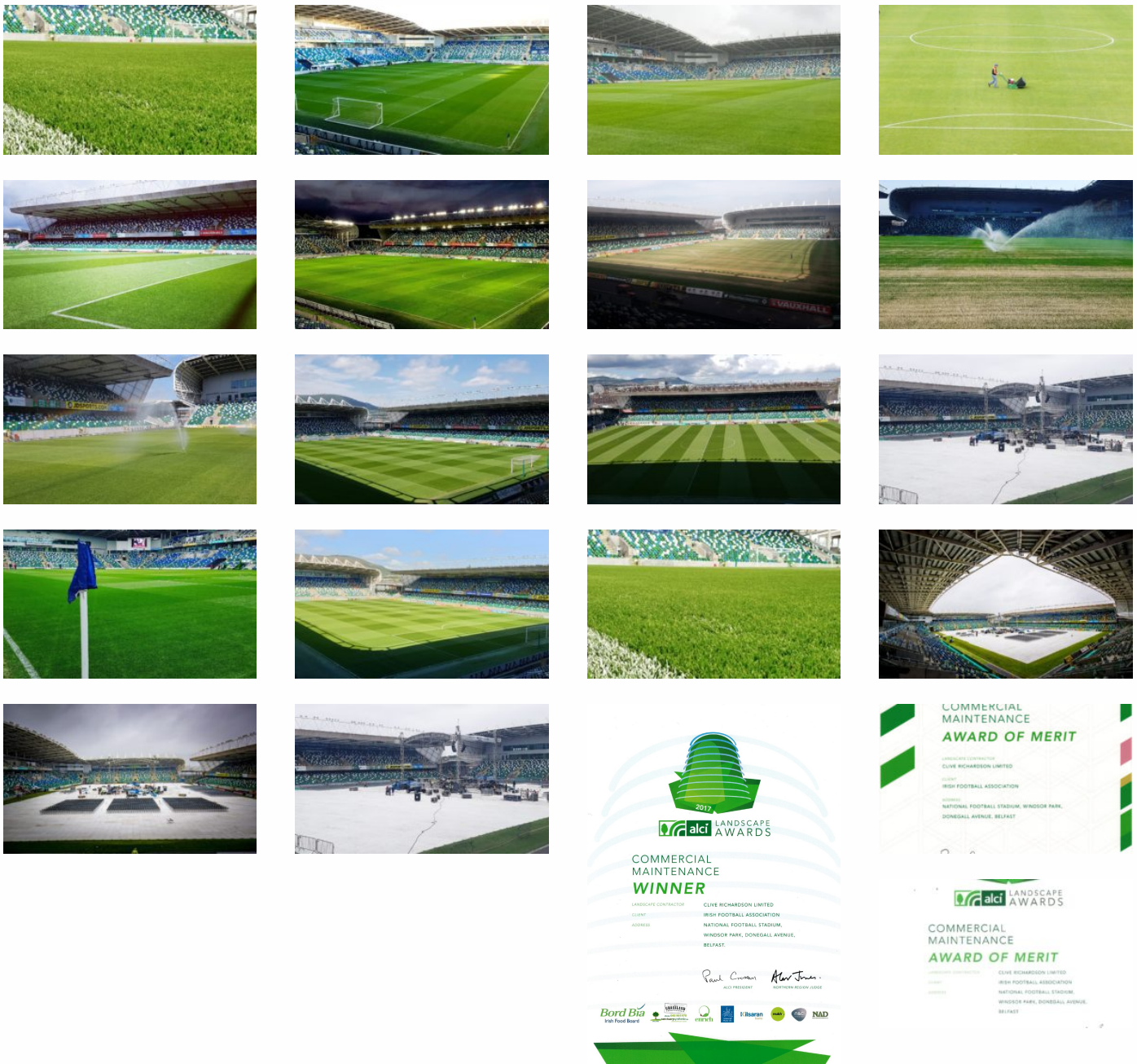
Clive Richardson Limited carries out maintenance works to the stadium pitch, ensuring that the surface is maintained in a top condition all year round. A bespoke maintenance programme, based around the pitch usage requirements of the IFA National Teams, Linfield FC and IFA domestic competitions, has been developed and is implemented on a daily basis by CRL. Peak usage times like international matches mean that CRL have to make additional staffing resources available to the facility, to ensure that the pitch quality is maintained to FIFA quality standards.

The pitch is independently tested periodically to ensure that it is maintained to stringent FIFA requirements.

CRL's work at the stadium has previously been recognised at the prestigious 2017 ALCI Landscape Awards when the company were named winner of the Commercial Maintenance Category, and again at the 2018/19 and 2019 ALCI Landscape Awards when it was the recipient of an Award of Merit in the Commercial Maintenance Category for its work at the stadium.

Further recognition of the standard of work by CRL was given by UEFA Representatives in the Bid Evaluation Report for the rights to host the 2020 Super Cup when they included a positive review of the stadium pitch. Sadly however the bid was unsuccessful.





Post Contract

Owing to an exceptionally high level of service delivery this contract has twice been extended and will now run until at least the end of the 2019/20 football season. CRL continue to work in partnership with the Irish Football Association on the development of the National Football Stadium into one of the premier event venues in Northern Ireland.

More Information

For more information on this project please contact Priscilla McFarland, General Manager/Director, Clive Richardson Limited via post to 54 Derrycoose Road, Portadown, Co. Armagh, BT62 1LY; via email to pmcf@cliverichardsonltd.co.uk or via telephone on +44 (0) 2838852888