

GENERAC®

MOBILE

**NORTHERN STEEL
SOCCER CLUB**

Renfrew, Pennsylvania

CASE STUDY

CHALLENGE:

Provide adequate lighting to a soccer field for fall training sessions.

SOLUTION:

Generac Mobile MLTS LED Light Tower

RESULT:

Continued, safe training sessions well past sunset.

“We are so happy to have this unit and we would highly recommend any club that has a field without lights, to look into them.”



Elite Soccer Powered by Mobile Lighting Solution

The air gets crisper, the leaves begin to change and darkness settles in earlier each night. Even though Mother Nature is telling you the seasons are changing, that doesn't mean your sport's calendar is ready to comply. Football, lacrosse, soccer or any other sports see coaches trying to fit in one more game and one more practice, long into the fall. According to the U.S. Soccer Federation, over 24.4 million people play soccer in the United States, ranging from professional athletes to those playing a pickup game with their friends in the park. One thing that remains a constant across all levels is that it is not always feasible to practice when the sun is out.

Northern Steel Soccer Club, out of Renfrew, Pennsylvania, is an elite soccer club that participates in local, regional and national leagues. Six days a week, you can find 280 boys and girls ranging from eight to 18 practicing from the time school ends until the time it gets dark.

“I coach hundreds of young, eager soccer players every year,” said Karen Wolf, coach at Northern Steel Soccer Club. “Every fall our club runs into the same problem, not enough sunlight to get in all of our training sessions. As the lights shift in the fall, we have to keep moving our start time earlier and earlier in order to get enough time to practice. This is compounded by the fact

that many of us coach multiple teams and need as much time as possible to run back to back sessions.”

George Grace, area sales manager, Generac Mobile, heard about the club's problem and thought up of a possible solution. “Lights can allow for longer and safer practice times,” he said. “It also can give the players the opportunity to continue working on their skills or to make up previously canceled games.”

Due to the need for longer practice time, Grace said the soccer club was extremely interested in obtaining lights for one of their fields. When choosing lighting solutions for their teams, the Northern Steel Soccer club knew they wanted temporary lighting. Light towers are portable, and self-contained and by using portable light towers, it gave them the flexibility of moving or shifting the towers on the field according to the lighting requirements. At times, they may need to remove a light tower from a current position for better and balanced lighting distribution of the field.

Wolf said she saw several advantages to a light tower, including its rapid setup and tear down times. “As the sun goes down, a light tower gets turned on and put up and training can continue without pause,” she said.



APPLICATION:
Sports/Recreation

MODELS:
MLTS LED Light Tower



When coming up with a lighting solution, there were several things to consider including lighting area, player safety and spill light. According to the U.S. Soccer Federation, all system components need to be UL listed and meet NFPA 780 standards. The poles should be at least 20 feet from the sideline to avoid injury. The federation states the lights should be mounted at a height to minimize glare for the spectators and spillage outside the soccer field. By reducing the amount of spill light, nearby neighbor complaints will be reduced.

The mounting height of the light fixtures is critical to the success of the system. There are different classes of lighting systems for sports applications, ranging from televised events to training. Since the club is using the light tower for training and recreational, non-televised events, the field needs to be glare-free for the players' safety. Exact pole location and details vary with each installation. The U.S. Soccer Federation also requires televised soccer fields to have 50-foot candle brightness. For normal usage, the federation recommends 25-30 foot candles.

After considering all of the necessary requirements, Grace said he thought instantly of Generac Mobile's MLTS. "There are many different ways we could have done the project," said Grace. "Generac Mobile has the PLT240 LINKTower and paired with the Generac IQ3500 you would have the perfect quiet solution. However, for this particular solution, the team needed a taller light tower." Generac Mobile's MLTS has four LED fixtures that produce 172,200 total lumens. It covers 19,526 sq. ft. (1,840 m²) with up to 220-hour runtime.

"We can have our U9 and U10 teams continue to practice until 8 pm, when the light usually fades around 7:20 pm now a day," said Steven Perri, director of academy Northern Steel Soccer. "Without this unit, we would be forced to end practice early and shorten the development period these teams have."

Grace said most sports teams are using LED lights, like those on the MLTS, for clear, uniform lighting. "LEDs increase comfort and well-being for the athletes," he said. "Because LED lights include more flexibility and the ability to adjust the angle and intensity of the light, they can reduce the glare. LED lights are also instant on and off and don't require additional warming up time, eliminating flicker."

With the help from Generac Mobile, Perri and Wolf said their players continue to see the practice time and support they need to develop into top tier soccer players.

"It has been a huge boost to our club and a fantastic way to serve the teams we coach," Wolf said. "We are so happy to have this unit and we would highly recommend any club that has a field without lights, to look into them," said Perri. "You will be able to extend your training sessions times without blinding your kids as parents try to help with headlights!"