

# REDSKINS SACK DIRTY LAUNDRY WITH NEW HIGH-EFFICIENCY LAUNDRY



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"Laundry is probably the furthest thing from a fan's mind when they're sitting up in the stands on Sunday," says Brad Berlin, equipment manager for the Washington Redskins. "Very few people stop and think about laundry's vital role in games, practices and the very functioning of a football team."



*Photo courtesy of Don Wright, Washington Redskins*

But for Berlin, it's hard not to consider laundry's integral role, since the Redskins' 68 players and 50 staff members generate 8,000 pounds of it per week. An efficient laundry process is crucial, not only for the team, but for Berlin and his staff, who also purchase equipment, schedule team transportation and maintain the locker room. An efficient laundry process, he says, starts with technologically advanced soft-mount washer-extractors.

He should know. The Redskins recently replaced their inefficient hard-mount laundry equipment with more productive Continental Pro-Series soft-mount washer-extractors. The result was a substantial savings in time, labor

and utilities. In the end, the facility replaced three hard-mount washers, one 90- and two 50-pound capacity machines with one 90-, one 18- and two 55-pound capacity Continental Pro-Series Washers. The Redskins' five dryers were also replaced with four new Continental drying tumblers — one 30-, one 40- and two 80-pound capacity machines.

Complete renovations of the Redskins' laundry facility began in July 2007 with help from Mike Schmidt of Hof Laundry Systems, a Continental laundry equipment distributor in Beltsville, Md.

Schmidt helped the Redskins improve their laundry facility with much more than just new

laundry equipment. A new electrical panel was added, and the entire vent system renovated to allow for a vent for each individual dryer. Before, the dryers vented into the main system, filling the locker room with the odor of gas and vented air. The laundry facility also underwent structural repair for damages caused from the previous machines and their tendency to move and lift from the floor during the extract portion of the spin cycles.

"Our hard-mount equipment just wasn't cutting it," says Berlin. The main problem, he maintains, was the cost of maintenance and labor to run the washers.

"Not only were these very labor-intensive



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*The new Redskins laundry facility has saved time and improved laundry productivity.*

machines, we were having to make more and more service calls on them every year,” says Berlin. “I knew they had to go.”

After Schmidt presented Berlin with the savings projections possible by replacing hard-mount machines with high-efficiency soft-mounts, they decided to install four Continental Pro-Series soft-mount washer-extractors and four Continental dryers. Soft-mount washers are freestanding and simple to install — unlike hard mounts. The entire laundry room renovation and equipment installation process was completed in five days. Even within the first few months, the new machinery proved to be a solid investment, according to Berlin.

### High-speed Extract Slashes Labor and Utilities

“The new soft-mount washers extract water at 380 G-force, compared to the 90 G-force extract of our previous equipment,” explains Berlin. “They extract so much more water from each load, they cut our dry time by nearly 60 percent. Before, we were drying the laundry for 75-90 minutes at 200 degrees; now the load is completely dry in 30 minutes at 180 degrees.”

Because the Pro-Series Washer-Extractors eliminate a significant amount of dry time, the new Redskins’ laundry facility operates with fewer dryers than before — using four rather than five, according to Schmidt.

Completing laundry quicker also equates to an enormous reduction in labor, according to Berlin, which allows his staff to get the laundry done sooner. “With the old machines, we had four workers who would do laundry until 9:30 at night. Now three attendants complete the job by 6:30,” he asserts. “We’re not missing the fourth set of hands because the new equipment makes up for lost time.”

Because soft-mount washers cut dry time, they also drop utility costs, adds Schmidt. “With the new equipment, Berlin and his staff are doing 25 percent less drying overall, saving them 8-10 hours of operating the equipment a week,” he says. Cutting the operating time of the tumblers extends equipment life and reduces associated maintenance costs. “In addition, less time running the machines equates to enormous savings on gas usage,” Schmidt maintains.

Less time in the dryer also means less linen wear and tear, which is very important when practice jerseys alone cost about \$80 each. “It costs a lot to outfit just one player, let alone a whole team, so we want to make sure these uniforms last as long as they possibly can,” says Berlin.

### Flexible Programmability

Programmability options also play a vital role in preserving and protecting the costly uniforms. “We wash many different types of materials, some of them high-technology

fabrics, and not all of them can be washed the same way,” says Berlin. Towels, uniforms, sweats and any personal items are among the items Berlin’s staff is in charge of washing. Pro-Series’ PM Control offers advanced yet easy-to-use programmability to ensure a consistent clean for all the team’s items. The attendant simply selects a program number, and the machine automatically provides the proper blend of water temperature, water levels, chemicals, extraction speeds and cycle time for the type of load being washed.

“We have a program for towels, one for jerseys, one for delicates like polo shirts and fragile fabrics, one for heavy stains that can be generated in a muddy practice, one for pants with grass stains and one for items that need to soak after using stain treatments,” explains Berlin.

### Chemical Injection Tackles Stains

Considering the different stains Berlin’s team encounters — grass, blood, mud and perspiration — the washer’s flexible control with automatic chemical injection is helpful in removing spots with ease without damaging fabrics. The chemicals are diluted and injected at precise times in the wash process, ensuring the chemicals never directly touch the fabric while still effectively removing stains. “We went from using seven chemicals down to just two, which is much safer on our fabrics,” says Berlin. “And the finish hasn’t suffered a bit. When you open that washer door and pull out a towel, you can see a noticeable difference.”

Getting laundry done quickly and getting it done right is an important part of a football team, maintains Berlin. High-speed, soft-mount equipment that saves time, labor and utilities is essential to securing an efficient laundry process. “Laundry is an everyday job in football, and it’s an important part of the health and safety of the team,” he says. “When those players come in at six in the morning to put on their practice gear, they’re changing into their work clothes. Laundry is a key component for these guys to do their jobs.”

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