



Innovative Tile and Stone
Installation Systems

Sports Basement Becomes Reality with DRYTEK®

Project Spotlight: May 2012



LOCATION:
Private Residence
North Haven, CT

LOGO TEMPLATE:
Fathead®
Detroit, MI

GRAPHIC DESIGNER:
Jo Rapisarda
Bethany, CT

LATICRETE DRYTEK SUPPLIER:
LATICRETE Headquarters
Bethany, CT



LATICRETE helps lifelong fan show the love for his favorite team with emblem embossed on floor in basement football headquarters

By Michael Pallerino

To say that football is a religion to Pittsburgh Steelers' fans may be the mother of all sports understatements. For those who follow the "Black and Gold" — the colors donned by one of America's most treasured sports franchises — football is everything, and more.

Whether the Steelers play at home — the cathedral-like Heinz Field — or on the road, the crowd is a whirling dervish of frenzied emotion. From the waving of their vaunted Terrible Towels, to the rhythmic chanting of Steelers' songs and cheers, the sight is one of sports' greatest spectacles.

Today's sports fans have more options than ever to show support for their favorite teams. From apparel to pennants, and novelty items like barbeque tongs and steak knives, nothing seems out of the ordinary when it comes to fan support. And when it comes to the Steelers, you can take that sentiment up another notch.

Such is the story of Mark Modine, whose basement in his North Haven, CT., home features a mini football field and Steelers' logo embossed on the floor. The idea came to personal trainer Modine after chatting with one of his clients, LATICRETE Chairman and CEO David Rothberg. One day during a workout session, Modine, who has some experience in the construction field, became enthralled with some of the products that Rothberg had mentioned from DRYTEK® Innovative Flooring Solutions, a recent addition to the LATICRETE family of products.

"David was telling me about some of the different options that these products, especially the self-leveling one, were capable of performing," Modine says. "I just couldn't believe the opportunities

these applications had. I kept asking, 'Can you put it on this, and that?' And he kept saying that you could. So I said, let's try something creative at my house!"

Modine, who only lives 12 miles or so from the LATICRETE world headquarters in Bethany, CT., was willing to be the test pilot for the new applications. And he had just the project. A die-hard Steelers' fan, whose house is the "ultimate" sports palace on Sundays during the season — including a game on in every room, complete with surround sound — Modine wanted to try something different in his basement.

He envisioned having the Steelers' logo embossed on his basement floor — the ultimate testament to the Black and Gold. "Even though he said that you could do practically anything with it, David kept stating that there were no guarantees how it would turn out unless installed correctly," Modine says. "But every time he said, 'you could, you could, you could;' I said, 'yes, yes, yes.' I knew I could be the perfect test subject to see how this would all work. I told David that any of the small mistakes that we would make — and there were some through trial and error — would be left at my house."

So Rothberg put a call into DRYTEK technical sales representative, Tom Leahy. Quickly, Leahy set up a meeting with Modine, at which he explained the various types of products and options available. After the meeting, Modine decided he wanted his basement to feature a black floor with the logo that the players' wear on their helmets. He also wanted the logo to feature the words "Pittsburgh" and "Steelers." Modine envisioned a mini football field, complete with two end zones, occupying the

400-square-foot space in his basement. The logo would serve as the 50-yard line, so to speak.

To help pull all the pieces together, Modine purchased the logo from Fathead®, a licensed product manufacturer that supplies an array of decorative wall graphics. He also enlisted the help of Jo Rapisarda, Senior Graphic Designer at LATICRETE. Rapisarda worked closely with Modine to create a template and design utilizing the black and gold colors for the logo, etc.

“We knew that we would have to do some specific work on the floor before we were ready to customize it the way he wanted it,” Rapisarda stated.

The first step in the process was to get rid of the excessive adhesive markings on the floor, which Leahy noticed during the initial meeting. The markings were a result of carpeting that previously was pulled off of the floor. To get the job done, Leahy enlisted the help of four LATICRETE team members — including Dean Cunningham, Gilles Bignolas, Rick Carino and Art Mintie — and Modine, to diamond grind the floor. This concrete pavement restoration technique is designed to help correct irregularities such as faulting and roughness. In this case, it was to smooth out the cracks and eliminate any leftover adhesive residue.

After they diamond grinded the floor, Leahy noticed that there were more cracks on the surface. “Once you remove glue, you can see fully see the concrete,” Leahy says. “That’s when we noticed there were more cracks.”

To further smooth out the floor, they put mesh tape on the cracks, and then laid down DRYTEK® 104S Epoxy Primer, which would help further smooth out the cracks in the concrete. The two-component, high-solids epoxy primer, part of the DRYTEK® Decorative Wear Surface System, is applied with a sand broadcast.

Next, Leahy poured DRYTEK® 7400, a fast drying, dual purpose, self-leveling cement in gray. The cement can be used both as a durable and attractive interior wear surface and as a high performance underlayment for troubled substrates. To give the floor that Steelers’ look, Leahy poured a black liquid dye in the concrete, and then poured the floor, which took a day to dry.

The next steps included spraying one coat of LATICRETE® epoxy primer (which takes eight to 12 hours to dry), positioning in the Fathead logo (followed by painting the “Pittsburgh” and “Steelers” word logos), spraying another coat of clear, and then adding a coat of LATICRETE® SpectraLOCK® Dazzle, which adds a metallic, micro-chip glitter look.

The last step involved using a spray that would lock in the micro chip glitter and give the emblem that shiny look. The enthusiastic installation team also sprayed yellow epoxy paint over the words ‘Pittsburgh’ and ‘Steelers’ in the logo.

“This is my first project that featured a Fathead logo,” Leahy says. “I’ve been in the business for 28 years, and have been doing custom work like this for about 15 years. And this was the first time I’ve ever worked on a project like this.

“Custom jobs like this take a minimum of anywhere from four to five days to complete. When it was over, Mark was very happy with the way the project turned out. And now, when we show pictures of this project to prospective clients, they can see what we are able to do. It is leading to other custom jobs.”

