



## **BASEBALL / SOFTBALL FIELD MAINTENANCE DO'S AND DON'TS**

### **DO'S – PRE GAME**

#### **1. Dragging the Field**

- Pull in the Direction of the Base Paths: NEVER drag towards a Grass Edge. If you drag to a Grass Edge, you will create a “Lipping” problem. Always stay One Foot away from the Grass when dragging the infield.
- Vary the Method: Do not always drag in the same pattern – Vary the Pattern.
- Spike Drag: Use on a Damp Field
  - a. If your feet make impression on the field, do not take a vehicle on the wet field.
  - b. Spike drag should only be used in order to “Open Up” the field to let the sun and winds dry the surface.
- Screen Drag: Use on a Dry Field to loosen the top layer of the infield.
- Matt Drag / Broom Drag: Use on a Dry Field for “Gametime” appearance.

#### **2. Water Removal**

- Utilize “Pillows” to remove all standing water
  - a. Place pillow in puddle – allow pillow to absorb water.
  - b. Remove pillow and take it to a grass area – step on pillow to squeeze out the water.
  - c. Repeat the procedure until standing water is removed.
- After removing Standing Water hand rake former puddle area to let Sun and Wind dry the area.
- Allow entire field to dry naturally through Sun and Wind until field is able to withstand a Spike Drag.
- Drying Agent can be used in High Traffic Areas (around bases) to assist in drying the surface. Rule: if you need more than 4 bags to get a field ready, cancel the game!



### **DO'S – PRE GAME (cont.)**

#### **3. Mound / Batters Box Area**

- Scrape Out depressed area to properly clean out holes at Pitcher's Mound and Batter's Box.
- Dampen holes with water.
- Insert DuraPitch Mound Clay into depressions and tamp clay down as it is applied – fully compact the clay to fill the hole.
- Apply light dressing of infield mix over the clay area.

#### **4. Grass Cutting**

- Depending on the time of year, grass infields should be cut to a standard height twice a week.
- Outfield grass should be cut to a standard height once a week.
- Plan ahead to avoid grass cutting after rain. Cutting after rain will leave ruts and damages the outfield.
- Avoid cutting grass under 1 ½ inches in height at any time, and do not cut grass in high temperatures as burning may occur. Never cut more than 1/3 of the top growth off during any one time cutting the grass.
- Blow grass away from Skinned portion of Infield.



## **DO'S – POST GAME**

### **1. Leveling**

- Rake and Fill in Low Spots at:
  - a. Home Plate / Batter's Box with Clay Material.
  - b. Pitcher's Mound with Clay Material.
  - c. Around All Bases
    - Focus on Sliding areas and areas where runners take their lead.
    - Pull excess material from behind the base (high spots) to in front of the base (low spots).
- Remove and Plug all Bases.
- Clear Dirt from Around Base Plugs so that Bases lie Flat on the Field.
- Use Rakes to Smooth areas around Bases.
- Brush Infield Mix off grass / turf areas around field and back onto the Skinned portion of the infield to prevent lips.

### **2. Field Conditioner**

- Conditioning Agent – should be used as Preventative Maintenance.
- Application procedure for Conditioning Agent
  - a. Review weather forecast – need dry condition for 48 hours.
  - b. Spread Conditioning Agent using a spreader evenly on the infield. This typically can be accomplished with 2-3 bags of conditioner.
  - c. Screen drag the infield to mix product into the soil.
- Result will be that the conditioner will be imbedded in the soil – enabling the field to absorb more moisture and respond more quickly to rain conditions.



### **DON'T'S**

1. Do Not Sweep or Rake mud from infield across onto grass. Remove all brooms from your ball field complex and preferably break them!
2. Do Not Drive a Truck / Car on the infield after a rain.
3. Do Not leave Chalk in the Baseline that is allowed to get damp in the rain.
4. Do Not Drag the infield from the inside (pitcher's mound) to the outside (towards the grass). This will create a lip on your field and a "bowl effect" on your infield.
5. Do Not Drag the infield without moving the bases.
6. Do Not Rake across baselines – rake the baseline lengthwise to properly drain the field.
7. Do Not Hit baseballs (soft toss) into fences anywhere in the park.
8. Do Not Dump bags of Drying Agents in anticipation of immediately playing a game. If it takes more than 4 bags to get a field ready, cancel the game!
9. Do Not allow people on the field unrestricted when games are not being played – all your hard work will be ruined!
10. Do Not Apply Clay without first cleaning out the affected area and applying water to the area.