



Mill River Field Maintenance Handbook

Introduction:

Amherst Baseball bears primary responsibility for maintenance of the fields at Mill River and at ARMS. The town and, in the case of ARMS, school district, provide some basic maintenance, but it is basically up to us to take care of our fields.

Practice days

1. Pre-practice
 - a. Remove tarps and store tarps and weights behind backstops
 - b. Remove standing water with field sponges, not by brushing, sweeping or squeegeeing.
 - c. Rapid dry should not generally be used for practices. A small amount may be used to prepare the batter's boxes if necessary, after removing and standing water
2. After practice (to be done by players)
 - a. Rake and drag infield dirt and homeplate area
 - b. Rake basepaths, pulling dirt into the center of the basepath, not outward towards the grass.
 - c. Rake pitcher's mound, raking towards the crown of the mound so as not to pull dirt into the grass edges
 - d. Weed any grass or weeds appearing in the dirt with the loop hoes
 - e. Replace tarps and weights
 - f. Dispose of any litter or trash left in dugouts or on field

Game days

1. Pre-game (Home team responsible for setup)
 - a. Remove tarps and store tarps and weight behind backstop
 - b. Remove standing water with field sponges, not by brushing, sweeping or squeegeeing.
 - c. Use rapid-dry judiciously to dry out wet or muddy areas after removing standing water
 - d. Rake and drag all dirt areas including dragging the infield with the cart
 - e. Line the field. Use chalk for all dirt areas and paint for grass areas.

- f. Lines on grass may not need to be done for every game if the paint persists.
- 2. Post-game (Away team responsible for post-game if two Amherst teams, to be done by players)
 - a. Rake and drag infield dirt and homeplate area
 - b. Rake pitcher's mound, raking towards the crown of the mound so as not to pull dirt into the grass edges
 - c. Weed any grass or weeds appearing in the dirt with the loop hoes
 - d. Replace tarps and weights
 - e. Dispose of any litter or trash left in dugouts or on field
 - f. Use packing clay to repair divot in front of pitching rubber
 - i. Brush out loose clay/dirt
 - ii. Scarify hard substrate
 - iii. Lightly moisten clay substrate
 - iv. Place packing clay to bring level to rubber
 - v. Tamp aggressively with a towel laid over the clay or the tamper wrapped in plastic to prevent sticking

General field maintenance

1. Fields should be mowed once a week, twice a week during the peak growing season of late April to the end of May
2. Fields should be dragged by cart/sandpro once a week
 - a. Use the nailboard only when needed to break up very hard surfaces or footprints/divots.
 - b. When dragging drive at a walking pace and leave a 12" margin to the grass to avoid dragging dirt into the lip. Finish the edges by hand with a rake.
3. Grass areas should be rolled whenever possible following rain (but not when there is standing water or mud). Roller must be hung back in the shed when complete, filling and draining for each use.

Drying fields after rain:

1. A good test of whether an area of dirt is playable is to plant a foot and try to 'cut' sideways off of it. If you can plant and drive the field is playable. If you slip on mud it is not.
2. Rapid dry should be used minimally. Overuse of rapid dry damages the playing surface.
3. Never use rapid dry without first removing standing water with the field sponges
4. Lightly cover the wet area with rapid dry and use a rake to incorporate with the existing soil mix.
5. If there are very large areas of the infield that are muddy the field is too wet and the game will have to be rescheduled.

Town/ARPS responsibilities:

Mill River

1. Pre-season aerating, overseeding and rolling at the request of ABB.
2. Basic maintenance of fences and gates
3. Installation/removal of sunshades and batting cage nets