

Field Maintenance

Taylor Little League

Summary

Board Member in-charge, coaches or field maintenance volunteers should perform the following tasks after practice or games. This is general guideline for all Coaches and Parents that participate in field maintenance.

Raking

- Every time you use a field, whether it is for regular season play or practice, before leaving the field, each team is expected to completely rake the field and to leave it presentable for the next team to use it.
- **The infield Base paths between home plate and first or home plate and third base:** This area should be raked parallel to the base path- not across it. If you must rake across it, then please remember to rake the clay to the center. Keep in mind that there should be a "crown" or high spot in the center of the base path to help drain the base paths.
- Please remember to keep the clay in the center of the base paths and NOT up against the grass edges as this will cause bumps and create uneven playing surfaces.
- If you see clay in the grass outside of or against base paths, there are fan rakes (leaf rakes) in the sheds to "sweep" the clay out of the grass. If the clay is hard and stuck in the grass, you can also use the hose and wash it back onto the base path.

Sweeping or dragging the infield

- Try to only hand rake the 1-2 feet of the infield perimeter and use the drag screens in the center in between those edges.
- Drags should be used in a circular motion with wide sweeping turns working from the outside toward the center of the infield.
- Drags should only be used between 1st and 2nd or 2nd and 3rd bases. DO NOT DRAG the base paths between third and home or first and home plate. Doing so will result in accumulating clay at home plate and impact the drainage at home plate and in the batter's boxes.
- If you observe clay in the grass along the edge of the infield, like with the base paths, use a fan rake to remove clay from the grass and if necessary, use the hoses located on each field to wash clay from the grass.

Home Plate care

Care of the area around home plate is essential to the proper drainage of the batter's boxes and the area around home plate. DO NOT SWEEP OR RAKE mud toward a backstop to get the mud away from home plate or drag the area around home plate toward backstops. The clay areas on the fields have all been graded for drainage and given the proper care, after a substantial rainfall will properly drain away from the batter's boxes. Sweeping mud or excess



clay toward the backstops will prevent water from drawing away and continued sweeping will only decrease the grade and cause water retention. Sweep or rake towards home plate.

Holes or depressions in the infield clay

- Sometimes there will be divots or “bowls” in the infield clay where water will collect. The proper way to eliminate holes is to add clay to fill in holes- **not Diamond Dry or other drying agents.** (Turface, Speedy Dry, etc.)
- While Diamond dry will absorb a tremendous amount of water, when it dries, it causes the clay to become exceptionally hard and prevents water from properly filtering through the clay and drain through the aggregate below the field.
- Using drying agents will assist you in getting in the game but will cause problems with the field further down the road if not applied properly or over applied.
- There is a wheelbarrow and shovels in the shed at Bull Branch. Please use clay to fill holes as it is the best way to fill empty spaces, keeps the clay from drying out and will leave the clay softer to play on.

Foul lines

- Infield lines are to consist of Guide lime and only in areas of the field where clay is visible. **Grass Areas are to be painted with the line paint (not Guide lime).**
- Excessive lime in the turf area over time causes an accumulation resulting in an uneven surface as well as inconsistent color of the grass, while paint is removed when the grass is cut.
- Lime, Paint and the lining equipment are available in the Minors (brown) and Majors (grey) sheds. The combination to the Majors shed is 13-30-36. A new combination lock for the Minors shed will be purchased shortly and the combination will be posted in the shack.

Proper use of Diamond Dry (Drying Agent)

- Diamond dry is not to be used to absorb standing water or remove excess water from sloppy mud (the consistency of a milkshake). Standing water is a good indicator that the fields should not be played on until they have sufficient time to dry.
- Drying agents are not the cure all for getting in a game under wet conditions. Any drying agent we use needs to be spread in fine, thin layers (like spreading lime on your lawn) but is not to be “poured” onto surfaces to dry them out. After applying any drying agent onto the clay, it is important that it be mixed in with a thorough raking – not left on top of the clay. Apply a thin coat and allow a few minutes for the dust to absorb the moisture- it is not instant and not allowing the agent to work for a few minutes before applying a second dusting will result in an over application of the product.

Trash

It is the coach’s responsibility to ensure that dugouts are free of trash and recyclables. It is strongly encouraged to make this the PLAYERS responsibility. Trash bags are available at the concession stand in the event that the trash bins are full. When in doubt, pack it out to the



dumpster. Overflowing bins are unsanitary and make good homes for bees and yellow jackets.

Field closings due to rain

The league will make every effort to assess field playability as far in advance in advance of game time as possible and have the information posted on the website and on the league Facebook page. Games may be cancelled in the morning but since the fields drain so well, it is possible to cancel the early morning games but not the later morning or afternoon games. Please pay attention to the duration that fields are closed for play and assess how this will impact your team. While a field closing can be temporary (until a specified time or until further notice), games may still be able to be played later that day.

Other hazards

If you see a hazardous condition on the field or in the complex, it is your responsibility as a coach to suspend play and resolve the issue on the field that causes the hazard. If the condition is not something that you can rectify yourself or with another coach on the field, please bring this immediately to the attention of the Field Maintenance Coordinator or Safety Officer immediately. Remember that safety and hygiene are always our primary concern.



