

# *Carlsbad Youth Baseball*

## **Field Maintenance Overview**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to provide a brief overview of some of the most important things that our volunteers need to be aware of regarding maintenance of the ball fields.

In general, ball field maintenance in the City of Carlsbad is the responsibility of the city's Park's Maintenance Department. However, there are certain responsibilities that CYB has to assist city staff in keeping the fields in the best condition possible.

In general, as the ball fields are the property of the city, CYB volunteers may not make modifications to the ball fields without permission and/or assistance of city staff. Examples of such modifications are include removal and/or addition of pitching rubbers/base pegs, etc.

It is everyone's responsibility to maintain safe playing conditions on the ball fields. The appropriate response to an unsafe condition on the field depends on the situation, but in all situations, such conditions should be reported after your team's event to your Division Commissioner and the league VP of Operations. If you are practicing, and an unsafe condition exists on the field, avoid that location if possible and alert teams that are following you on the field. If you are in a game and an unsafe condition exists on the field, notify the umpire in charge so that appropriate measures can be taken. **Never assume** that somebody else already knows about a problem!

### **Fields and Equipment Overview**

The job of every field user should be to leave the fields in as good or better condition as they were before. This needs to be both a short (single game/practice) and a long term (season) goal. Considering both short term and longer term needs leads to a number of "best practices" for fields and equipment care.

### **Equipment Care**

There is a variety of equipment used at the fields, and proper care of the equipment is critical to a successful season. Equipment care best practices are contained in the Appendix "CYB Equipment Rules." Inspection of these rules will reveal that these are common sense housekeeping guidelines, and if everyone follows these simple guidelines it will ensure the long-term condition of our equipment as well as safety of the facility.

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## **Field Care**

This section covers “routine” maintenance only. From time to time, larger “seasonal” maintenance projects may be scheduled (eg rebuilding a mound, leveling an infield, etc), but these types of projects are not covered in this guide.

### A) Natural vs Synthetic

Most ball fields in the city of Carlsbad have natural turf in the outfield only. Pine Field is the only field which currently has synthetic turf, and this turf is on both infield and outfield. CYB volunteers are not expected to perform any maintenance on the turf portion of the fields, whether natural or synthetic. However, as mentioned earlier, problems in the outfield portion of the field should be reported so that corrective actions can be planned by the city staff.

### B) Infield Maintenance

Most of the work that our volunteers will do on the fields falls under the general category of infield maintenance. Within this category there are several different sub-categories, as described below.

#### *Lip care*

The term “lip” refers to the edge where the infield meets the outfield grass. There are some important ways in which coaches can help to preserve the conditions of these lips.

Hand-dragging is most practical for dragging the field prior to the game, given normal time constraints. When dragging the infield, keep the drag at least 18” away from the infield lip, to avoid pushing of dirt onto the outfield grass. If not familiar with how to use the hand-drag, have an experienced coach show you.

As mentioned above, it is important to avoid pushing dirt from the infield over the “lip.” The reason is this dirt buildup in the grass can lead a gradual elevation of the lip which over time can become a safety issue. To prevent this buildup, it is also helpful to perform periodic sweeping of any dirt moved to the outfield grass back onto the infield. This should ideally be done quickly after every game, but as a minimum should be done after the last game of the week on Saturday.

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### ***Watering***

Watering of the field should be done before all games except when the field is already moist. Watering provisions vary per field, as below:

Chase 1 – Sprinklers with control valve in box on 3B line; quick-coupler behind mound is also available.

Chase 2 – Sprinkler valve is available behind the mound, but a separate sprinkler control valve is available on the 1B line.

Chase 3 – Sprinklers with control valve in box on 1B line; quick-coupler behind mound is also available.

Pine – Quick-coupler is available behind the mound (only batter/catcher area needs water)

Poinsettia 1 – No water is available for non-city use

Poinsettia 2 - Quick-coupler is available behind the mound

Calavera 3 - Quick-coupler is available behind the mound

Safety Center - Quick-coupler is available behind the mound

It is also recommended to water down the infield after the final game/practice of the day. This can be done for about 5 minutes while the team is wrapping things up. Note that prior to this watering, any needed repairs on the mound or batter's box (see below) should be completed.

### ***Mound Care***

Our fields use both portable and permanent mounds, and each type has its requirements for care and handling.

**Permanent Mounds** – Permanent mounds get worn down over time due to the wear and tear of pitchers' use. The wear and tear occurs mainly in two locations, just in front of the rubber where the pitcher pushes off, and in the landing area (location of which can vary due to pitchers' strides). While this wear and tear is normal, it can be greatly reduced and nearly eliminated by regular care.

The required tools are: a) rake, b) tamp, c) water jug

The required care is, after the final game of each day, to:

a) Fill the water jug, and soak the areas in front of the rubber and the landing area

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- b) Use the rake to refill these areas with fresh dirt from the lower area of the mound
- c) Use the tamp to compress the fresh dirt. If needed, rake a bit more dirt and tamp into place.

Note: Do not drag over a permanent mound

**Portable Mounds** – Portable mounds get worn down over time due to the wear and tear of pitchers' use. To minimize wear and tear, it is critical that pitchers do not use metal cleats on these mounds. Pitchers may wear tennis shoes or a rubber cleat, and this will substantially reduce the rate of wear of the upper surface.

Another step that can help to preserve the structural integrity of the mound is to store the mounds flat on the ground next to the fence. Storing the mounds in this manner reduces mechanical stresses which lead to stress failure of the fiberglass structure.

### ***Home Plate Area***

Wear and tear of the home plate area is very similar to what occurs on the permanent mound, in this case caused by the repetitive motions of batter, catcher and umpire. The required remedies are the same as for the mound.

The required tools are: a) rake, b) tamp, c) water jug

The required care is, after the final game of each day, to:

- d) Fill the water jug, and soak the areas that have been damaged.
- e) Use the rake to refill these areas with fresh dirt from the area surrounding the plate.
- f) Use the tamp to compress the fresh dirt. If needed, rake a bit more dirt and tamp into place.

### **Notes**

1) Care of the infield lip (sweeping dirt from the outfield back onto the infield after the game) is an appropriate responsibility for the developing infielders on your teams. At Bronco level and above, it is suggested to train your players on these

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post-game responsibilities and to reward them for a job well done.

2) Care of the mound and home plate areas are appropriate responsibilities for the developing pitchers and catchers on your teams. At Bronco level and above, it is suggested to train your pitchers and catchers on these post-game responsibilities and to reward them for a job well done.

### **Contact Information**

- 1) For general information, questions, comments, concerns or suggestions – VP Operations – [vpops@carlsbadyouthbaseball.org](mailto:vpops@carlsbadyouthbaseball.org)
- 2) For day to day operational issues – your Division Commissioner
- 3) For issues of an urgent nature (safety issue, flooding, etc):
  - Park's department at (434-2825) (before 4pm Monday through Friday)
  - Harding Center Hotline (213-5875) day or night
  - Division Commissioner
  - Police Dispatch (931-2197)

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# **CYB EQUIPMENT RULES**

*Revised as of February 2009*

- 1) Do not release the “codes” to the equipment rooms to unauthorized personnel. Authorized personnel are CYB Managers, Coaches, Commissioners, and Board members. (Note: there are many unintended ways in which the codes can get released, including “loose lips”, giving your players the codes, leaving the doors sitting open with combo lock set to the code, etc. Please try to avoid these “inadvertent” releases.)
- 2) Equipment and supplies are for use only for use at CYB games, practices and other sanctioned events at the facility at which the equipment is stored.
- 3) Return any equipment and un-used supplies to the equipment room from which they were taken **prior to the beginning of the game** for which they were used for field preparation. At that time, **ensure that the door is locked prior to returning to the field.**
- 4) Return portable mounds and L-screens to their proper “out of use” location, OFF of the infield surface. If you have a question regarding the proper “out of use” locations for these items, contact your Division Commissioner.
- 5) Keep the equipment room door locked **AT ALL TIMES** that you are not working in the room, or leaving the room for a period of more than 5 minutes.
- 6) When returning used equipment and supplies to the equipment rooms, return them to the proper room and storage location therein.
- 7) If you see a mess in the equipment room, please stop or come by after your game is completed to help clean it up with the broom provided. If everyone does this, it will help to ensure our ongoing enjoyment of the facility.
- 8) Return bases to the room at the completion of the last game/practice of the day. Also, please remember to lock up Bathrooms (Chase

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Field) and call to have lights turned off after the last game/practice of the night.

- 9) If you see that needed equipment is missing or damaged, contact your division commissioner at the earliest opportunity.
- 10) If you see that chalk or other supplies are running low, please contact your division commissioner so they can be replenished.