

Natural Grass Ground Care

Natural grass grounds need extensive care and maintenance. There are a number of essential operations that need to be carried out on a natural grass ground to maintain the quality of the grass surface. It ensures that the underlying soil will support the root development and give a well-drained and stable playing surface.



Here are some handy tips to maintain natural grass grounds:

Mowing

Mowing of the ground should be carried out at regular intervals. The purpose of mowing is to ensure that the grass is at a suitable height for matches. Regular cutting improves the density of the grass sward. The mowing lines are important in the presentation of grounds. Mowing can also be used to lift surface debris resulting from games.

Equipment like cylinder, rotary and flail mowers should be used in the desired pattern.

Application of Fertilizer

Fertilizer is applied in order to provide a range of essential nutrients to support growth, giving a strong, wear resistant upper layer of soil, and to help recovery after damage of the ground. It improves the color of the grass as this is an important element of ground presentation.

Accurate and uniform application of the fertilizer is essential.

The most important nutrients include nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium, amongst other elements and micronutrients.

Irrigation

Regular irrigation of the ground is required to provide the grass with water to support even growth. It also reduces the hardness of the surface layer. It improves the stability of sand dominated root zones which may become too loose if allowed to dry out. It smoothens the chemicals and other materials applied on the ground and irrigation maybe needed in arid areas to wash excess salts out of the soil.

A wide range of equipment is used for watering grounds. It includes hand-held hose pipes, portable rotary and oscillating sprinklers, portable sprinklers, and pop-up irrigation systems.

Top Dressing and Aeration

Top dressing is applied on ground to improve surface levels, dilute fine mineral and organic matters that accumulates at the surface of the pitch. It provides a firmer playing ground and stabilizes channels created by aeration work.

Aeration is required to create a network of holes on the surface of the ground to improve water infiltration and air exchange. Helps to relieve compaction in the soil and promotes better root development. It modifies the firm characteristics of the playing surface.

Scarification

This process is needed to remove excess organic matter from the sward to improve growth and cuts any lateral grass growth for a denser and stronger grass. It improves the firmness and traction properties of the grass.

Equipment includes power reeled scarifiers with rotating blades, rake attachments and harrows.

Removal of surface debris

Natural grass ground needs to be brushed to remove grass cutting and other debris from the playing surface. It helps in better growing conditions and reduces the risk of deterioration. It ensures that the grass is upright, which allows uniform and effective cutting.

Equipment like Tractor mounted brush, powered suction units and rotary mowers are used.

Weeds and Pests

Most areas of the ground can be subject to invasion by weeds and to damage by pests. The selection of the correct grasses and good management practices can help minimize problems. Hand weeding can be used to remove some weed types but is not effective against all weeds. Spraying equipment with the right set of fertilizer is also crucial to evade weeds and pests.

Staffing

A sufficient number of staff should maintain the ground and should receive the necessary training to do the work effectively. Staffing levels can also be influenced by the nature of the work that is carried out on the ground.