

# Har-Tru® Courts Maintenance Manual

## MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

**Daily Maintenance** Daily maintenance of Har-Tru courts is a three-step process: brush, water and roll, in that order. Each process is explained below.

**Yearly Maintenance** Besides daily maintenance, Har-Tru courts must be reconditioned each spring prior to play. Reconditioning corrects minor problems and puts a fresh layer of Har-Tru on the surface. Sport Builders provides annual reconditioning services to commercial facilities.

**Other Maintenance** When Har-Tru courts become older, they lose their pitch and thickness. They begin to develop drainage problems which causes them to be too wet or too dry and sandy. Over time, they can also develop severe moss and algae problems. These types of problems are best solved with a stone dust overlay or lift. Har-Tru courts generally need a lift about every 12-15 years. Sport Builders can provide this service as well.

## BRUSHING THE COURTS

*Before watering, brush the courts to improve playing conditions.*

- We recommend brushing the courts in the late morning prior to afternoon watering and again in the evening after the end of play for the day. If you are not rolling your courts on a daily basis, you should also brush them in the morning prior to play.
- Brush the entire court surface. Don't miss the perimeter area where moss and algae can grow.
- Brush in a different direction each day. It's easier if you follow the schedule below instead of trying to alternate every day which gets confusing. Here's a suggested schedule:
  - Brush the short way (fence to net) on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
  - Brush the long way (side fence to side fence) on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday.
  - Brush either way on Sunday.

## WATERING THE COURTS

(above ground irrigation)

*Every court is different and may have different watering requirements. We've listed some general rules for watering. Sport Builders will evaluate your courts and recommend a watering schedule based on the condition of your courts and the times they're most frequently used.*

*Managing your irrigation plan is extremely important to create good playing conditions. You will have to make constant adjustments according to weather conditions and useage. But basically, it boils down to this: if the courts are dry, water them more and/or add more cycles. Sometimes courts need to be watered four times a day during hot, dry weather.*

- Make sure all your sprinkler heads are functioning properly to ensure even coverage. If they aren't you will end up with areas that are bone dry or areas that are soaked or a mixture of both.

- In the spring, it's better to water for shorter periods of time. Most courts will be watered in two cycles: cycle #1 at 12 pm noon and cycle #2 at 7 pm after play. Courts should be watered immediately after they have been brushed. DO NOT water in the middle of the night at this time. In the spring the courts are still soft. If you water too much and roll them in the morning, you may cause damage and line shifting. The courts will firm up as they get played on.
- As you transition from spring to summer, the amount of water used will need to be increased. Cycle #1 will remain the same and cycle #2 will probably move back an hour or so as the days grow longer. Depending upon conditions, you may need to add a third cycle during the middle of the night. If the courts look dry when you arrive in the morning, this will indicate that you need to add the third cycle.
- During the summer, water the courts in three cycles: cycle #1 at 12 pm, cycle #2 at 8 pm and cycle #3 at 1 am. The courts should get the heaviest watering during cycle #3 when the least evaporation will take place. The midday cycle (#1) will improve afternoon playing conditions.

## **ROLLING THE COURTS**

***After the courts are reconditioned in the spring, they need to be rolled. We recommend 2-3 days of rolling prior to play. During the season, they require less rolling. Hydro courts only need to be rolled at the beginning of the season.***

- Before beginning any rolling, always check the court conditions. If you are impatient and start rolling too soon, the lines will shift and you will have crooked lines. Sport Builders never leaves a job with wavy lines. DO NOT roll the courts if:
  - You step on the court and leave a footprint.
  - When you step on a line, you can push it into the Har-Tru.
  - You can easily move the lines.
- Do not use above ground irrigation systems until the initial rolling program is completed. Hydro court systems should be turned on after reconditioning for 24-36 hours to stabilize.
- Begin by rolling over the lines without turning. NEVER TURN ON THE CORNERS OF THE LINES. Roll the longer vertical lines (sidelines and center line) first. Then roll the shorter horizontal lines (baselines and service lines). Repeat the process. Make sure the lines do not shift before rolling the entire court.
- Roll the entire court surface the short way (from fence to net, in the same direction as the sidelines). Repeat. If at any time, you notice any line shifting, stop immediately and wait another 24 hours before attempting to roll again.
- Roll the entire court surface the long way (from side to side, in the same direction as the baseline). Repeat.
- After this initial rolling sequence, you do not have to roll the lines specifically again. For the next 2-3 days prior to play, roll the entire surface in both directions, first the long way, then the short way. It may be beneficial to roll twice a day, in the morning and later in the afternoon. After the courts are firm with no footprints and no line shifting, they are ready for play.
- During the season, rolling the courts three times a week and after a rain storm is usually sufficient. Roll the courts if they're soft in the morning when you arrive. If they're hard and dry, do not roll them. If they're constantly hard and dry you may need to adjust your irrigation.

## TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS

*Here are solutions to some of the most common problems that Har-Tru courts experience. If you develop other problems, please feel free to call Sport Builders for advice.*

**Dry Courts** Calcium chloride is a great product to help courts retain moisture. Use a 50lb bag on every court. Use it as necessary, usually once a month. Magnesium chloride can also be used. You can purchase these products at your local home improvement center.

**Moss and Algae** The easiest way to contain this problem is to use straight bleach. Pour bleach into a sprayer and spray the court perimeter. Spray every 4-6 weeks unless you have a severe problem, then spray every 2-3 weeks. It also helps if you brush the court perimeter with a metal dray mat 2-3 times a week. Don't be afraid to remove moss and algae with a lute once or twice a season. After removal, spray with bleach and add fresh material over the area.

**Low Spots** Remove dead or loose material from the low spot, then spread a new bag of Har-Tru over the spot. Extreme low areas may need several bags of Har-Tru. Level the area with a 2x4 and brush. Water the new material and roll the area.

**Dead Material Build-Up** If your courts are really sandy and the ball is bouncing everywhere, remove excess material with a lute. Make sure you don't remove too much.

**Hard Areas** Hard spots can develop where new material does not bind or where water accumulates on the court. These areas need to be scarified or broken up in order to create a porous condition to allow water to penetrate to the base.

**Line Shifting** If a line is popping up, take a hammer and nail it back into place. Don't be afraid to add additional nails to keep it in place. Hammer right through the tape into the court.

# YOUR MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

*Sport Builders can customize a program specifically for your courts. Fill in the charts below and keep it for your staff to use.*

## Brushing/Rolling Schedule

Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

## Spring Irrigation Schedule

Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

## Summer Irrigation Schedule

Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				