

The 10 -12 day prep shown below is only a guide; most groundsmen will have their own interpretation of these activities

DAY 1 String out pitch lines to ensure correct width, 10 ft; mow out at 8mm. Always double mow (up and down the same line), using an 8 bladed pedestrian cylinder mower for maintaining the square. Test the pitch with a key or knife for moisture. Water the pitch thoroughly in the event that the pitch has dried out through pre season rolling.

DAY 2 Brush / light rake, mow at 8 mm, light roll to consolidate surface levels.

DAY 3 Power scarify or verticut to remove lateral growth and surface thatch avoiding deep surface disturbance. Mow at 7 mm. Remove biomass, continue medium light rolling 1000 kg for 10-15 minutes.

DAY 4 Test for moisture. Roll pitch increasing to consolidate surface with 1000 kg roller if available.

DAY 5 Scarify with hand rake to remove any surface thatch build up Set and mow at 6 mm. roll.

DAY 6 Light scarify/ brush (lawn rake) to lift sward, mow, roll 20-30 minutes.

DAY 7 DAY OFF

DAY 8 Light scarify by hand, mow at 6 mm, increase weight of roller to 1500- 1700 kg continue rolling 30 minutes reducing speed to consolidate surface. Test for consolidation with key or knife for placidity.

DAY 9 Continue to mow and rolling at slow speed to achieve consolidation. Cover pitch over night to encourage moisture to rise to surface.

DAY 10 Brush/rake, lifting any lateral grasses, reduce mower (with a shaver blade) to 4mm, try to avoid scalping. Roll using heavy roller slow speed (crawling) morning and again late afternoon where possible. Cover pitch overnight.

DAY 11 Brush and mow pitch, roll morning and afternoon slow as possible (crawling).

DAY 12 Brush, mow and roll to polish surface, test bounce with an old ball along edge of pitch. Continue rolling to consolidate surface. Cover pitch overnight.

DAY 13 Brush, mow and roll polish up pitch. Your pitch should effectively have take on a straw like coloration, a sign that preparation has been achieved. String and mark out as in accordance to E.C.B guidelines.

The purpose of rolling is to squeeze any remaining air out of the pore spaces and to consolidate the surface up to 100mm. Rolling is best performed when there is sufficient moisture in the pitch before the ground dries out. In the event of drought, syringing is advisable to assist keying the surface and helps polish the pitch.