

# Painting a Warning Track - Plus - More Creative Thinking

by Mike Hebrard, Athletic Field Design

With The Babe Ruth World Series scheduled for action at the campus field of Lower Columbia College in Longview, Washington, there were many adjustments and reconstructive measures that needed to take place. Since the tournament was to be played at a Jr. College facility, the outfield fence was deemed to be too far and high for boys 14-15 years old to have a chance to win a game in the last inning with a heroic home run. The World Series Committee, headed up by Kirc Roland and Tony Murillo, decided to install a temporary 5' high cyclone fence down both the foul areas and the outfield. In order to accomplish this, the new red cinder warning track would be used as the base for temporary bleachers, and another warning track would need to be created. The Committee asked for my assistance, as I was in the midst of preparing my own tournament venue in Portland, the Girls Softball World Series.

As we have all done at one time or another, I decided to experiment. I used a product called Mulch Magic, which is used for coloring bark to its near natural appearance, in the shade of red that best matched the bright red cinder, and applied it to the 10' wide grass areas along

the fence. First, I marked and painted a straight line 10' from the outfield fence, using the wand and hose method to fill in the remainder of the grass. Success! There was an area in center field where the fence line went back to the existing warning track, and from a glance, you couldn't tell the difference between the cinder and the sprayed grass! Next came the infield, which was a recycled artificial turf that was faded from the sun with 10' wide walkways from each dugout. I decided to paint the walkways with the Mulch Magic too. This really highlighted the homeplate area! To finish the effect, taking a tip from past Super Bowls on artificial turf, I painted mowing patterns. I first marked off each of the four sides in 4' widths. Stretching a string between the points, I sprayed every other section and then repeated it in the other direction. For a more drastic pattern, you might spray the entire infield first, then measure off and spray the 4' widths.

This is not for the low budget or everyday ballgame, but if you have that one time special event and want to highlight your skills and show off your field, this might be a project that could make a difference.

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