

"Building Your Pitchers Mound with Clay Blocks"

When installing clay blocks, it is important to study your pitchers. Place the blocks 10 inches before the shortest stride and 10 inches wider than the longest landing foot. Remember pitchers may pitch from either edge of the rubber. The entire table around the mound should be built with clay blocks or bagged material.

1. Outline your table and landing areas and use a mound gauge to obtain the desired slope. Excavate 3  $\frac{1}{4}$ " below the surface.

2. Wedge the blocks into position  $\frac{1}{2}$  or less below the rubber. Water lightly and with your hands or a trowel, melt the seams together.

3. Excavate the landing area and be 10" wider and longer than the longest stride of your pitchers. Blocks should be within a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " of the surface.

4. Lay blocks into landing area, and tamp the sides to wedge tightly. Water and melt seams together.

5. Water and allow clay to set up. Lightly tamp or roll the surface.

6. Rake vitrified or calcined and infield mix over the surface and hand drag.

7. Always cover your mound to hold moisture in your clay.

8. To repair holes cut up blocks or use professional mound clay. Sweep out the hole to expose pure packing clay.

9. Lightly water, add new clay, and tamp. Bring infield mix over the clay and cover the mound.

**Caring for Material:** When not in use. Store blocks under a damp towel or burlap sack while wrapped in its plastic covering. This will keep your clay blocks moist and workable. Avoid storing in direct sunlight.

\*Ed Mangan, Head Groundskeeper of the Atlanta Braves, Top 10 Tips for Field Maintenance, Amcor Consumer Products, LLC

## continued from page 9 "Safety Is No Accident"

- Operate the machine only in well-ventilated areas;
- All service, other then the item listed in the owner's manual maintenance instructions, should be performed by competent service personnel.

OPEI urges landscape professionals to abide by these and other tips. For safety information on outdoorpower products, the institute has an extensive Website on the Internet: www.opei.org.

Other sources for safety (though less industryspecific) include the National Safety Council and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. You can find them on the World Wide Web at www.nsc.org and www.osha.gov, respectively. The N.S.C.'s phone number is (630) 285-1121; consult your local phone book for the nearest O.S.H.A. office. ▲

\*For information on how to obtain a copy of "Safety Management for Landscapers..." phone John Deere Publishing at (800) 522-7448 Landscape & Irrigation March 2003

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