

Appendix B - Generic Cricket Table Maintenance Programme

Mowing – mow the cricket table at 12-20mm through the year except after renovation when the height of cut can be as high as 32mm on seedlings. Close cutting must be employed only for pitch preparation. Clippings should always be removed.

Scarification – in spring and late summer the surface will require scarification as part of renovation works. Scarifying, verticutting and brushing will be required as part of pitch preparation.

Compaction Relief / Aeration – this work is undertaken from the end of the season until New Year as a general rule. The type and depth of aeration work needs to be chosen in response to prevailing conditions. Normally at renovation time solid tines of around 12mm diameter are employed and these are suitable through the winter until New Year.

Overseeding – damage to crease ends should be repaired with underpacking and as removed from use overseeding. The whole cricket table should be overseeded at least once per year and individual pitches can be overseeded after sarrel rolling during the playing season if so desired. Specific advice on cultivars and species should be sought from an independent sports turf Agronomist.

Topdressing – After scarifying and overseeding topdressing should be applied at the end of the playing season. The type of topdressing heavy loam relates entirely to the construction and loam type and clay contents employed and should be consistent with this.

Fertiliser – apply a winter fertiliser in September or October as the square comes out of renovation and the grass leaves have reached the 2-4 leaf stage. Soil analysis will determine the correct fertiliser product to use. In autumn and winter a product of 2-5% Nitrogen content will suffice and in summer a product of 8-14% nitrogen will be sufficient though 2-3 applications will likely be required to sustain growth and condition. Application rates of 20-35g/m² will suffice.

Pest and Disease – vigilance should be maintained for turf blemishes and appropriate approved products used to control issues that arise applying these in strict accordance with maker's instructions. For support and advice contract an independent sports turf Agronomist or disease specialist.

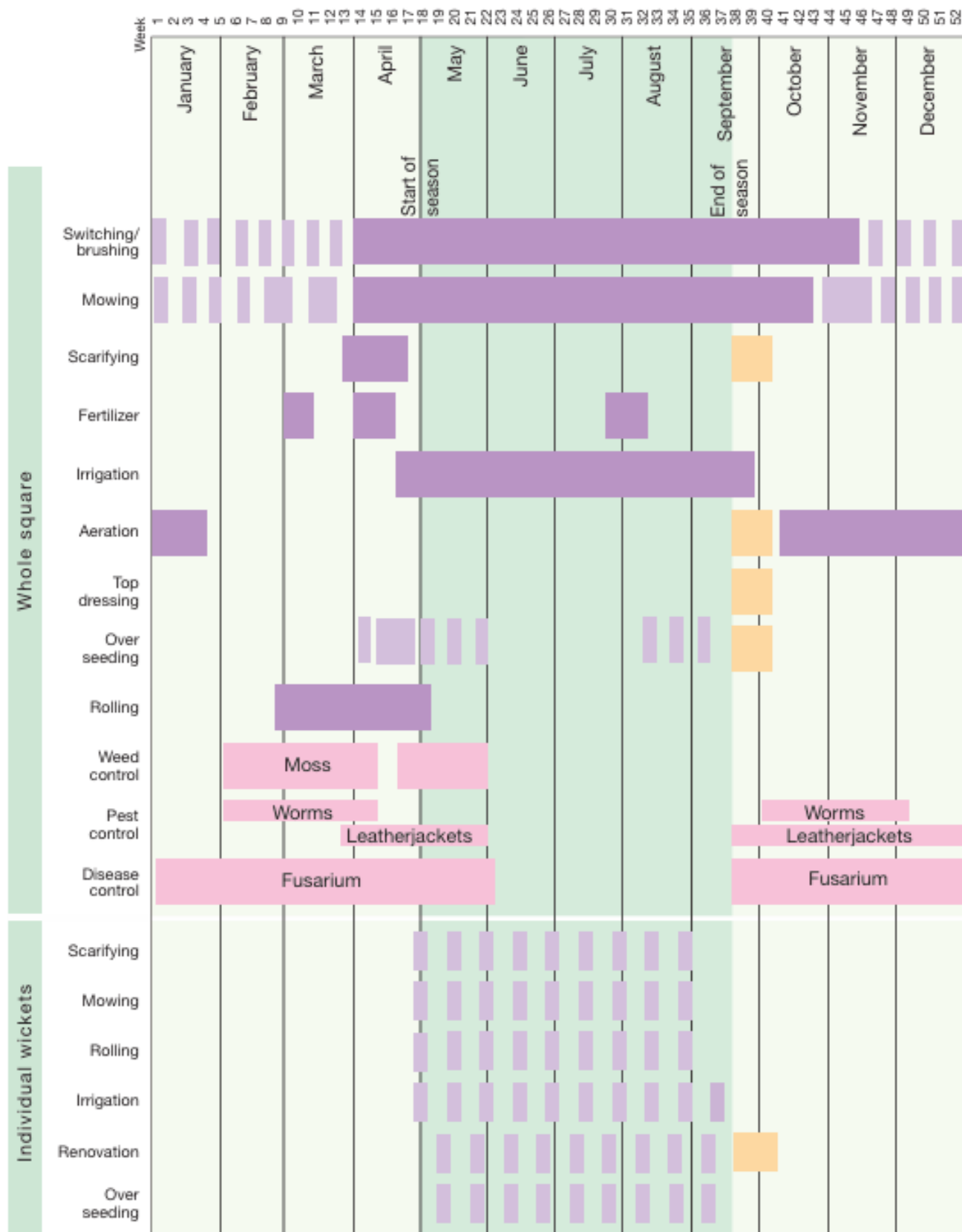
Selective Herbicide – apply a product suitable for the weed presence observed and if in doubt discuss with contractor, sales representatives or contact an independent sports turf Agronomist for further advice.

Rolling – Rolling should be carried out in spring when soil conditions are moist to settle the table for the season's play. Irrigation and watering are a normal part of cricket table preparation for matches.

Preparing Pitches: This is a very individual task depending much on the cricket table and how it responds to drying conditions, the time of year and standard of play. Generally the key elements are:

- Pre-season Rolling to settle the square after winter frost and water accumulation – this may proceed from February onwards as ground conditions allow.
- Spring renovations – usually verticutting or light scarifying suffice with mowing to collect arisings.
- During the playing season pitch preparations:
- Mowing – about 5-10 days before a match the pitch area is cut down to around 2mm height of cut.
- Scarifying – light scarifying then takes place repeatedly followed by further mowing to remove the lateral stalks and dead organic matter.
- Brushing and mowing take place to improve on the work with the scarifier.
- Watering and rolling may be needed contingent on surface conditions
- Covers may be needed to protect the surface from very fast drying or summer rainfall
- The process of pitch preparation is a uniquely skilled task for a good grounds person and it is difficult to fully explain the process in words... much is contingent on skill and understanding how the surface reacts to conditions over time.

Table 6: Summary Table for Cricket Table Management (source: Natural Turf for Sport - Design Guidance Notes. (May 2011))



Key
 Essential
 End of season renovation work
 May be required
 According to growth and ground conditions

A summary maintenance programme for cricket squares