High-level IPM at Cooperstown’s Doubleday Field
Joellen M. Lampman, New York State Integrated Pest Management Program
Quinton Hasak, Doubleday Field

Introduction
Doubleday Field is a historic ball field owned by the Village of Cooperstown, which has set a policy to try to eliminate pesticide use on village property, but without establishing an IPM plan of action. The ball field is subjected to intense traffic, hosting over 300 games a year, rain or shine, as well as community events. With the support of the NYS IPM Program, Doubleday Field was managed during the 2012 season using high-level IPM. In 2014, NYS IPM Program support officially resumed.

Procedures
The project team met throughout the summer to assess field conditions, conduct on-site consultations, and investigate alternative management solutions.

- Strict adherence to the core cultural practices was emphasized as the first line of defense against pests.
- Mowing heights were raised to 3” in 2013.
- Fertilization was conducted three times over the season.
- Overseeding was conducted in the spring and late fall at a rate of 4 lbs/1000 ft².
- Irrigation times were increased by 50%, but the number of applications decreased.
- Warning track material was added to increase its depth to better suppress weeds.
- Outreach materials were developed and distributed.

Equipment needed
Project team recommendations, including the installation of thick cut sod in high traffic areas, were not able to be implemented as there was no truck available for pickup.

Manual raking was necessary as a tractor that had been in the budget was never purchased. Proper equipment would allow for easier raking and grooming, thus reducing weed encroachment into the warning track. The lack of equipment also led to less aeration than was planned.

Looking into the future...
It is clear that acceptable playing conditions can be achieved without the use of pesticides during a good year; however, the conducive conditions of 2014 also masked consequences that might have become evident due to the lack of appropriate equipment and staffing.

A commitment to pesticide free maintenance must be coupled with a commitment to providing the resources needed to allow all cultural practices to be completed at the appropriate time.

2014 – Good year for turfgrass
2014 proved to be an undemanding year for turfgrass and strict adherence to core cultural practices provided a relatively pest free playing field. It was determined that no alternative pesticides were necessary to control weeds or insects in the field. Weeds in the warning track and under the bleachers continued to cause some issues, but the addition of warning track material combined with diligent manual raking and flaming kept these issues under threshold levels.

Two common reactions:
“Wow! You manage this field without pesticides? It looks amazing.”
“I am impressed that the municipality is doing that.”

Objectives:
- Mitigate risks associated with conventional pesticides, grub, and weed pressure
- Maintain field quality that meets or exceeds the expectations of stakeholders
- Project Evaluation
- Document and publicize results

Veronica filiformis at the turfgrass and warning track border.

Acknowledgments
Bruce Maxson, Doubleday Field Committee Chairman; Frank Rossi, Ph.D., Cornell University; Jennifer Grant, Ph.D., NYS IPM Program, Grant Thompson, Cornell University; Jordan Gary, Cornell University.

All photography by J. Lampman.