



Acrylic Courts



Tim Freeman from Kent Tennis sponsor, Trevor May Contractors Ltd, provides some information about acrylic courts, which may be a surface your club has not previously considered. Trevor May Contractors Ltd is based near Ashford and works across the South East specialising in installation and resurfacing of sports surfaces.



Two of the four Grand Slam tournaments, the Australian and US Open, are played on cushioned acrylic surfaces. Around half of the ATP and WTA Tours are also played on either indoor or outdoor acrylic surfaces. Traditional acrylic surfaces are non-porous, and outdoor courts are installed with a shallow gradient to aid drainage. However, this gradient is not enough to clear all rainwater from the surface, so inevitably you will experience some 'puddling'. This means that you will need to clear water from the courts following rainfall if play is to resume quickly on days that are damp or overcast, especially in the UK climate.

Acrylic is characterised by being a very flat surface that provides consistent ball bounce, takes spin and provides grip underfoot, except of course, when it is frosty, icy or damp. It is also available in a range of court pace ratings (CPRs) when installed, from slow (ITF 1) through to fast (ITF 5), which is achieved by altering the composition and texture of the top coat. Most are installed with a medium (ITF3) or medium fast (ITF 4) CPR. As the surface ages it will play faster, so you should bear this in mind if you are thinking of installing an acrylic court. It is a great surface for recreational play, coaching and matches.

It is available in a wide range of colour options, including tan, grey, purple, red, yellow and green which allows you to choose bespoke combinations and accentuate the contrast between the centre playing area and the perimeter of the court. Blue is particularly suited to televised events and this colour choice has been widely copied, often with a darker blue centre and lighter run offs.

The other unusual feature of a traditional acrylic playing surface is that it can be installed as a hard surface with no cushioning directly onto the base construction, over multiple layers of liquid applied cushioning for intermediate comfort that will vary with temperature, or over a pre-formed rubber shock pad, which helps to absorb shock and reduce the impact on a player's body, while at the same time offering best play performance and less susceptibility to temperature changes.

According to Tim, acrylic is a cost-effective surface system and is probably the most affordable of all surfaces. It offers a reliable ball bounce and good traction, is relatively low maintenance, comes in a large number of colours and you can determine the court speed. Installation usually takes between two to five days.

For more information about court surface options available, please contact Tim on 01233 740574 or visit the website at <http://www.trevormay.co.uk/>

Read the next editions of In Touch for articles by Tim Freeman about the benefits of clay and grass court surfaces