

## **Resurfacing Courts 7-9 and Mini-zone – Progress to date**

The sub-committee initially excluded acrylic (Caversham, Windsor indoor), Synthetic Grass, Grass, Clay and Porous Acrylic (current 7-9) surfaces.

Next we sent out surveys to all adult members and a separate junior survey. The results of both had very similar results with members of all abilities preferring our macadam courts (courts 1-3) to the poraflex (courts 4-6) in both the dry and when wet. Again across adults/juniors and all abilities the most popular other surface played on was artificial clay (similar speed & cushioning to the porous acrylic on 7-9 now), though some juniors also cited astroturf. In the general comments, several answers stated that “members at other clubs that had laid artificial clay courts were very happy or it was now a favourite surface”.

The sub-committee agreed a short list of four court surfaces – Macadam, Poraflex, Artificial Clay and Tiger turf (a high quality astroturf). We then arranged visits (group of eight players of varying abilities) to Windsor LTC to play on their poraflex courts and their artificial clay and another visit to Wooburn Green TC to play on their Tiger turf.

At Windsor everyone commented how much better their poraflex played, consistent bounce height and speed, but many also commented that we can't risk getting our style again (Windsor courts were laid nearly two years after those at MLTC). Everyone thought the artificial clay played well, with most players being happy with the small amount of “slide” that the surface allows. Everyone had a go at dragging the courts and it was noticeable that no-one had “red” socks (unlike real clay).

At Wooburn, everyone felt the courts played OK, but a lot of comments about “not at my club”, don't want to play on it and sand came up very quickly (maintenance and getting into shoes).

The sub-committee reported to the full committee with a recommendation for either artificial clay or macadam. Two items to note for the decision were that the installation & maintenance costs of the two surfaces are similar, that we know of many clubs (small to large) laying artificial clay as a new surface, with macadam being laid only to resurface existing macadam courts.

The full committee voted to lay artificial clay and so a request for final quotation has been sent out to three suppliers, with a schedule to place an order by end of November. It is expected that the courts can be laid in early 2019, as the installation will not be “summer weather” dependant and the surface on courts 7-9 is deteriorating rapidly.

Gareth Jackson  
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