

## **Camberley Tennis Courts**

***Below is a compilation of the feedback from the visiting group:***

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Dear All

Thank you for being a part of the focus group to report back on the 'clay court experience'.

Your feedback is an essential part of our decision-making process, so we very much appreciate your time to let us know your thoughts.

As a guideline to help you to consider, these are the areas that would be useful to know about:

	<b>Your comments</b>
<b>Playing conditions</b> when assessed was it wet, dry or raining etc.	Dry and sunny
	Dry
	Dry
	Dry
	Dry and Sunny
	It was a fine warm day.
<b>Ball bounce,</b> was it higher or lower than macadam?  Was the ball slower/faster?  How did this impact on your play?	Slightly lower
	Slower
	Longer rallies, more difficult to hit a baseline winner.
	Lower
	The ball felt slower
	I felt like I played better as a result
	Not much different
	Lower Slower ball pace Harder I would say to hit winners – rallies carry on longer
Lower	

	<p>Faster</p> <p>Am used to both surfaces</p>
	To be honest I didn't notice the bounce.
<b>Line calls</b> - was it easy to assess the ball being in or out?	<p>Yes, clear witness marks.</p> <p>Yes, after the appropriate court preparation is carried out.</p>
Were the lines clearly visible?	<p>Not as easy I thought it was going to be as the clay didn't mark as easily, but it might be that there just needed to be more sand.</p> <p>Lines were visible once you had rolled over them.</p>
	Yes
	<p>Wouldn't say it was any different really – if it had been thick clay powder then you could have seen the ball mark afterwards, but there wasn't much clay powder on the court so it didn't leave any real noticeable mark afterwards.</p> <p>Lines were visible as they were cleared before</p>
	Yes
	Yes
	The lines were visible after we had cleaned them, but disappointingly didn't show if the ball bounced on them (we checked)
<b>Ease on joints</b> – did you find it more forgiving or less forgiving than macadam?	<p>Yes, the surface is much more forgiving with adequate grip.</p> <p>No knee or hip pain after a match</p>
What difference if any did you notice?	<p>More forgiving.</p> <p>When I went for a ball I didn't feel as much pull on my muscles.</p>
	More forgiving
	Not sure I found it any different – if anything I felt it was slightly more tiring to play on as you don't have

	<p>the natural push/bounce from the court so you have to work a bit harder to get around (particularly with sliding). But it probably is easier on the joints</p>
	Much
	My main take away was take it was a slower surface to run around on, but would no doubt get used to it quickly
<p><b>Sureness of footing</b> - how did it feel underfoot? Did you feel secure?</p>	<p>Very stable underfoot, the option is available to slide a little if needed (less than natural clay court).</p>
	<p>It's very different so I think it will take a little bit of getting used to. I skidded once but I didn't fall over and I actually think a skid is better than pulling a muscle</p>
	<p>Less secure when pushing off and stopping but I prefer that as it puts less pressure on my toe. It will just take a little getting used to.</p>
	<p>Secure – yes. Albeit you can't change direction as quickly as hard court (i.e. you have to allow braking time). But yes, never felt like I would loose my footing</p>
	Yes
	It felt fine, slower to move
<p><b>Court maintenance</b> - did you sweep the court after play?</p>	<p>Court swept pre match with both court brush and line brush.</p> <p>Easy, 2 person job, around 5-10 mins work in total. Before play</p>
<p>How was that process?</p>	<p>We swept the court before play.</p> <p>The process was easy and took a short amount of time.</p>
<p>Was it preferable to sweep the court before or after play?</p>	<p>I think it depends. For me I would prefer to do it before so you know it has been done, but some people might prefer after.</p>
	No
	Less than 5 mins
	Before
	Before play

	<p>Easy – took 5 minutes and think people will do it as it takes no time.</p> <p>Preferable before or after</p>
	<p>Yes</p> <p>Easy</p> <p>After</p>
	<p>We dragged clay over prior to play, as is their rule. We dragged the large mats over the court and then went over the lines with the line brush - about 5 mins in total.</p> <p>Better before play as the weather could affect the surface overnight etc.</p>
<p><b>Any other comment</b></p>	<p>Balls remain in very good condition with little wear compared to hardcourt.</p> <p>I think the sunshine helped but I really enjoyed playing on the clay courts. I would have liked to play against the people I play against regularly to really see how differently I performed.</p> <p>I presume the court wouldn't be as affected by a bit of rain as our courts are?</p> <p>None</p> <p>You can play on them all year round, in frost ice and rain</p> <p>Dragging prior to play was fine, although the older members may not like it, and find the mats cumbersome. Other maintenance is very time consuming - leaf debris etc must be removed quickly and the sand sieved or it degrades the base. Camberly have a ton of clay delivered per year, which must be carefully stored and is costly. Dirty clay from sieving (can be two buckets every week or so) needs to be taken to the dump. Playing on the courts in the frost is not advised as it breaks up the plastic which holds the sand in place. We thought the surface looked OK, but the maintenance man pointed out that the courts were acutally 2mm lower than they should be, even after we had dragged. It really needed someone to come in and rejiggle sand across the whole area.</p>

<p><b>Would you want to change the courts at WSTC to Artificial Clay?</b></p>	
	<p>Yes, personally I prefer the benefits over hardcourt.</p>
	<p>Yes</p>
	<p>Yes</p>
	<p>I liked the clay courts – and I think the ideal is having both types of surface available (this is what Camberley have – hard court plus clay). I wouldn't want all 3 hard courts to be converted to clay as I think it would be a real shame; personally I would start with 1 court or maximum 2, but definitely not 3.</p> <p>It will be a bonus in the winter as the clay doesn't freeze, however I have played doubles pretty much every week throughout the winter bar 3 weeks due to bad weather. Sure clay would be better than hard court for winter, but for summer, hard court would be better, hence I think 1 court to start with would be best – that will give members 12 months or so to evaluate and then we can decide from there.</p> <p>The absolute ideal would be 2 hard court 2 clay but I assume we can't get planning permission!</p> <p>Ps And for my 2ps worth, definitely no need to change/invest any more money in the floodlights – they are absolutely fine.</p>
	<p>Yes it's a no brainer for an ageing club!</p>
<p>It was a nice surface, but to say they are low maintenance is naive. If we had ground staff it wouldn't be a problem and I would go for clay, however maintenance will require help from a very committed member. Who is going to come and help store away a ton of sand, sieve out debris, take foul sand to the dump, and check clay distribution each week?</p>	

If you get the chance to speak to members at the visiting club:

- Do they have them professionally swept once a week? Or on any regular basis? Yes – they had a dedicated member monitoring the

clay levels, adding more clay as necessary/sweeping/maintaining courts (3) at least once a week.

**If you get the chance to speak to members at the visiting club:**

- Are there are any times that the courts are not playable? **Not really – they said they still freeze in winter but still playable.**
- Do they water courts in the Summer? **Not sure – I didn't ask but Glenn probably did**
- Do they have them professionally swept once a week? Or on any regular basis? **They seem to invest A LOT of time in maintaining them – not just the sweeping, but Quentin the guy there I get the impression spends about 1 hour a week maintaining them, so it would need careful consideration as to who would perform this essential regular maintenance. I wouldn't be for having clay if it mean us having to pay additional fees for someone to maintain**
- Are any trees etc nearby that could affect the freezing or foliage that lands on the court? **Some, but no more than we have.**

**If you get the chance to speak to members at the visiting club:**

- Are there are any times that the courts are not playable? **No**
- Do they water courts in the Summer? **No**
- Do they have them professionally swept once a week? Or on any regular basis? **No – every few months**
- Are any trees etc nearby that could affect the freezing or foliage that lands on the court? **No**

**Other Comments received:**

From a lot of the players I've spoken to the most important factor is surety of footing.

Our current courts are just too slippery unless completely dry (if dry they are great),

Really enjoyed playing on the artificial clay surface-It was much better on the knees, a consistent bounce and very useful to be able to check on balls landing close to the line.

Artificial clay is fantastic for both the body and enjoyment of the game.

Agree with all comments about the artificial clay, makes such a difference and look forward to playing On it at WS!

In the end I don't really mind what surface you put down at WS as long as it's a safe one (unlike our current!)