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Section II.N. - Reconditioning Fast Dry Tennis Courts

1.0 Definition

Fast dry is a porous tennis court surface material consisting of natural crushed stone, brick, or tile, that is ground, screened, well graded, and may or may not be mixed with a chemical binder to form a stable homogeneous mixture having an affinity for water.

2.0 Introduction

Periodic reconditioning is important to both the performance and life of a fast dry tennis court. Proper maintenance, both daily and yearly, will maintain a tennis court in good playing condition and extend the useful life of the court.

Reconditioning is the seasonal replacement of surfacing material lost due to play, wind and water erosion.

3.0 General Requirements

An annual application of approximately 5 lbs./sq. yd. (2.8 kilos/sq. m.) of fast dry surface material should be applied, depending on type of irrigation system, intensity of play, and local climatic conditions. 5 lbs./sq. yd. (2.8 kilos/sq. m.) represents 2 tons (1814.4 kilos) per court.

4.0 Procedure

A. Preparation

In preparation for reconditioning, the fast dry court should be cleaned of debris, groomed by brushing, and then rolled. The rolling insures the bonding of all usable material. After rolling, the excess loose (“dead”) granules should be gathered into piles and removed from the court. Extra care should be exercised not to remove more material than necessary. If blowers are used, caution should be exercised so as not to remove usable surface material.

The loose (“dead”) granules may be used at a later time as top dressing material on bald, slick and wet areas and on subsurface irrigated fast dry courts.

B. Location of Depressions

Depressions are generally located in the base line and in the service court areas. Exact locations may be determined by circling areas retaining water after a rain, as well as by stretching a string line in several directions and marking low areas.

C. Correction of Minor Depressions

The correction of a depression may necessitate the removal of portions of the line tapes.

Ideally, the court should be relatively dry before applying new surfacing.

The depression should be scarified to a depth of 1/8" (3mm) to 1/4" (6mm) and filled with new fast dry surface material. The new surface material should be spread and compacted in a dry state, then leveled to surface grade with a straightedge, scraping off any excess materials. The area should be watered to its full depth and compacted. After watering, light play may resume.

Occasionally, the new surface material may have a tendency to shift and adhere to the roller. In cases where shifting persists, the area should be cut out to a depth of 1" (25 mm) below the grade and filled with new fast dry surface material. The new surface material should be compacted by hand and leveled. After watering and rolling, play may resume when the patch is firm. After play, additional maintenance may be required to these repaired areas for several days.

D. Correction of Major Depressions

In the event that a depression is too broad for a straightedge, a "screed strip" should be placed in the center of the depression with the top edge set at surface grade. This strip should be set with an instrument or by stretching a string line to points at proper surface grade outside the depression.

In leveling the newly applied fast dry surface material, one end of a straightedge should rest on the screed strip with the other end on the court area outside the depression. The screed strip acts as a guide for leveling each half of the depression. After the surface material is installed, the screed strip is removed and the remaining void patched with surface material.

For correction of major depressions, it is advisable to contact a qualified tennis court contractor or surface manufacturer.

E. Correction of High Spots in the Aggregate Base

In areas where the base is high, to the extent that aggregate is exposed in localized areas, the surface and aggregate should be removed to 1" (25 mm) below surface grade and filled with new fast dry surface material. After the surface material is compacted and leveled, the area should be watered and rolled. Play may resume when the patch is firm.

F. Top Dressing

After the loose "dead" material has been removed and the depressions filled and compacted, appropriate top dressing material should be applied. Above ground irrigated courts and subsurface irrigated courts may require different top dressing materials. It may be advisable to contact a qualified tennis court contractor or surface manufacturer to determine the appropriate material. A fertilizer-type spreader may be used to apply the top dressing material in several directions, brushing afterwards. If a spreader is not available, the fast dry top-dressing material should be applied by spacing the bags evenly and spreading the material as uniformly as possible. The newly applied surfacing should then be brushed in several directions to insure a uniform distribution of the material. The top-dressing material should be hand-watered with a fine spray and rolled. All line tapes which have been removed should be reinstalled.

It may be necessary to brush, water and roll successively over several days to

insure a bonding of the top-dressing to the existing fast dry surface before resuming play.

The same procedure should be repeated if additional applications are required.

Subsurface irrigated courts may require special procedures.

5.0 Courts Requiring Additional Conditioning

Courts which are badly worn may necessitate the use of more than the normal 5 lb./sq. yd (2.8 kilos/sq. m.) (2 tons). The additional fast dry should be applied according to the procedure above in applications not to exceed 5 lb/sq yd (2.8 kilos/sq. m.). It is not recommended that more than 10 lbs/sq yd (5.7 kilos/sq. m.) (4 tons) be used as a top dressing. Courts worn to a greater extent should be resurfaced with no less than 80 lbs/sq yd (45.6 kilos/sq. m.) (32 tons) using screed strips and a proper straightedge or laser controlled techniques as discussed in Section 6.0.

For courts requiring extra conditioning, it may be advisable to contact an experienced contractor or manufacturer.

6.0 Laser Controlled Resurfacing

Fast dry courts that have lost their original slope and planarity may be regraded using laser controlled equipment, returning the court's proper slope and planarity. Prior to determining the amount of new fast dry surfacing required, the court or courts should be surveyed on a 20' grid, recording the surface elevations and the depth of surface material. After regrading, a minimum of 1" of compacted fast dry surface should be maintained throughout.

Again for courts requiring this type of resurfacing, a qualified tennis court contractor and/or surface manufacturer should be consulted.

Note: Refer to Guidelines for:

[I.A. General Conditions for Construction](#)

[II.A. Tennis Court Orientation](#)

[II.B. Tennis Court Dimensions and Related Measurements](#)

[II.D.1. Fast Dry Tennis Courts for Use with Above Surface Irrigation](#)

[II.D.2. Fast Dry Tennis Courts for Use with Subsurface Irrigation](#)

[II.F.1. Above Surface Irrigation Systems for Clay and Fast Dry Tennis Courts](#)

[II.F.2. Retrofit Subsurface Irrigation Systems for Fast Dry Tennis Courts](#)

Notice

These Construction Guidelines are intended for use by architects, engineers, contractors, tennis court and running track owners. Parties not experienced in tennis court or running track construction are advised to consult a qualified contractor, consultant and/or design professional. Experienced contractors, consultants and/or design professionals can be identified through the American Sports Builders Association. Due to changing construction technology and techniques, only the most recent version of these Guidelines should be used. Variances in climate, soil conditions, topography and other factors may make these Guidelines unsuitable for certain projects.