



Considering A Synthetic Surface or Product for your Arena?

Below are a few points to take into consideration when researching and selecting a Synthetic Product or Material for your Arena Surface:

- Synthetics were originally used in Europe to help stop surfaces from freezing over during the winter months. European style surface construction generally consists of a fine silica sand (similar to beach sand) and high levels of moisture content to ensure consistency of ride of the surface for varying disciplines.
- In Australia our sands and materials are different and our water supplies are costly and not so abundant. We also have more extreme weather conditions - heavy downpours, storms and flooding events in Summer compared to more steady rain in the UK and Europe. High temperatures and drought conditions are also a regular occurrence. Humidity can affect the performance of some fibres causing them to rot and breakdown quicker. Australian surfaces need to be able to adapt to a wide range of weather conditions and elements.

Choosing a synthetic product to add to your existing surface, or deciding on a synthetic surface during original construction will require a number of key factors:

- Water availability - A number of products will require large amounts of water to ensure a consistent ride. Some synthetic surfaces may be supplied with a wax/gel in them - waxes can be highly reactive to temperatures and moisture content, which may change the ride throughout the year particularly on an outdoor arena. Consistency is the key.
- Ongoing Maintenance - Synthetic Surfaces will often require a specific type of maintenance implement or tool, generally one with a roller and sprung tines. Maintenance is also more labour intensive compared to a standard Sand type surface. Regular maintenance visits to bring the surface back to it's original blend can be more expensive. Depending on the type of additive, it may require regular topping up.

(See ELD Synthetic Surface Maintenance Tips Flyer for further details: [ELD Synthetic Surface Tips](#))

- Training vs competition consistency: Training daily on a synthetic surface and then competing on a variety of different sand based surfaces can alter your horses performance.
- Down the track - should you decide you don't particularly like the surface you have chosen, or it does not suit the purpose - consider disposal options as you may be limited due to regulations.

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