

Choosing Surface Colors for Courts and Tracks

Designers and owners of running tracks and courts have always balanced concerns about visibility, aesthetics, energy use, and surface temperature when choosing surface colors and backgrounds. But with surface technology advances providing a vibrant rainbow of standard and custom color options, greater attention today is being focused on aesthetics, and issues of attitude, personality, school spirit, and visual identity have come to the fore.

The new trademark United States Tennis Association (USTA) color scheme, presented as a black and white image to the right, which has a darkly-rich blue inner court surrounded by a parrot green outer court, provides a stunning example. According to USTA, the color scheme heightens visibility of the ball for players, fans attending tournaments, and television viewers, while providing an identifiable visual link between the many U.S. Open Series tournaments and the U.S. Open proper.



Center Court at U.S. Open

Proven surface color selections are available. Traditional, dark green court surfaces provide excellent contrast to yellow or white tennis balls, and good visibility for players, while reducing sun glare. Two-tone color schemes are often selected to clearly define boundaries. When such combinations are chosen, the color with the lowest light reflectance (generally, the darker color, as in the USTA color scheme) should be used within court boundaries. However, for areas in which tennis is played during the day, lighter colors are often chosen for surfacing, as they absorb less light and therefore, minimize surface temperature buildup. For night play, or for indoor courts, surfaces with low reflectance colors will require more lighting to illuminate them.

Red and black have always been popular colors for running tracks. But advances in UV-protection technologies have spurred on a rush of custom colors for track surfaces, often incorporating school or track club colors.

The fashion, printing, and home furnishing industries greatly influence our attitudes about color and design. Hot colors for 2006, according to the Color Marketing Group, will include green, pink, blue, gray, orange, and brown. Designers are expected to throw one-two punches from this hot-color pallet, selecting contrasting colors, or using two or more complimentary bright hues in combination. Much quicker than sport traditionalists might like to admit, these color trends will be incorporated into recreational court and running track design. Check out a teenager's bedroom today for the hot court and track colors of tomorrow.

NOTE: USTA has licensed its trademark U.S. Open court color scheme. Contact Fred Kolkmann, at 414.351.0800, to incorporate the Open colors for your court(s).

Late Fall Tennis Court Maintenance Checklist



An effective annual maintenance program ensures you get the best from your tennis court(s). Great Lakes courts need the following maintenance work done in late fall:



Net + Snow = No-no

- ✓ Remove all debris and dirt off court, preferably with light power-washing. Organic debris, such as weeds and leaves left on court, will decompose and trap moisture for the duration of the winter. Trapped moisture will cause premature failure of the paint system, which is susceptible to moisture.
- ✓ Remove nets and windscreens and store them in a dry, rodent-resistant place (mice love nesting in nets and windscreens). Ice and snow buildup can cause fabric to deteriorate quickly, limiting windscreen service life, and can contribute to fence failure during storms or high winds. Also, remove net posts, if possible, and cap post sleeves.
- ✓ On clay courts, we recommend placing a winter court cover to minimize the amount of clay loss. **NEVER COVER A COLOR-COATED HARD COURT.** Doing so increases the chance of moisture damage to the surface color system.
- ✓ Fill cracks to minimize water entering and expanding the cracks during freeze/thaw cycles.

Creation and implementation of a regular maintenance program and attention to preventive maintenance ensures you get the best from your courts. Our experience over the past 41 years shows failure to remove all debris and dirt off courts in late fall (Checklist item one above) is the primary cause of court damage. Many court owners and managers protect and preserve their court investments with an intelligent maintenance-service program coordinated by Munson Inc. For more information on Munson court maintenance services, contact Fred Kolkmann at 414.351.0800. Call today, as our fall maintenance service schedule is filling up fast.

Munson Inc. is a proud and active member of the following associations:



CASE STUDY: Multiple-Court Facility Repair Project Requires Court-by-Court Analysis and Customized Repair Solutions

Eagle River, Wis. - The four outdoor courts adjacent to the Vilas County Fair Grounds, leased and managed by the Greater Eagle River Tennis Association (GERTA), were successfully returned to service recently, after an extensive, two-week court-repair program was completed on time and on budget by Munson Inc.

The repair project was funded, according to GERTA project manager Mike Schindler, through an Adopt-a-Court grant from the U.S. Tennis Association, GERTA-member fund raising efforts, and donations from local businesses, the Town of Cloverland, and the City of Eagle River.

Pre-project assessment found the courts in various degrees of age and playability, and with multiple cracking conditions. "The challenge," said Fred Kolkmann of Munson, "was to provide the correct repair solution for each cracking condition."

Courts 1 and 3 showed evidence of structural cracking, but the playability for each court was still fair. Court 2 had been replaced 4 to 5 years ago and had developed hundreds of small surface cracks, which did not extend through the pavement. Court 4 had severe structural cracking and will need to be replaced in the not-so-distant future.

Courts 1, 3, and 4 also showed considerable paint peeling, which required water-blasting equipment to remove the surface to the original asphalt to provide a firm bonding surface for the court repairs.

Crack assessment on Courts 1 and 3 suggested the ARMOR CRACK REPAIR SYSTEM would provide the best repair solution, greatly extending the service-life for each court. A six-step process, the system utilizes a thin, knitted fabric membrane to keep structural cracks from reappearing on the surface of asphalt tennis courts. The system allows cracks to widen in the winter without the fabric tearing or delaminating from the surface, as the fabric is not bonded to the court in the vicinity of the crack, thus effectively spreading the stress of the crack over a wide area of expandable fabric.

As a result of crack assessment on Court 2, a full-coverage fiberglass membrane repair was made in the playing area only, to restore surface integrity and provide a smooth, dense, watertight playing surface. Experience on other court repair projects has shown this repair solution works well for courts exhibiting small (less than 2-inch-long) "slits" in the color coating and penetrating only the top 1/16-inch of pavement.

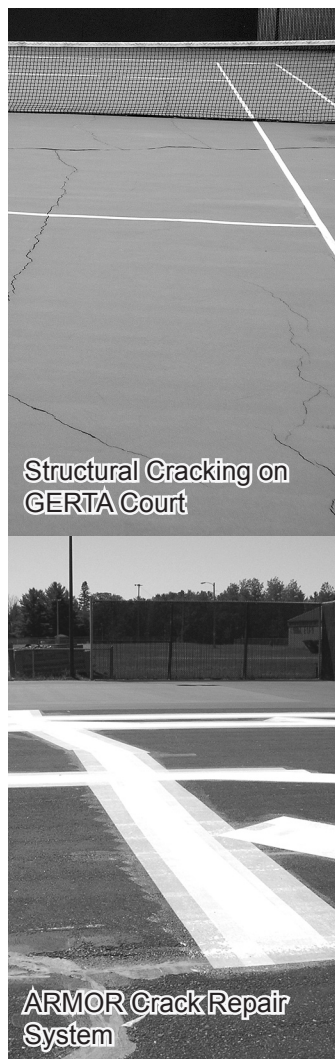
After assessing Court #4, GERTA decided to only implement a crack-filling and re-coloring repair. Due to the extensive amount of cracking on this court, the cost of installing an effective crack repair system would have exceeded the cost of removing the asphalt and re-paving the court.

Schindler reports because of the repairs, the courts are now "in really nice shape." He also noted it was a pleasure to work with Munson Inc. "Fred came out to inspect the courts and explained what Munson could do, within our budget constraints, to fix the cracks. Then the Munson Team went to work and did just what Fred said."

Kolkmann reports the condition-specific crack repairs will greatly extend the service life of the courts for GERTA members.

For more information about the USTA Adopt-a-Court grant program, call Shannon Hatton at USTA, 914.696.7291. For more information about the ARMOR CRACK REPAIR SYSTEM, visit this web site: www.armorcrackrepair.com.

For help with crack assessment or crack repair, call Fred Kolkmann at Munson Inc., 414.351.0800.



Q & A, Continued

with high ultra-violet (UV) light resistance, richness of color, ability to hold texture (sand), wear-ability, and speed-of-play.

Munson Inc. has had great success with industry-leading Plexipave coating systems, as they: Offer the highest UV resistance; use twice the amount of hiding pigment; use highest quality color pigments (for long color retention); provide great ability to hold sand; and offer multiple options for ITF-rated speeds-of-play. Plexipave also invests full-time in R&D, provides responsive technical service, and supports the sports-building industry through association involvement. Visit www.plexipave.com for details.

When comparing coating system costs, know low price seldom relates to longevity.

Larry Tegtmeier of California Products Corporation contributed to this article. Contact Larry at eltego@earthlink.net.

Q and A

Are all color coating systems equal?

NO. Though a majority of coatings manufactured for tennis courts use 100 % acrylic latex as the primary vehicle for production, competing surface coating products are not equal. Various grades and quality of acrylics are available from suppliers for tennis court coating manufactures, which add ingredients (too numerous to list) to their coating recipes in proprietary proportions to make duplication almost impossible.

Color coating systems often require the use of companion products (silica), which can vary widely in quality and availability. Manufacturer application recommendations for color coating systems also differ, and application methods directly affect such surface characteristics as color, wear-ability, color retention, adhesion, and playability.

When selecting a surface coating, experience shows priority should be given to coatings ...

[Please see Q & A, Continued, adjacent]

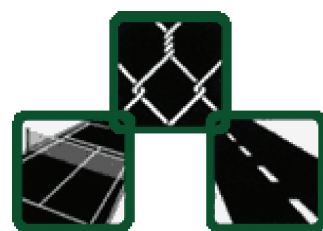
Have questions about court or track construction/maintenance issues?

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SINCE 1955**

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