

Lode Tennis Club

**The Nineteenth Annual General Meeting of the club
will be held at 7.30pm at 47 Mill Road,
Lode on Thursday 3 September 2015**

Agenda

1. Election of the Committee of Management and the officers.
2. Matters arising from the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 23 September 2014.
3. To receive the Treasurer's Report.
4. Matters arising from the Chairman's Report.
5. The forthcoming resurfacing of the court and the committee's decision to change the current tarmacadam ('Pladek') surface to an artificial grass ('Savanna') surface.
6. To set membership fees for the forthcoming year.
7. Any other business.

Chairmans's Report

Your tennis club continues to thrive and the court has been maintained to a very high standard.

This year the club has again arranged a very successful 8 week course of tennis coaching, aimed principally at juniors, and subsidised by the club. It may be necessary (because of availability of the coach) to change the format next year to a concentrated mid week training camp for just one or two weeks.

During the year, there have been successful social events held, including a curry evening in February, and an open day in August. A safari dinner party is proposed for later this year.

A grant of £3,000 from East Cambs District Council has been secured for the complete resurfacing of the court, which now has to be done before June next year. We have been provided with the opportunity to significantly improve the existing hard court surface with a state of the art artificial grass surface. Full details of this are provided in a separate briefing note attached.

Any suggestions regarding the management of the club and/or any improvements would be most welcome.

Jeff Kempster Chairman

Lode Tennis Club

Court Resurfacing - Briefing Note

Executive Summary:

Your committee has come to the conclusion that the courts should be resurfaced using the new Savanna artificial grass surface for two fundamental reasons. First, although it is initially more expensive by £3,470, the new surface will save the Club something in the region of £24,000 over the next 15 years. Second, having tested the new surface your committee are absolutely convinced that it represents a significant improvement over the existing Pladek surface, and have not been able to find anything other than positive feedback about it in other locations. If you wish to read the detailed reasoning behind this conclusion see below.

History:

The court last had a complete resurface when Lode Tennis club was formed in 1996 so around 19 years ago. The current tarmacadam surface ('Pladek') needs and has had regular maintenance at 5 to 7 year intervals which involves a deep clean (which removes the binding coat), moss killing, repainting and replacing the binding coat. The current cost of this process is almost £3,000 each time. The committee has been accumulating funds in preparation for a complete resurfacing of the court (circa £12k) which was due at around 14 - 15 years, - so now.

Financials:

The club currently has around £9,400 in the bank. In addition a grant application to ECDC has been approved for £2,997 so long as the resurfacing work is done within 12 months (so before end June 2016).

The original quotes:

The committee's preferred supplier (has been responsible for all court construction matters and maintenance from outset) originally provided quotes for a replacement Pladek surface, and a more expensive carpet surface ('Sporturf') similar to that on Bottisham courts which would cost £2,750 more. The committee had already rejected the Sporturf option as none of them preferred that surface over the existing Pladek. NB - these quotes were not the cheapest of all those obtained but were very competitive.

The new quotes:

In finalising the work required for replacing the worn out posts another option has become available, primarily due to an improved exchange rate which has made a far superior artificial grass surface ('Savanna') cheaper and therefore (potentially) within the club's price range. The comparison of these quotes (which include the replacing of worn out posts etc) is as follows:

- a) for replacing with the same Pladek surface - £11,856
- b) for replacing with the Savanna surface - £15,326

The difference is £3,470

Consideration of the Savanna surface:

Your committee has been working very hard to establish whether the change to a different surface (from the Pladdek which has been perfectly acceptable and liked by all existing members), is either justifiable or preferable. Here are the pro's and con's of changing to the Savanna surface that we have identified:

Factors for changing:

- i. The certain maintenance costs of £3,000 every 5 to 7 years would be removed and would be replaced by a £500 cost (and even that may not be needed). So a saving of at least £7,500 - £9,000 over 15 years against an initial cost of £3,470.
- ii. The Savanna surface is better at resisting moss and keeping it at bay.
- iii. The estimated life of the Savanna court for private use (like ours) is indefinite, [for heavy club use it is 18+ years]. The product is guaranteed for 8 years. This is difficult to quantify financially, but could save the club a bill of at least £12,000 in 15 years time.
- iv. The surface is much more 'comfortable' than hard court. Far less likelihood of injuries, particularly serious injuries from falls. It does not wear out shoes and tennis balls as quickly. It is not abrasive to the skin so does not 'burn' when rubbed.
- v. The bounce/ball speed is consistent in both dry and damp conditions. The surface drains very quickly (much quicker than Pladdek) so will be ready to play on within 15-20 minutes of rain. It is not as 'fast' as grass.
- vi. The lines are not painted on, or inserted into the surface, and consequently there is no variation of bounce when a ball hits the line.
- vii. Five committee members have tried out this surface on a private court in Kimbolton. All five arrived with a healthy dose of scepticism, as they all liked the existing Pladdek surface, and several had tried both grass and Sporturf carpet surfaces and did not like them in comparison with Pladdek. All five left as converts. They liked the speed and the bounce of the ball which were almost exactly like the Pladdek surface. Slower balls might just die a bit more quickly, but apart from that it was very similar to Pladdek.
- viii. Inherent with the quotation supplied was an understanding (not written or contractual) that we would allow the supplier to 'show' our court to prospective customers, with a quid pro quo, that it was in their interests for the supplier to help us to maintain the court in excellent condition.
- ix. This is a one off opportunity for us to have a 'Rolls Royce' court. "The best court in any club in the county".

Factors against changing:

- i. We know and love the existing court so Pladdek is 'the safe option' (ie relatively risk free).
- ii. The Savanna surface is relatively new (5 years) and it might be argued it is untested for longevity. [It is however, developed from wet hockey systems which have been in existence for over 12 years.]
- iii. It costs less initially to install the Pladdek surface.
- iv. There are not a lot of clubs (none in Cambridgeshire) that have this surface, although there are quite a few in private homes.

- v. There are not a lot of people to approach for references. [although those that have been contacted (some independently of the supplier) were unanimously favourable].
- vi. Only one supplier currently supplies and installs this court surface.

Importance of timing:

- a. The court must be resurfaced before next June otherwise we will not retain the £2997 grant from ECDC.
- b. The quotations provided are only valid for a maximum of 3 months. We know that the current quote for the Pladek court is £1,000 less than it ought to be (it has been discounted because we had an earlier quote from last November)
- c. We believe that we have a very favourable quote for the Savanna surface because the supplier wants to establish an example court close to Cambridge.
- d. The Pladek surface would have to be installed by around the end of September as fair weather conditions are required in order to allow the surface to 'cure'. The Savanna surface is more flexible and so could be installed in October or possibly November.

Funding issues and proposals to solve them:

- a. As things stand there is a shortfall in club funds if the Savanna option is to be pursued. This amounts to £2,929.
- b. A further grant has been applied for, from Amey Community Fund, but we won't know if that application will be successful until some point in November 15.
- c. If the grant application is not successful (which is thought likely), it is proposed to ask if any members of the club would be prepared to make an interest free loan to the club of £500 each for a period of between 2 and 3 years in order to cover the temporary shortfall in funding. Some members (committee members) have said that they will be prepared to make that commitment, but we will need a few more.

Other Matters:

A summary of various technical and other detailed questions regarding the Savanna surface and the supplier - En Tout Cas Tennis Courts Ltd are provided in the attached Appendix, together with online links to information relating to the product and the company.

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Court Resurfacing - Appendix with additional information

1. Preferred supplier = En Tout Cas Tennis Courts Ltd (website details - <http://www.tenniscourtsuk.co.uk/>)
2. For details of the Savanna surface - <http://www.tenniscourtsuk.co.uk/savanna.html>
3. Links to their filed accounts and officers etc.
<https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/04176633>
4. Places we have found that have Savanna installed and have asked for references:

Sportscotland National Centre Inverclyde

Mullingar Tennis and Badminton Club

Boldmere Tennis Club

The coach at Ross on Wye Tennis Centre who has a private client who installed it

The private client near Ross on Wye

We have not had any unfavourable comments about the surface.

5. Questions we have asked and the answers received:
 - a. How does the water drain away from the surface? There are holes in the underlying backing for the 'grass' and the water drains through those and through the underlying tarmacadam, which will have been cleaned to remove the binding coat which will improve porosity. If any areas of the court require it, then drainage will be improved by drilling prior to laying the savanna surface.
 - b. How is it fixed down? There is adhesive between the Savanna surface and the underlying tarmacadam surface, but primarily the weight of the sand holds the Savanna surface in place.
 - c. Will the sand be visible? This surface is a half filled sand surface which means that the sand is kept away from the players and should be unobtrusive. There will be an initial period for the sand to 'bed down' when the sand may be a bit more visible. It may be necessary to carry out some light brushing from time to time to ensure that the sand levels remain consistent, but this should be minimal.
 - d. Will any moss on our existing court grow through and appear in this surface? No - moss needs light to photosynthesise and no light will get to it under this surface.
 - e. How much maintenance will this surface require? It should be treated with mosskiller 4 times a year in the same way that a Pladec surface should be. Apart from that there should be minimal maintenance other than very light brushing to remove surface debris or leaves. This surface is less likely to be susceptible to moss spores than the Pladec surface.

- f. What happens if the distribution of sand over the surface becomes uneven? It shouldn't happen, but if it were to then either light brushing to redistribute the excess sand, or in extremis we would be happy to send someone just to correct the problem. It is in our interests to help you to keep the court in tip top condition.
- g. Will cold weather pose any problems? No, in fact this surface reduces the risk of frost damage to the underlying tarmacadam as it provides insulation and there is less chance of freezing water in minute cracks starting to damage the surface.
- h. Why haven't you got a lot of courts installed with clubs? We have found the club market to be very keen in terms of pricing and consider that many competitors are currently working with very little margins in their pricing. As a result we have concentrated on private courts where we have found people are happier to pay a reasonable price for a quality product and service.
- i. If this product is manufactured in Belgium, is it marketed by anyone else in either Europe or the UK, and could we contact them or any other users about it for references? This product is made to a unique specification only for En Tout Cas Tennis Courts Ltd and is not marketed in Europe. It is only sold by, or under licence to En Tous Cas.
- j. Why have you decided to move away from other tennis court surfaces and developed your own unique design? We were unhappy about the production of Tiger Turf which was becoming widely developed and used. The early versions of it were brilliant, but the company manufacturing it got into debt with its overseas suppliers and was subsequently acquired by those suppliers. Different versions of Tiger Turf were then launched and the quality of the product across the range started to suffer badly. We decided to look at alternatives because we thought we could improve upon the other offerings available.
- k. What is it like to play on if it is raining? As with any court it is not recommended to play on this surface when it is pouring with rain, but it drains faster than Pladek and can be played on within maybe 15 to 20 minutes.
- l. Would it be possible for the edges of the court to lift or ruck up, for example in windy conditions? No it is stuck down.