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SWI008: Squash Plaster Working Instructions 8 - Cleaning

Armourcoat Quality Assurance Rules On Cleaning Squash Courts – White And Coloured

1 Causes of Dirt

- Body grease is deposited when players wipe sweat from their hands to walls.
- Graphite marks occur when the racket head hits the wall. Colour depends on the racket colour. World Squash Federation rules require racket manufacturers to fit racket head bumper strips that do not leave marks. Enforcement of this rule will prolong periods between court cleanings.
- Ball scuff, caused when squash balls are hit hard along the wall. Shows as a black or green smudge on the wall surface.
- Dirt and grime, generally airborne, settles as dust on the walls.

2 Cleaning Frequency

Clean walls improve light quality in a court. Thus, walls should be cleaned at least once a year.

3 Pre-installation Checklist

Ensure that the floor is properly protected before starting any repairs or cleaning of walls and playing surfaces, or painting doors or out-of-court areas.

- Hand grease, ball scuff and airborne dirt can be safely removed with Armourcoat Cleaning Solution. Follow manufacturer's recommendations, using water-retaining scouring pads. While cleaning, swill down the wall to prevent loosened dirt being re-absorbed.
- To remove graphite marks requires abrasion. Use fine sandpaper on dry walls or abrasive cleaning pad. This is a labour-intensive operation, since each mark must be tackled individually.
- When cleaning Armourcolor Courts, heavy scouring, with abrasive pads and or abrasive cleaners such as Vim or Bar Keepers Friend will open the grain of the plaster and coarsen the surface. This will increase the propensity of the wall to mark. In practical terms abrasive cleaning should be kept to a minimum and clients planning coloured courts should be told of this risk if non approved rackets are used on their courts.
- When abrasive cleaners are used, particularly on coloured courts, the walls at the end of the cleaning process must be thoroughly rinsed to remove all traces of powder residue. If this is not done or done badly the wall, when dry, will look patchy and several shades lighter than original colour.

Note: Never use acidic cleaners for squash court walls.

Some maintenance companies have used acidic cleaners – cement and lavatory cleaners – in the past. They work by dissolving the plaster surface to expose a clean layer. They also leach into the plaster beneath, which, within a year, will be soft, chalky and in need of replacement.

4 The Time Factor

Cleaning a squash court takes two people about six hours.

5 Mould Growth

Mould growth on internal walls is caused by prolonged condensation, rising damp or leakage from outside. Watch for signs of mould growth and treat immediately, ensuring that the cause is corrected. Established mould cannot be removed and will cause permanent marking throughout plaster.

Remove growth by brushing down to remove loose growth. Then wash down walls with a suitable fungicide or a dilute solution of chlorine-based household bleach. Wash down walls with clean water and dry thoroughly, using a dehumidifier to accelerate the process. Condensation is usually caused by poor ventilation and, if it is a frequent problem, professional advice should be sought.

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