

## » Game, set and match: Arma-Chek at Wimbledon Successful long-term redevelopment of Wimbledon Court facilities



The greatest competitions in the history of tennis have been carried out on Wimbledon's "hallowed turf". In 1980, in what was probably the most exciting Wimbledon final ever, Björn Borg won the title for the fifth time in a row against John McEnroe. Then, a year later, it was McEnroe's turn to carry off the most coveted trophy in tennis. In 1985 Boris Becker was the youngest player to win the tournament. Martina Navratilova is to this day the undisputed "Queen of Wimbledon" with six consecutive victories and the all-time record of nine wins altogether. In the men's event, the US American Pete Sampras holds the all-time record with seven titles to his name.

There is something magical about The Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Championships, the only Grand Slam tournament to be played on grass, which fascinates players and spectators alike every year. The most prestigious tennis championships has kept its old-fashioned, refined character. The players in their tennis whites, breaks for the rain and, of course, strawberries and cream – this is all part of Wimbledon. However, the fact that it keeps time-honoured traditions does not mean that Wimbledon ignores the advances of modern technology. The Championships, which

have been staged by The All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club since 1877, has developed from a refined garden party into a highly professional competition and media event. The tournament attracts an attendance of some 500,000 spectators and a following of several hundred million viewers on television screens throughout the world.

To do justice to the rush of visitors and huge media presence, various redevelopment measures have been carried out over the past years. In 1997, the new No. 1 Court, a broadcasting centre and two further grass courts were inaugurated. On the site of the former No. 1 Court the Millennium Building with modern facilities for players, press representatives and club members was constructed, and it is now the turn of centre court.

### Insulation of cooling-water lines for Centre Court improvements

At the beginning of the year the complex underwent a second year of enabling works which began in support of the proposed center court. Existing pipe work along a tunnel used for deliveries to adjoining restaurants and the Wimbledon shop was replaced with an additional pipe line system to supply chilled water to center court.. The pipes are not concealed but

exposed. Traditionally the specification for a system of this type would be to install mineral fibre insulation with an aluminium jacketing system.. However, as the pipes are installed at a height where they can easily be knocked in the course of deliveries, the rigid jacketing was often damaged and, as a result, moisture penetrated the insulation which then had to be replaced. With this in mind the specifier had searched for an insulation system with an



in-built water vapour barrier that can't be damaged as well as for a flexible covering system which is easy to install, durable and easy to maintain.. The specifier, on the advice of insulation contractors BSL Ltd from Dagenham (Essex, UK), decided to use a different insulation system. A system which would provide the cooling-water lines with effective condensation





control whilst at the same time offering resistance against the expected mechanical impact.

BSL used Armacell's Arma-Chek system. Arma-Chek systems consist of the tried and tested Armaflex insulation material and robust, flexible coverings of various types. The closed-cell material prevents condensation and energy losses on the pipes; the covering protects the insulation material against mechanical impact, the penetration of moisture, oil, chemicals and, when used in outdoor applications, against UV-light, weathering and the increased risk of corrosion.

A decisive technical advantage of the Arma-Chek covering systems compared to metal or PVC coverings is the flexibility of the material which allows the covering and insulation to recover their original shape after mechanical distortion. A metal jacket is dented by mechanical damage which causes the insulation material underneath to be com-

pressed and can thus lead to moisture penetrating the insulation. An Arma-Chek covering, on the other hand, is so flexible that no lasting impairment of the insulation effect is to be feared.

Flexible covering systems are also considerably easier and faster to fit than rigid jackets. Arma-Chek D and Arma-Chek S are also available as factory pre-coated tubes and sheets, allowing the installation time to be reduced even further.

For the new centre court infrastructure pipeline, BSL installed pre-coated Arma-Chek D sheets on a Class O Armaflex substrate. Due to the use of woven glass-fibres, Arma-Chek D has a

durable smooth surface. The pipes with diameters of 6 and 14 inches were insulated with Arma-Chek D (Class O Armaflex) sheets in an insulation thickness of 13 mm. In total, the insulators installed 250 m<sup>2</sup>. Ray Taylor, Managing Director of BSL Ltd, on the installation: "Arma-Chek systems are not only easier and faster to install than conventional coverings, they are also much more maintenance-friendly. If damage to the surface occurs, we can replace part of the material and do not need to renew all of it." The insulation material was supplied by H + V Insulations Stapleford Abbots (Essex).



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