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Markus Gaebel · May 2

Squash Court Types: Best-Practice Series on What Makes Courts Different

Squash courts come in more flavours than many people realise. Starting this week, the Squash Facilities Network (SFN) is launching its Best Practice of the Month series, focusing on the different types of squash courts and what sets them apart.

Over the next few weeks, we'll explore a range of court constructions and designs. Why? Because not all squash courts are the same—and even small differences can impact how the game feels, how much a court costs, and how long it lasts. Our aim is to break down the technical details so you can choose the court that best suits your facility's needs.

At the end of this Best Practice of the Month series, we'll publish a detailed checklist for each type of squash court and every major court component. This checklist will serve as a practical decision-making tool—helping you select the most suitable option based on the focus and goals of your facility.

Stakeholder Perspectives

To understand what truly matters when choosing or building a squash court, we spoke directly with those who deal with them every day. Each group brings a different set of priorities to the table:

- **Facility operators** focus on low maintenance, easy cleaning, and ensuring safe, reliable courts.
- **Coaches and players** prioritise consistent bounce and court speed to support high-quality training.
- **Investors and owners** look at long-term durability, customer appeal, and financial return.
- **Architects and designers** aim to integrate courts into diverse spaces, future-proof facilities, and increasingly consider sustainability from the start.

The input from all these stakeholders has been carefully considered and integrated into the analyses presented throughout this series.

Indoor vs Outdoor: Two Different Squash Court Types

To kick off our series, we'll take a closer look at indoor and outdoor courts. What are the key differences between these two types, and what should be especially considered when it comes to outdoor courts?

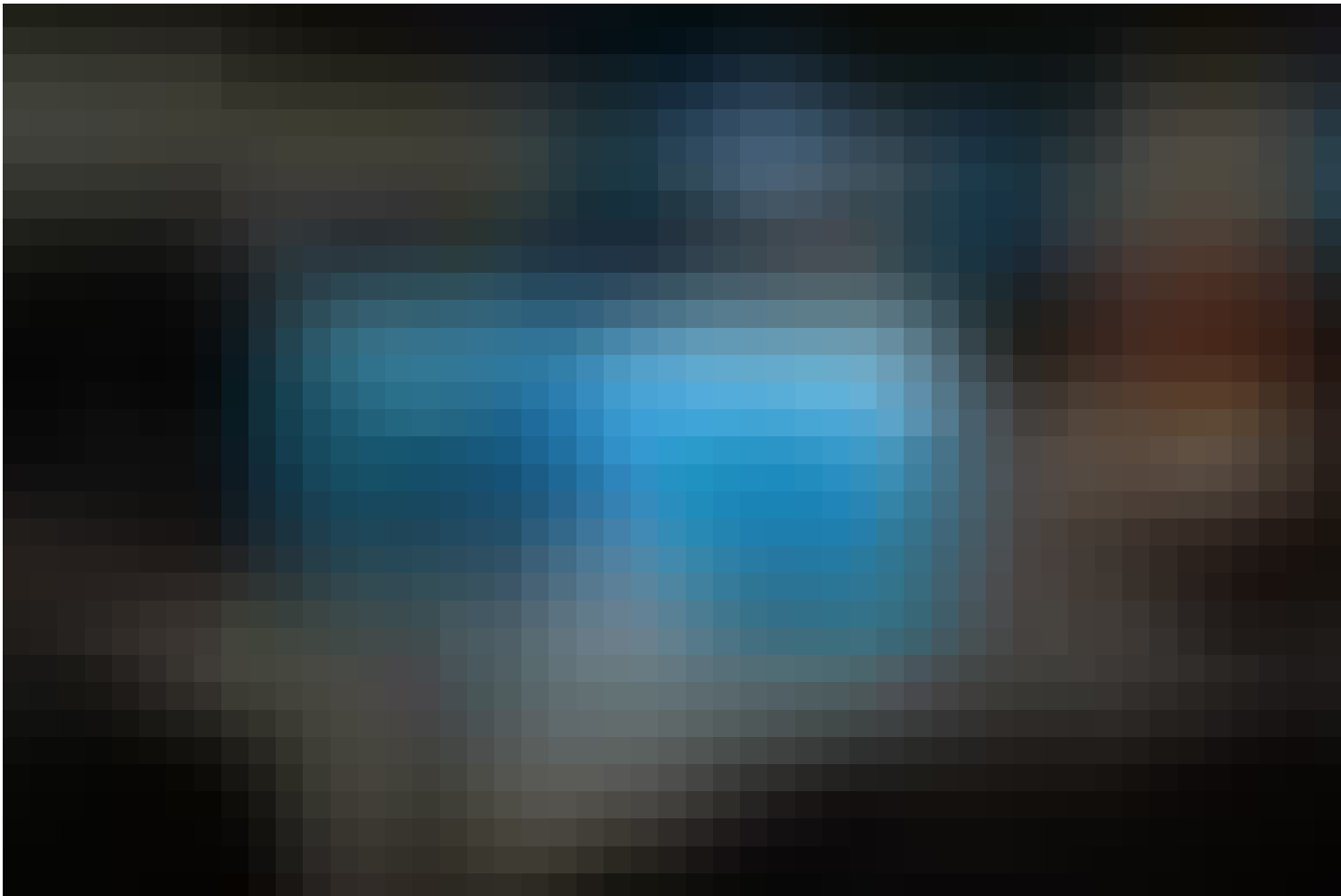
- **Indoor courts** give consistent conditions, shielded from weather, so the game plays the same every day.
- **Outdoor courts** are gaining popularity, bringing squash into parks and public spaces. These courts must cope with rain, sun and temperature swings, so their materials and design have to be more robust.



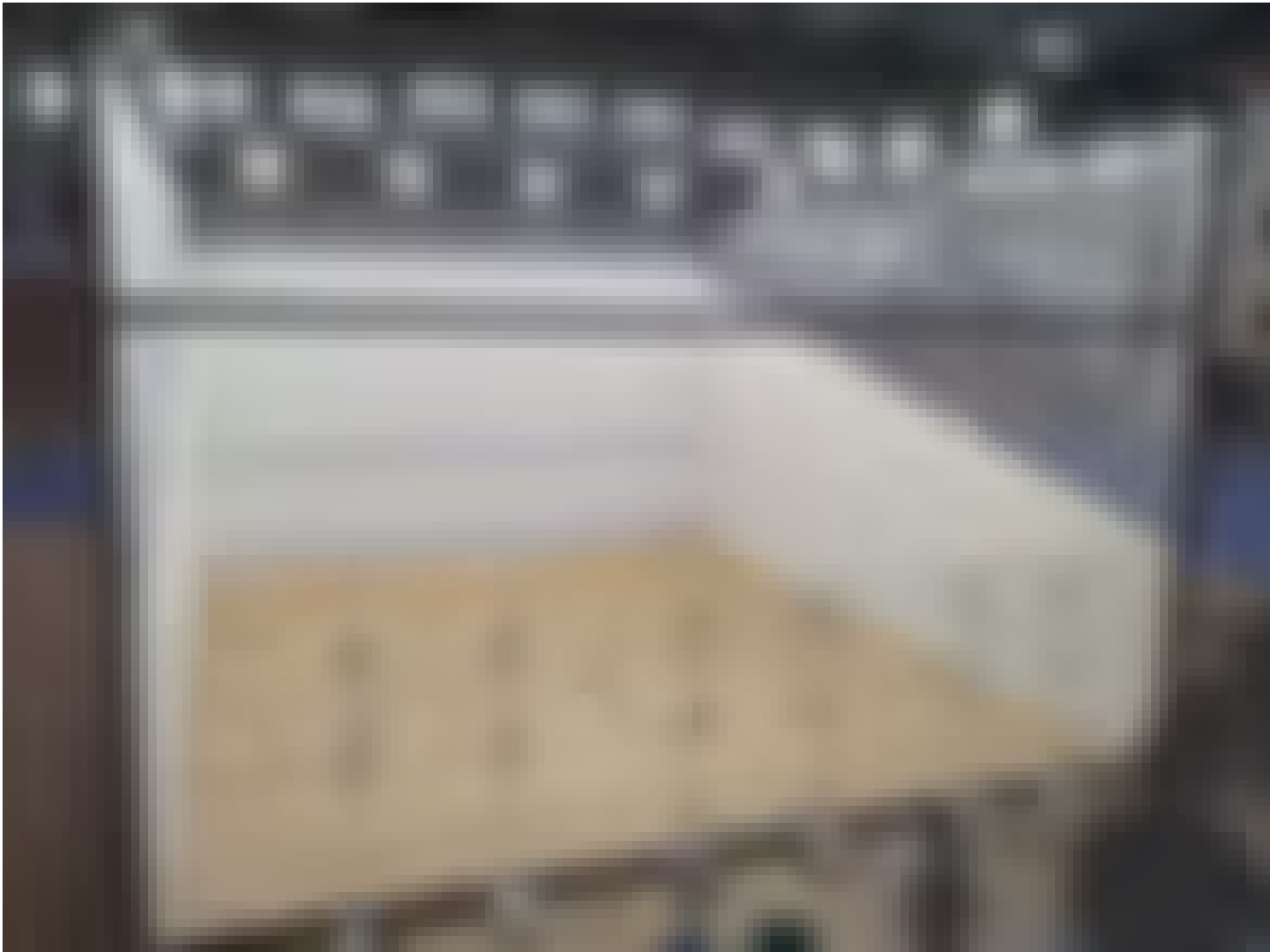
Access Outdoor Court

Demountable Courts: Courts You Can Move

In addition to indoor and outdoor courts, it’s important to understand what *demountable courts* are—and what advantages or challenges they bring.



Showcase events in city squares, shopping centres and theatres sparked the need for courts that could be built in a day and removed just as quickly. The answer was the demountable glass showcourt—a self-supporting structure whose panels travel in flight cases and bolt together on site. Demountability isn’t only for glass, though. Sand-filled, lightweight panel and hybrid courts can also be installed on freestanding steel frames. When a lease ends or a club relocates, the whole court can move, protecting the owner’s investment.



Sand-Filled Doubles Court built for one week for the Small Nation Games in Malta 2024

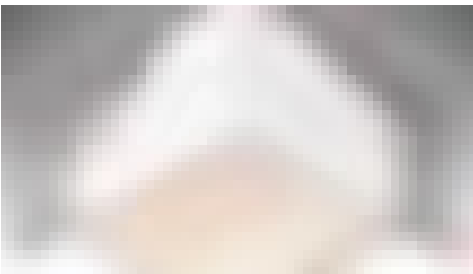
Wall Types: Glass, Panel, Sand-Filled and Plaster

When planning or upgrading a squash facility, one of the most important decisions is the choice of wall type. Each material has its own characteristics that influence playing experience, durability, maintenance, and costs.

In the second part of this Best Practice series, we'll take a closer look at the four main wall types used in modern squash courts and analyse what makes each one unique.

Plaster Walls

The classic court built throughout the last century. Plaster offers a grippy surface, good acoustics and a consistent rebound. Because plaster is applied directly to the building's walls, cracks or chips can appear over time, and re-plastering may be needed.



Panel Walls

Originally developed for racquetball, panel walls use 28 mm or 38 mm multi-layer boards, fused under heat and pressure, then fixed to a timber or metal frame. Panels give a very uniform surface and need little maintenance—no peeling paint and almost no cracking.



Sand-Filled Walls

Sand-filled elements are made from 18–21 mm high-density boards mounted on a steel frame. The cavity is filled with dry silicate sand, giving a solid feel, reliable rebound and lower noise. Because the panels are prefabricated, installation is quick and, like panel walls, upkeep is minimal.



Glass Walls

At first, only the back wall was glass so spectators could watch. Show-glass courts for pro events pushed the concept further, creating four-sided glass courts. Many clubs now upgrade standard courts by bolting glass panels to existing walls, brightening the space and improving visibility. The trade-off is a slightly faster bounce, more sound reflection and higher build costs due to toughened safety glass and specialist installation.

Why wall choice matters: Each wall type changes the playing feel, construction cost, maintenance load and even the club's image. Our upcoming posts will explain which combination works best for different business models.

Key Factors: Play, Cost, Safety and More

Choosing the right squash court isn't just about looks—it's about finding the best fit for your goals, your users, and your budget. In this part of the series, SFN highlights the key factors that define the strengths and trade-offs of each court type:

- **Playing characteristics** – bounce, speed and surface friction.
- **Cost & lifespan** – initial build, maintenance and expected service life.
- **Safety & liability** – certified materials and injury prevention.

- **Financial return** – member appeal, event potential and running costs.

There’s no universal solution. A community centre may opt for affordable, low-maintenance panel walls, while a professional venue might invest in a high-impact glass showcourt to attract events and sponsors.

Sustainability: The New Priority

In the third part of our Best Practice series, we turn to a topic that’s becoming increasingly important across the sports world: sustainability.

Building and operating squash courts consumes resources—materials, energy, and ongoing maintenance. More and more clubs and investors are asking: how can we reduce the environmental impact of our facilities while improving long-term efficiency?

SFN



From FSC-certified flooring and LED lighting to well-insulated court halls and low-impact construction methods, sustainable choices not only support the environment but also reduce operational costs over time. In addition, eco-conscious features can boost a facility’s appeal to modern members and create new opportunities for funding or partnerships.

In this part of the series, we’ll explore what sustainability means in practice, what players, operators, and manufacturers expect, and how it influences material selection, facility design, and future readiness.

Your Court Decision-Making Checklist

At the end of this series SFN will publish a **Court Selection Checklist**, inspired by our popular flooring guide. It will cover all the vital points—playability, cost, safety, lifespan, stakeholder needs and sustainability—so you can choose the right court with confidence.

Stay tuned as we dive deeper into each topic: indoor vs outdoor realities, the pros and cons of glass, panel, sand-filled and plaster courts, true costs, maintenance tips and insights from our interviews. Whether you plan to build a new squash centre or just want to know why your current court feels the way it does, this series will have the answers.

We’d love to hear from you! If you have experience with different court types or want to share what matters most to you when it comes to squash facilities — whether as a player, coach, operator, architect or investor — send us an email at team@squashfacilities.net.

Your insights could help shape the next steps of this series and support the global squash community.