

21<sup>st</sup> July 2021

## Taraflex® wins repeat specification at Loughborough University Badminton Centre

Almost 600m<sup>2</sup> of Gerflors' World class Taraflex® vinyl sports flooring has been installed at Loughborough University. The badminton performance centre decided to bring forward the like for like replacement of Taraflex to ensure they stayed at the top of their game when it came to facilities.

With over 100 years elite level sporting history, Loughborough University is synonymous with sports education. Its 4-court Badminton Centre is home to the Performance Badminton Programme, which is run in partnership with Badminton England's Development team to provide the extremely specific training venue and coaching athletes require to develop badminton skills alongside studying for degrees. Amongst its notable Alumni is English badminton player and Olympian and World Silver medallist, Donna Kellogg MBE.

In 2018, Badminton England, the NGB (National Governing Body) for the sport of badminton, officially endorsed Loughborough University as an NGB England Badminton Centre. In doing so it formalised a long-term partnership which has benefited many national players in the England team through a joint education and training environment.

Loughborough University is also one of UK Sport's six major Elite Training Centres in the country. As such, it delivers the required standards of the National Sport Governing bodies using the facility. Where NGB's need a specific facility, venues like the Badminton Centre, provide first class training centres for target athletes who compete in world and international sporting championships.

Additionally, it is the training centre of one of the biggest clubs in the Athletic Union, which includes elite players at international standard, squad players in national, high county or local level leagues, and development squads comprising players of all standards.

Originally constructed in 2003, Loughborough University's Badminton Centre was therefore built with Olympic specification in mind and upgraded in 2011 with Gerflor's Taraflex® as part of the specification. Taraflex® is a renowned sport flooring solution having been used since 1947 at the largest international sporting events and selected for 10 Olympic Games.

Consequently, when it came to refurbishing the Badminton Centre once more, Taraflex® was the automatic flooring of choice. Tim Oakey, Project Manager for the Facilities Department, Loughborough University, explains: "As Taraflex® is a very good, approved surface for badminton with the right amount of flex and grip for our players, it was simply a case of 'why change'. We were therefore careful to get Gerflor involved at an early stage and to use one of their recommended installers whose fitters are Gerflor trained. However, this time we chose Taraflex® Evolution in colour 'Mint Green' to highlight the play areas and in colour 'Blue' for the outer court areas."

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Underpinned by innovation, Gerflor's Taraflex® brand is the playing surface of champions, approved by many National and International Governing bodies of sport and yet suitable for every level of performance. Durable, sustainable, and fully EN 14904 compliant, it is the most widely specified indoor sports surface in the World.

"Typically, when Olympic quality flooring is needed, a Taraflex® flooring is used, and therefore we replicate this to guarantee the performance levels of our badminton programme," said Mark Davies, Sports Capital Strategy & Maintenance Manager, Loughborough University. Although Mark works on behalf of the University to ensure that all new build, refurbishment, and maintenance projects delivered by the project teams on campus meet the requirements of the sporting teams, he is also the lead for Loughborough University, engaging with UK sport on the Elite Training Centres.

"To be an Elite Training Centre, we work collectively to deliver the governing bodies' required standards for the facility," said Mark. "Within the Badminton Centre Olympic standard flooring like Taraflex® is therefore necessary to provide a like-for-like playing surface with the consistency of movement underfoot and protection from injury that is essential. As the flooring lasted well in the past, we anticipate the same longevity from the new flooring. We are therefore generally relaxed and comfortable moving forward about what to expect in terms of its delivery."

When the installer, multi-sport flooring specialist, The Sports Flooring Company (a division of Durant Cricket LTD), became involved the University had already identified the need for a replacement flooring using Taraflex® together with a new undercarriage. As a result, Gerflor's complete Taraflex® Combi 85 System proved ideal. This is an ultimate combination comprising a fully height-adjustable cradle and batten substructure overlaid with plywood, finished with a 7.5mm Taraflex® Evolution playing surface. The perfect duo provides one of the highest specification sports floorings available with optimum safety and ball bounce.

Taraflex® Combi 85 is a C4 category sports flooring suitable for multiple sport and leisure activities. Its unique construction includes revolutionary CXP HD foam technology for the greater comfort and protection of players, advanced D-Max™ fibreglass grid reinforcement for superior indentation, abrasion and heavy loads' resistance and triple action Protoscol® surface treatment for easy, low-cost maintenance, friction protection and 'intelligent' slide coefficient.

Cristian Durant of The Sports Flooring Company said: "We are a multi-sport flooring company who specialise in fitting Taraflex® as it is really easy to work with and a globally recognised name for providing durability, safety and comfort without impairing performance. Our fitters are fully Gerflor-trained installers having attended the international flooring company's training courses at their headquarters in Villeurbanne, Cedex, France."

"We are very happy with the flooring system and its installation, it's first class," concluded Tim Oakey.

Learn more about Gerflor solutions, ask for a free sample or contact us to speak to a specialist today by calling 03332 412901, emailing [contractuk@gerflor.com](mailto:contractuk@gerflor.com), or visiting [gerflor.co.uk](http://gerflor.co.uk) for the latest innovations.

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