



May 2016

Attwood Equestrian Surfaces, Inc

[Corporate Office and USA](#) | [Asia-Pacific and Middle East](#) | [UK and Europe](#)

[Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [YouTube](#)

The Attwood Advantage

What we stand for



We're not like other equestrian surface suppliers and installers. Our background is in science and technology, and this has enabled us to create and develop carefully balanced products that perform consistently in any climate. We've invested in continuous research and development to provide riding surfaces with the best possible physical properties. We have developed scientific tests that characterise these properties so we can use objective assessment, rather than rely on 'feel' like many of our competitors. We also apply our technical skills to all aspects of the installation of arenas and tracks. Furthermore we collaborate with the world's leading independent equestrian surface academics to ensure we remain at the forefront of both technical and governance developments.

But we're not just scientists. We understand the needs of each discipline, and we ensure our surfaces benefit both the horse and rider. Over 25 years in the business has taught us this. Over 500 installations later including dressage and jumping arenas, training pens and gallops, and an impressive client list that includes many internationally recognised competitors and trainers, we believe we have the best footing solutions available today.

We're not going to stop here though. Our aim is to bring our high tech solutions to the equestrian and racing world, not just in the United States, but across the globe. For too long, poor quality footing and installation have dogged the riding world. After the promise of safer synthetic racing surfaces in the United States, poor quality, badly developed wax-based footing completely devastated the name of synthetic surfaces. We think there is a way back, and it doesn't involve wax!



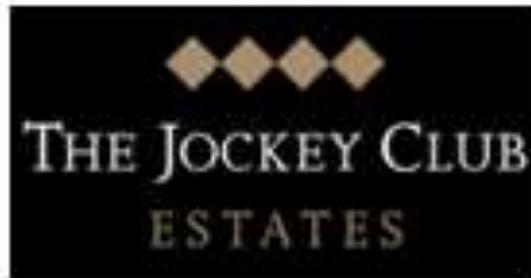
Similarly, we constantly come across equestrian customers who are looking to replace poor quality and badly installed arena footing. The common factor in all this is that the suppliers and installers simply don't have the technical expertise to develop, specify and install what is a complicated, highly scientific product and service. All too often they are either ex-riders or trainers, or construction industry employees who do not have the necessary technical training.



We believe we have the best riding surface solutions available today, supplied and installed by the best riding surfaces company.

To know more, or to request a sample and quotes, please visit [our website](#) or write in to us.

Pinnacle surface at Jockey Club Estates, Newmarket, U.K.



It is now six months since our all weather dust-free, polymer-coated footing was installed in a training ring at the world famous Jockey Club Estates in Newmarket, and we have been monitoring its performance over the winter months. The footing was installed in a brand new round-pen built alongside an existing ring containing a wax surface. The rings are used by local trainers to lunge, and to ride generally young thoroughbred horses.

Despite some very wet weather during the winter, the surface performed well, demonstrating its superior draining capability. Indeed on several occasions the adjacent wax surface was water-logged, whilst the Pinnacle ring continued unfazed. Admittedly the wax surface is several years old so we shouldn't crow too loudly. This was the adjacent (rather squelchy!) wax surface after overnight rain in December last year, whilst our Pinnacle ring next door was being used.



This was the picture on several visits - the pinnacle ring was being used whilst the wax surface was undisturbed from its grooming the night before. To underline this, a number of trainers told us that they much preferred to work their horses on the Pinnacle surface, citing its superior cohesion and support, and its usability after heavy rain.

The Head Heathman is happy with the surface so far but regrets that its full potential has not been tested through freezing conditions - the Newmarket area just didn't have any prolonged spells of freezing weather last winter. We are confident the surface would have shown up well against the adjacent wax surface, particularly considering the high level of moisture contained in that footing - we dread to think how that would turn out in any sustained cold weather!

[Our Website](#) has a fresh new look



Since the end of last year year, we have been making a concerted effort to revamp our online and offline marketing tools and materials. A few months back, we had posted a teaser of what our new book would look like, and we are delighted to inform you that it is nearing completion and in the next couple of months, it would be ready to be sent out.

Along with the book, we had embarked on an ambitious journey to make our website more user friendly and aesthetically pleasing, and at the same time, take advantage of the new design elements that we had incorporated in our book. The older website design served us well, but we realised a need to modernize it and bring it in line with current design philosophies. This part of the rebranding exercise is now complete, and we urge you to visit www.equestriansurfaces.com and see for yourself, our brand new website. Please do let us know what you think of it :)

Footing Facts

Fibres

Last year we carried a mini-series on additives. This covered such materials as rubber pieces, PVC wire insulation, carpet scrap and nonwoven felt. We also stressed the importance of fibres in providing cohesion, hence shear strength to a surface, and also contributing to shock absorption. Because of their significant importance, this month we dedicate a complete Footing Facts to fibres.

Fibres have been used for thousands of years. In fact the earliest use of fibres by man is thought to be around 34,000 years ago. The flax fibres could have been used to make clothing, but also in structural application such as rope and twine, and thread. These fibres of course were natural, and included cotton, jute, wool and silk. Such fibres have served man well for thousands of years, offering strength, warmth and comfort. They also, conveniently, biodegrade quickly.



However, deficiencies in natural fibres, and man's quest for technological advancement saw the development of synthetic fibres in the 20th century. Synthetic fibres are built using chemistry by joining small molecules together into long chains - so-called polymers. These polymers, or plastics as we tend to call them are extruded through holes and the polymer is usually stretched to thin the strands down and make them stronger. The most widely used synthetic fibres today are polyester which is used mainly for clothing, polypropylene used mainly for carpets, and nylon which is used for clothing, carpets and industrial applications.



One key property that sets these synthetic fibres apart from natural fibres is their reaction to water - natural fibres tend to be attracted to water and therefore absorb it (hydrophilic), whilst synthetic fibres tend not to be so attracted to water and absorb much less (hydrophobic). Because synthetic fibres are less water-loving, they also biodegrade more slowly.

Synthetic fibres can be useful additives in equestrian footings. Because they biodegrade slowly they will not rot when left in wet sand. Natural fibres on the other hand can rot in an equestrian surface environment, and it causes us some alarm when we come across surface suppliers and installers who are selling natural fibres such as rayon as additives. Of the synthetic fibres, polyester is probably the ideal choice because it is not too water hating, nor too water loving. It is at home in a watered sand arena, and in a non-watered coated (wax or polymer) surface. On the other hand polypropylene, whilst ideal for a coated surface, is extremely hydrophobic (water hating) and not compatible with watered sand footings. However there are some well known suppliers out there in the industry who sell products containing polypropylene fibres for watered arenas.

The physical dimensions of the fibres is vitally important. The diameter, or thickness, known in the industry as denier is one characteristic. Cheaper fibres tend to be thicker, but these are not ideal as additives because they do not blend well with sand and easily separate and rise to the surface.



The caption shows the footing from an arena we visited recently where the arena manager was at his wits end trying to constantly re-mix the fibres back into the footing. We advised that the wrong size fibres had been used. The next caption shows one of his fibres next to an Attwood fibre under a microscope - although the image is not entirely clear it can be seen that our fibre is at least half the diameter. And it's not just miscibility that suffers with large diameter fibres. These products are sold by weight, and incorporated by weight - a typical incorporation level might be 2%. If a fat fibre product is used, say 2x the diameter of a thinner product, and you buy 1000Kg, you will get only 1/4 or 25% of the *number* of fibres that you would with the thinner product. If the fatter product was 3x as fat then you would only receive 1/9th or just over 10% the number of fibres. (Notice it's a square relationship).



The length of the fibres is also important and we showed a graph last year of the effect of fibre length on the shear strength of Attwood's polymer coated Pinnacle product.



Too short and the surface is too loose, too long and the surface is too stiff and can't be harrowed.

Prestigious award for Britain's Princess Anne



Britain's Princess Anne, The Princess Royal, is to be honoured for her achievements at the very highest level of global equine sport during the Longines Ladies Award ceremony in London in June.

The Princess Royal will be presented with the prestigious Longines Ladies Award, during the ceremony at The Natural History Museum, London, on Monday, June 13.

The Longines Ladies Award celebrates women who have consistently achieved at the highest level within the equestrian world and made a significant contribution to the equestrian industry through their work. Previous winners of the highly respected award include former FEI president Princess Haya Al Hussein, event organiser Sylvie Robert, racehorse trainer Criquette Head-Maarek, Asian equestrian organiser Jing Li, animal welfare advocate Bo Derek, racehorse breeder and owner Princess Zahra Aga Khan, showjumper Athina Onassis de Miranda, and television presenter Sophie Thalmann.

Read more [here](#).

Our Social Media Channels



Continue to engage with us on the social media platform of your choice, [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Youtube](#). We love to hear from you!

You can also contact us at info@equestriansurfaces.com, info@attwood.in and enquiries@aesurfaces.co.uk.

Download our previous newsletters from our [archives](#).

*Attwood Equestrian Surfaces provides
meticulously engineered surfaces that benefit
both the horse and the rider*



© Attwood Equestrian Surfaces 2015. All rights reserved.