



[April 2016](#)

Attwood Equestrian Surfaces, Inc

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Temporary Arenas at the Menlo Charity Horse Show



What do you do when you require the best footing, but only for a limited time? This was the exact problem plaguing the organizers of the Menlo Charity Horse Show, held every year in Menlo Park, California. Over the last many years, Attwood has been the official footing partner for the event, and its footing solutions have been widely acclaimed as the best in class footing.

Attwood's Portable Arenas are the solution to this surprisingly common problem. Our highly acclaimed EuroTex footing is laid over a series of custom made mats, and can be removed after the event is over. The footing retains all its properties.

Case Study - Menlo Charity Horse Show

The Menlo Charity Horse Show has been the ideal platform for Attwood to demonstrate this technology. Over the years, the show has been a major success with the footing receiving universal praise.

The Problem: This highly acclaimed show in the San Francisco area is held every year on the polo field at the prestigious Menlo Circus Club. This presents a unique challenge as the competition arena has to be temporary, being returned to the polo field after the event.

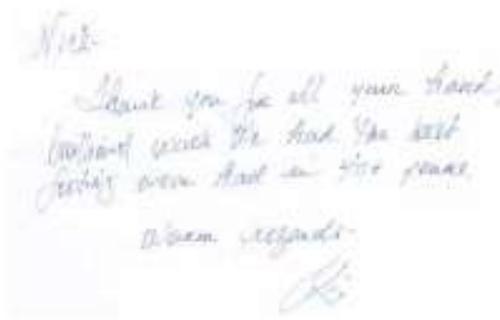
The Solution: Attwood has been installing the temporary arena for a number of years, and our solution has been a huge success.

Firstly interlocking rubber mats are laid on the grass - if footing is placed directly on the grass surface there is poor

cohesion at the interface and the footing can slide on the grass. Several years ago the club purchased Attwood's Eurotex footing which is stored off-site during the year and is brought to the field and laid on top of the mats. After a check of the moisture content and adjustment if necessary, the surface is graded to Attwood's tight tolerance, and the show can begin! Interestingly, recovery of the underlying grass after two weeks under the arena is rapid, and is ready for polo soon after.



Following yet another successful show, the Show Manager, Liz Crowell, congratulated the Attwood team saying, "Thank you for all your hard, brilliant work. We had the best footing we've had in 40+ years."



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

Attwood is proud to be a sponsor of the Carolina International



For the third year running, Attwood Equestrian Surfaces is delighted to be the title sponsor for the CIC* event. The competition ran from the 24th to the 27th of March at the Carolina Horse Park. The total prize money this year was USD 75,000 and event honored the legacy of Karen Stives.

As always, the event was a resounding success. We were present at the event, and to check out some of the amazing pictures and videos we took, head over to our [instagram page](#).

Our own sponsored rider Caitlin Silliman, an up and coming rider and one for the future, with her horse, Vagabon de Champdoux, participated in the event.



Double clear and triple smiles all around for Team Attwood. Pictured: Caitlin Silliman, Nick Atwood and daughter Carrie

Boyd Martin, another rider closely associated with us was there with his team, and competed in the CIC**, CIC*** and Advanced events, remarked *"The Carolina International put on the best event to date in 2016: it was hugely supported, with about 500 horses competing. The cross country course was designed by Ian Stark, who built a new look that caused plenty of havoc among the competitors."*

You can track live results for all the events, including the Attwood CIC* event [here](#).

About Carolina International: The Carolina International Organizing Committee was formed to build a world class eventing competition in the Sandhills of North Carolina. Leveraging local and national expertise and leadership, it delivers an outstanding weekend of horse sport and entertainment for riders, owners, grooms, spectators, patrons and sponsors alike.

Silva Martin returns to the Show Ring



Low Country dressage on Johns Island, near Charleston, South Carolina marked Silva Martin's return to competitive riding, after the birth of their son Nox! Silva is another rider, who along with her husband, Boyd, and numerous other distinguished riders, love our footing and have it installed on all their arenas.

Speaking after the event, Silva remarked "We took eight horses and I was lucky enough that my mom came from Germany to watch Nox for me while I was showing all day! I rode five horses and they all went very well for me."

It's great to have you back, Silva, and we look forward to seeing you compete many more events on the equestrian calendar.

You can follow her blog [here](#).

Footing Facts

History of Synthetic Surfaces

This month we look back at the history of synthetic equestrian surfaces. To do this we first have to consider a definition of a synthetic surface. It is generally considered that any surface that is man-made, and that does not include simple dirt, can be termed a synthetic surface. A tighter definition sometimes used is a man-made surface that does not rely on water/moisture to hold it together, so essentially constitutes all coated surfaces. This definition would therefore preclude all uncoated surfaces. We'll stick with this narrow one for now.

The first synthetic surface was installed at The Meadows Racetrack in Pennsylvania U.S.A. in 1963. This was a tartan turf material made by 3M. Tartan has become a generic term for polyurethane sports surfaces, usually in athletics sport, and the surface at The Meadows was very similar. The surface was supposed to end maintenance issues, be usable in all weathers, and be kind to horses. In fact it only lasted a season due to a number of unforeseen problems. When it rained patches of different colour emerged which spooked the runners. Clearing droppings also was an issue as the contrast with the flat surface also disturbed the horses. But most of all the surface was just too hard and unforgiving.



Despite this a further synthetic track, also based on 3M Tartan technology was installed at Tropical Park in Miami, Florida in 1966. Again, few trainers allowed their horses to run on the track.

A little known fact is that the then Chairman of 3M, Bill McKnight, owned a Racing stud and produced many winners - the name of the facility was Tartan Farm, and it was after this that 3M named their synthetic sports surface range.

Still undaunted, another kind of synthetic surface, Saf T Turf, also manufactured by 3M was installed at Calder Racetrack, also in Florida in May 1971. By September of the same year the track was covered over with sand!

The first synthetic surface based on the more familiar coated sand was installed in the U.K. by trainer Richard Hannon in 1987. This was Polytrack, a wax coated sand surface manufactured by Martin Collins Enterprises. It is interesting to note that a number of synthetic surfaces based on sand were being developed independently at this time. The patent literature gives a clue as to who were the pioneers. Whilst Martin Collins Polytrack is generally accepted as the first commercial installation of a coated sand surface, En Tous cas were the first to file a patent based on their polymer-coated sand composition, Equitrack in January 1986. Their first commercial installation was at Remington Park in 1988. Martin Collins followed with an installation at Lingfield Park in the U.K. in 1989. Despite on-going problems with these surfaces (Remington Park replaced the Equitrack surface in 1991), further synthetic surface installations appeared, particularly in the U.S.A. over the next decade.



Remarkably, in 2006, the California Horse Racing Board mandated the use of synthetic surfaces by 2008. There followed a manic phase where many tracks, including facilities outside of California moved to synthetic surface. There were also prestigious installations outside of the U.S.A. such as Michael Dickinson's Tapeta surface at the Meydan racetrack in Dubai. However all was not well and several real or perceived problems continued with these surfaces, around maintenance issues, drainage, track bias, and horse injuries. Gradually, one by one the synthetic surfaces were removed and replaced with dirt.

This timeline has concentrated on the racing scene, where the history is considerably easier to track than the thousands of equestrian facilities around the world. There appears not to be such a defined trend of a rise in popularity of synthetic surfaces followed by a sharp decline. Some of those surfaces used on racetracks have also been marketed as equestrian surfaces. In many cases the material that was removed from racetracks has been sold to the equestrian community. Today, coated surfaces appear just as popular, where a low maintenance, dust-free option is required. However we still find that the old problems are still there with wax-based coated surfaces. Many facilities are having to water their wax surfaces because the wax no longer binds the sand and additive particle together. Although track times are not important in the equestrian world, the wax surfaces still suffer from significant 'going' variation as the ambient temperature changes.

As a footnote, En tous cas, one of the pioneers of coated sand surfaces and one of the few that based their coating on polymer and not wax is no longer in the business. However, Nick Attwood, founder and owner of Attwood Equestrian Surfaces was a research scientist for En tous cas back in the day, and has used that knowledge to develop Attwood's polymer-coated footings into the highest performing synthetic footings available today.

Equestrian line-up confirmed for Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games



Equestrian is the latest sport to confirm its line-up for the Rio 2016 [Olympic](#) and [Paralympic](#) Games. Following in the recent footsteps of [handball](#) and [women's football](#), the three equestrian disciplines - dressage, jumping and eventing - have seen all their berths allocated, the International Equestrian Federation (FEI) has confirmed.

The places are allocated to National Olympic and Paralympic Committees, who decide whether to use the quotas and which athletes to send.

Six nations will be making debuts at Rio 2016: Chinese Taipei and Qatar in jumping, the Dominican Republic and Palestine in dressage, Zimbabwe in eventing, and Uruguay in the Paralympic equestrian competition, which is dressage only.

A total of 43 nations will compete in the Olympic equestrian events, while 30 countries will be represented in the Paralympic events.

"We are thrilled to be welcoming new nations to the Olympic and Paralympic equestrian family," said FEI President Ingmar De Vos. "The Olympic and Paralympic Games are the pinnacle of our sport and we are looking forward to absolutely top-class equestrian action during both Games."

For more on this story, click [here!](#)

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

