

CEN TC 217 "Surfaces for Sports Areas"

Integrity of EN Standards on National Level

The harmonization of standards for sports surfaces in Europe pursues the goal of eliminating trade barriers of these products. For this, CEN setup the Technical Committee 217 "Surfaces for Sports Areas" in 1988. This committee has formed 6 Working Groups with the following tasks:

- WG 1 (Coordination)
- WG 2 Sports Hall Surfaces R. Brown/Eric Harrison
- WG 3 Natural Turf Areas Herwig Münster
- WG 4 Unbound Mineral Surfaces Dominique Boisnard
- WG 5 Synthetic Athletic Surfaces Hartmut Meyer-Buck
- WG 6 Artificial Turf Joachim Scheewe/Alastair Cox
- WG 7 Angled Ball Behaviour Dominique Boisnard
- WG 8 Shock Absorption Mark Harrison
- WG 9 Friction R. Brown

In these working groups, representatives of the national standardisation bodies together with technical experts of their countries have developed common standards on the various issues needed for constructing sports surfaces based on the various national standards and available experience. All European standardization bodies being partners of CEN have agreed to adopt any new EN standard with no limitations or changes. At that time, respective national standards on the same issues have to be withdrawn.

It is inevitable that participants have to make compromises in the specification of the test procedures and the requirements. This was the main reason for the 15 year long duration of negotiations. During this time, some participants (nations) who could not achieve their goals developed the idea that they would implement the missing items into their national version of the EN standard. Examples could be Environmental Compatibility or the W_{500} parameter of sports hall floors (= measure of width of deformation trough of area-elastic sports hall floors) which are not included by any EN standard and no application to add these topics as official Work Items (WI) is known.

At the Paris meeting it was stressed by Mr. Stratton from the TC217 Secretariat that in general EN standards have to be adopted as national standards without any changes or additions. Deviations would be accepted only if national legislation requires them or the CEN TC gives special permission. This is logical since otherwise the principle of elimination of trade barriers would be undermined. Thus, since Environmental Compatibility and W_{500} are not connected with national legislation, these issues have to be dropped as soon as the EN standard is introduced.

The only modification of a national version of an EN standard may be to express a recommendation of a certain preferred minimum/maximum or range of requirements acc. to national traditions etc. However, such recommendations must be within the range specified by the EN standard.

This statement has been prepared since the issue has not publically been discussed yet.

HJK
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