



New sports centre a winner with Tarkett Omnisports flooring

Project: Wanneroo Secondary College, WA

Product: Omnisports Active 7.1

Wanneroo Secondary College, located in Perth Western Australia's northern suburbs, has harnessed the multifaceted benefits of Tarkett vinyl flooring for its new sports centre.

Constructed in July 2020, the sports centre received approximately 900 square metres of Tarkett Omnisports Active 7.1 flooring.

Tarkett Omnisports Active 7.1 is a premium multi-purpose sports vinyl with exceptional shock-absorbency and cushioning, yet remains resistant to indentation – making it also suitable for non-sporting uses such as school assemblies, exams and performances.

Tarkett Omnisports Active 7.1 is a Federation of International Basketball Associations (FIBA) certified high performance multiuse sports flooring, offering comfort and shock absorption, friction performance, and Tarkett's high standard of durability and health and hygiene properties.

It can be specified in a range of 24 designs and colours including six different highly realistic timber-look finishes. The latter was especially appealing to project architect Herarn Perera of education specialists DWA Architects, who was commissioned to design the sports centre.

Mr Perera considered a sprung timber floor for the Wanneroo Sports Centre, until he spoke with Tarkett Western Australia state manager, Simona O'Kane, who introduced him to an installation of Tarkett Omnisports timber-look flooring at the close-by Woodvale Secondary College, built over 10 years prior.

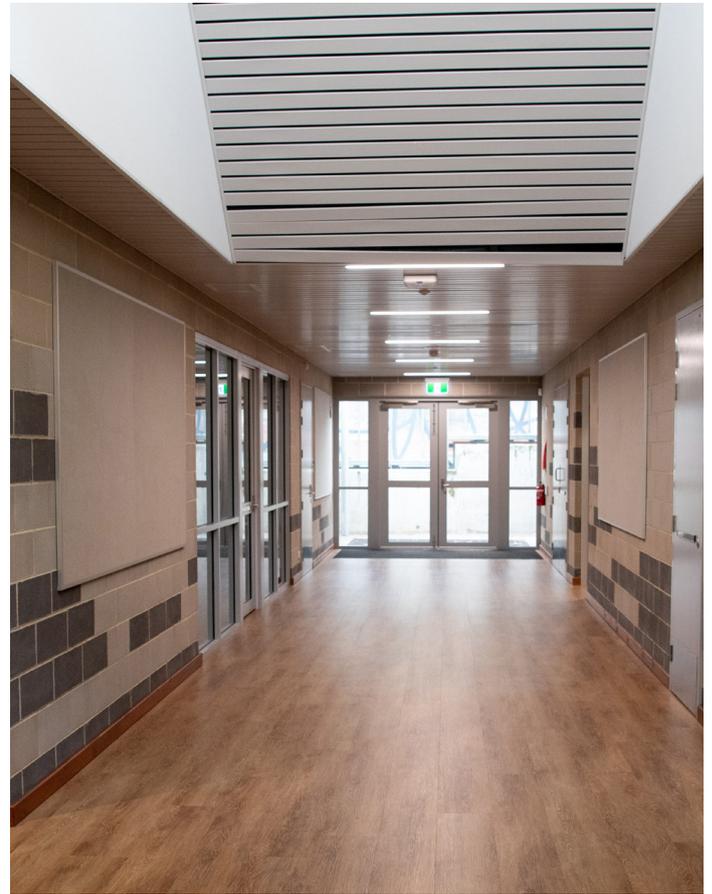
"The school was happy to show DWA Architects how well their Omnisports floor had held up over such a long time," said Ms O'Kane. "Woodvale's floor still looks fabulous, quite similar to when it was new, which is testament to its durability."

DWA's Mr Perera said his practice often takes a common-sense approach before specifying materials. "Some schools are quite helpful in letting us learn from past projects and that helps us develop our model and design approach," said Mr Perera.

"Woodvale Secondary College had a larger sports centre with a similar Omnisports flooring so that precedent helped us in a situation where we were considering using a product that we were unfamiliar with.

"Having been installed for several years, it was performing well and the school seemed really happy with it, so we knew that it would be a good choice for our project."

Tarkett's Ms O'Kane said another attractive factor for the architects was Omnisports' comparative affordability. "Herarn had been considering a timber floor for Wanneroo's new building but the budget was tight so when he learned



that our vinyl alternative could be specified at a fraction of the price – approximately 40 percent less – without compromising on performance, he was impressed,” said Ms O’Kane.

DWA’s Mr Perera agreed government budgets for school buildings are generally driven by functionality and will often seek a more affordable alternative such as Tarkett’s Omnisports.

Whilst Omnisports was finally specified, DWA considered sports vinyls from other suppliers. “We looked at two or three different sports vinyl flooring companies,” Mr Perera said. “We were considering what would be the best value for money in terms of getting a quality product for the right kind of cost.

“There were products from other brands that were more affordable and then also other products that were more expensive, but I think Tarkett’s Omnisports was the best value-for-money given its performance features.

“Also, there were options within the Omnisports range that we could spec up or down, so we had that flexibility to alter the amount of shock-absorbency to try to get the most amount of ‘give’ in the product that was still within that multi-use kind of range.

“Tarkett was really helpful with that process, in terms of explaining how some of the ranges are exclusive for sports and then some are a bit more multi-use. Omnisports Active

7.1 is most-suitable for the school’s intended use. We know it’s mostly going to be used as a sporting facility, but occasionally they might use it as an assembly building or, say, an election voting location, so it’s good to know it can be used by the greater community as well.”

Tarkett product marketing manager, Greg Widders, said Omnisports’s key attributes can be broken down into four key categories and numerous performance certifications. “Sports flooring has some key differences in its requirements compared with other flooring types. As a FIBA research partner, Tarkett can be trusted to comply Omnisports with the relevant standards and certifications. And this trust is backed by our 15-year commercial warranty,” said Mr Widders.

“We have the expertise to deliver quality sports floors that are certified. This should be one of the first questions to ask when selecting a sports floor: Is it compliant and certified?. Naturally, Omnisports meets the EN 14904 Sports Surface Standard and is FIBA-approved.

“Our Omnisports range focuses on player safety, performance and indoor air-quality, delivering a solution that looks after the wellbeing of all users,” he continued.

“Rather than specifying to slip ratings, sports floors examine shock-absorption and friction, these are the key aspects of performance needed for sports, and importantly Omnisports Active 7.1 has a P1 shock absorption level, whilst maintaining a high level of resistance to indentation.



“Once the Omnisports flooring went in, it definitely changed the overall balance and perspective of the interior.”

The flooring contractor for the Omnisports Active installation was Jupps Floorcoverings and director, Stephen Collins, said the business has been around since 1962 and that Jupps’ relationship with Tarkett “Goes back to the very beginning and there’s always been a very strong affiliation,” he said.

Mr Collins encapsulated the business’ role: “As the flooring contractor, we plan the job, ensure the product is fit for purpose, order the materials and ensure they will arrive on time. Once received, we work with our client to programme the installation,” said Mr Collins.

Mr Collins said the Omnisports Active 7.1 installation process wasn’t dissimilar to laying other Tarkett vinyl and the process was seamless. “The installation went very smoothly. Everything arrived on time and in very good condition because it was well-packaged and transported.

An important step that Jupps Floorcoverings took prior to installation was letting the transported Omnisports flooring come to ‘room temperature’. “Because it came from Europe, we made sure to acclimatise it to local conditions to ensure a smooth installation.

“Health and hygiene is important to consider with all flooring, but especially so in sports halls where air intake is increased and surfaces contaminated with sweat mixing in with dirt ingress.

“Durability, particularly in multiuse applications, is crucial for sports floors, which see some of the highest demand from foot-traffic, as well as the added potential of furniture damage. The latter is where a high resistance to indentation is important, ensuring the flooring can withstand chairs and tables when used for non-sporting events.”

DWA’s Mr Perera said Omnisports’ ongoing performance and maintenance attributes were major considerations during the specification process. “Those are important cost considerations over a product’s lifespan so all that information was passed on to the Department of Education and they were happy with the product’s durability, cleaning and maintenance requirements.

“As far as durability performance goes, the school has only been open for about six months, but they’ve been pretty happy with how it’s been performing so far.”

Mr Perera also said the Omnisports colours have helped create a sense of warmth in the space. “We’ve got a lot of concrete block internally, so we wanted the natural-looking flooring colours to give a warmth that contrasted the blockwork. Prior to the flooring installation it felt very grey and a little bit drab,” he said.

“When in transport, you can get shrinkage in colder temperatures so we get them on site to absorb local weather conditions for at least 72 hours before laying them.

“The installation process was very easy. It laid out well and having two metre wide rolls was a real advantage in terms of coverage and minimising welds.

“I honestly didn’t hear a lot about the actual installation from our guys on site, which is a great indication that things are going smoothly. It’s always good when you don’t hear about any issues from our installers.”

Mr Collins said he dealt directly with Tarkett and the builder, throughout. “Tarkett was really helpful. They made it easy for us to understand the Omnisports Active technical details and how to best install. And we needed to understand their production and shipping times, to meet the builder’s schedule.

“In terms of information coming back when we needed it, that’s exactly what happened. So Tarkett was good to work with, yes. It was an important project for them and also an important project for us, and together we worked really well.

“It was a string to our bow that we were able to ensure the product was installed correctly to Tarkett’s specifications and also for Tarkett given it’s such a specialised flooring with excellent design.”

Mr Collins said feedback on the completed installation has been positive. "From the response I've had, the feedback has been very good – that it looks nice. When I've taken people out there, they don't realise it's a vinyl floor because it looks like a real timber floor. It's not until you touch it and feel the cushioning that you understand it's not. "I'm of course biased, but it's a first-class installation and a first-class product. I think it looks fantastic; it looks a 'million dollars'."

And would Mr Collins expect it to remain looking-so? "Like any flooring, its durability and aesthetics are affected by how it's maintained. You would expect, given the school's investment in Omnisports, that it will be properly maintained, in which case I think it would last for a very long time. You'd expect it to still look great in 10 years' time."

Wanneroo Secondary College head of learning area – Health and Physical Education, Brad McCallum, was fortunate enough to start his employment at the Sports Centre project's commencement. "It was a good time for me to arrive at the school," said Mr McCallum. "I'd never had experience with this kind of vinyl sports flooring before but it's been good – the feel of it is really good."

"We have some high-level basketballers here and they're really happy with how they land and stop on it, so that's been a positive."

"They really like the sports floor because it's got enough 'give' in it, but it holds when they want to change direction. They like that because, in addition to playability, some of

them have problems with their ankles and knees after having already played for so many years in the sport. So they're really happy with that side of it. There have been no issues with how the surface performs when playing on it. White soles leave less marks for cleaning than black soles, however."

Mr McCallum said the flooring has already received a lot of foot traffic. "It gets pretty high traffic, about 25 hours per week, and we've had a couple of assemblies on it with chairs, etc. – a few things like that. We're expecting even higher traffic when the kids come back after the holidays next year, when it will also be used for after school care."

There hasn't been a lot of time to evaluate performance, but so far things have bode well. We've only had it for less than a year but the surface is great for now and the kids got used to it really quickly. We've been happy with it, overall."

DWA's Mr Perera said the feedback he's received on the Omnisports Active 7.1 flooring has been positive. Given his experiences with it at Wanneroo, would Mr Perera consider using Omnisports on future projects?

"Yes, definitely. I think it was really good value-for-money, has good maintenance qualities and looks nice installed. Being a multiuse solution, it also delivers complete flexibility for how the space is used. The school is pleased with the final outcome."

