

Artificial turf pitch at Club La Santa in 2025

Why was it necessary to change?

- The old natural grass pitch has been in use since 1983 without the soil layer being replaced, meaning that it was depleted and no longer suitable for grass growth in areas of high use and wear. - The turf had large holes that could pose a hazard to users. In addition, the soil layer had become home to insects.
- Club La Santa has a shortage of space for ball games. When the grass pitch had to be constantly repaired and shut down for various works, many activities had to be cancelled. The constant maintenance of the natural grass, such as watering, aeration, seeding, fertilising and mowing, was also a nuisance for guests.
- With the many challenges that Club La Santa faced with the natural grass pitch and given that artificial turf pitches had advanced to the point where they were a viable alternative, the decision was an easy one.

What considerations went into the choice of artificial turf?

Environmental considerations that have been achieved:

- We wanted a construction that does not need to be watered for sports reasons, as unnecessary water consumption is costly and not environmentally responsible.
- We wanted a structure with no infill, to avoid pollution and unnecessary maintenance costs.
- We wanted an artificial turf carpet that could be reused and incorporated into new production.
- We wanted the entire new substructure for the artificial turf surface to be made from natural materials sourced in Lanzarote.

Technical considerations that have also been realised:

- All grass and soil layers from the old turf carpet had to be removed and taken to an environmental dump.
- All non-adjustable subsoil, clay, etc. had to be removed and taken to an environmental dump.
- Construction of a 1x1 m longitudinal trench in the subsoil along the entire length of the centre of the track to ensure water drainage in case of extreme rainfall.
- Underlying new gravel surfaces were laid with a slope towards the catch basin.
- The final gravel surface is completely horizontal, ensuring that the entire artificial turf pitch is level and that rainwater drains through the surface where it falls.
- Water outlets for mounting hoses are installed at the sides so that the artificial turf can be cleaned if necessary.

The choice of artificial turf type, manufacturer and construction:

- At the FSB trade fair in Cologne in 2023, we found two manufacturers whose products met our requirements. These manufacturers provided samples for testing at Club La Santa. It quickly became clear that one manufacturer's artificial turf was superior, which is why we entered further dialogue with this company. We visited their production and testing facilities in the Netherlands, where we observed tests simulating 10 years of wear and tear and high UV exposure. These tests were very convincing. We then visited the PSV Eindhoven Football Academy, where coaches from Real Madrid and Valencia FC also attended, and they gave us very positive feedback.
- After deciding on this artificial turf, we tested it with a proportion of yellow fibres mixed into the green to see if this would reduce the surface's heat absorption. This trial, the first of its kind, was so successful that it reduced heat absorption by 8 degrees Celsius. In addition, the artificial turf looked more natural.

Sports functional properties:

- One of the most important properties of an artificial turf pitch is the friction between the turf and the skin of the athletes using it. This friction must be minimised so that athletes do not suffer unnecessary abrasions or burns. The chosen artificial turf has the lowest friction on the market and is extremely skin-friendly, even when dry.
- Underneath the artificial turf, directly on top of the levelled gravel surface, there is a 10 mm foam pad that stops the ball from bouncing. This ensures that the sports functional properties for ball bouncing comply with UEFA and FIFA rules.
- The surface construction is also suitable for high-level rugby, and spear throwing can be performed with spears designed for use on artificial turf with rubber tips.
- The best footwear for ball games is ordinary football boots designed for natural grass pitches (steel studs are not allowed).

Use of the artificial turf pitch at Club La Santa:

- It should be noted that, in the first few months, the artificial turf will feel quite soft and unstable underfoot. The artificial turf is woven at a height of approximately 4.5 cm, with a lot of air between the blades. Over time, the blades will collapse due to use and weather conditions, making the entire carpet more compact and stable, like natural grass with a height of approximately 3–3.5 cm corresponding to the normal mowing height of a natural grass pitch.
- The new artificial turf pitch will be used for many different purposes, including old and new activities devised by the Green Team. The main ones are rugby and football. To avoid disturbing guests using the running track and the two segments, fences will be installed to keep balls inside the pitch. We expect these fences to stop at least 80% of the balls that currently end up outside the pitch. The fences are made of aluminium posts, and the nets are similar to those used for football goals, allowing easy visibility.
- Behind the two large football goals, there is a fence, and at the javelin-throwing end, there is an opening in the fence behind the goal, which is the same width as

the javelin field. The goal covers the opening and is moved when javelins are thrown.

- In the first half of the artificial turf pitch, towards the shot-put pitch, fences will be erected on the two long sides, with collapsible seven-man goals mounted in front of them. We saw this system used at PSV Eindhoven. This will give us an established mini artificial turf pitch. In addition to this fixed pitch, there will be a few loose mini goals and five pairs of mini pod goals that can be placed as required. On the side of the pitch facing the pole-vaulting area, a mobile pitch made of aluminium with glass panels on the sides will be placed on each side of the pitch. This allows spectators to sit and watch the players. One court is an octagonal panna court, and the other is a rectangular mini court measuring 10 x 15 metres.
- We invite you to enjoy lots of ball games on the new artificial turf pitch.

Especially around events:

- We have purchased 2,000 m² of special cover sheets to protect the artificial turf during events involving tents, etc. These sheets have been tested in collaboration with the artificial turf manufacturer to ensure that the turf is not damaged.

Links:

Grass type:

- <https://www.greenfields.eu/products/non-infill/Pure-PT>
- <https://www.opsa.es/pure-pt-cesped-artificial/>

Installer:

- <https://www.opsa.es/>