

Kinetic Solutions Group celebrates a double at The Championships, Wimbledon

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Moving structures specialist Kinetic Solutions Group celebrates a double anniversary of its iconic retractable roofs at The All England Lawn Tennis Club in Wimbledon, London.

Kinetic Solutions Group is the Sheffield-based engineering business behind both retractable roofs at The Championships, Wimbledon.

The Centre Court roof, which marks its 15th birthday in June 2024, was deployed for the first time in competitive play on 29 June 2009, during a match between former Wimbledon champion Amélie Mauresmo and Grand Slam finalist Dinara Safina. This was the first Wimbledon match ever to be played under a closed roof.

The newer and slightly larger, No.1 Court roof celebrates its 5th birthday this year, and was officially used for the first time during The Championships 2019 during a match between Coco Gauff and Magdaléna Rybáriková.

Jamie Baker, Tournament Director at The Championships, Wimbledon comments: "The roofs enable us to complete matches that otherwise would be suspended due to rain or poor natural light, which has helped to transform the event.

"The ability to deploy roofs on Centre Court and No.1 Court helps us to keep our match schedule on track and the feedback we have received from the players, the public, broadcasters and partners has been extremely positive."

Danny Pickard, CEO at Kinetic Solutions Group, adds: "A total of 20 years of Championships tennis has been played at Wimbledon with our retractable roofs at the ready. We're immensely proud of this outstanding record of reliability.

"We are dedicated to creating unique, innovative and robust kinetic architecture solutions. The performance of both roofs at Wimbledon demonstrates our commitment and capability on a world stage."

John Biggin, Senior Project Manager at Kinetic Solutions Group, has looked after both roofs from the very start, going back to the Centre Court redevelopment in the early 2000s.

John says: "It's a great testament to what we delivered first time around on Centre Court that our approach has been largely unchanged for No.1 Court.

"The in-service support team is on-site throughout The Championships, ensuring that both roofs are fully tested and ready to be called into action when needed."

Interesting facts about the retractable roofs:

- Both roofs have been designed and built in Britain.
- The roofs can be fully opened or closed in an average time of eight and a half minutes.
- Each roof spans 75 metres and weighs 1,000 tonnes – as much as 500 Land Rovers – yet they glide quietly and effortlessly above the 12,000-strong crowds.
- The roof is 17 metres above the grass surface.
- Each roof has more than 25,000 parts and 25 kilometres of electrical cabling.
- In its 15 years of service, the Centre Court roof has been fully deployed and retracted more than 280 times. Its slightly bigger brother over No.1 Court has been fully closed and opened 79 times since 2019.
- The roofs are in motion during matches too, travelling imperceptibly while players change ends or take breaks. The Centre Court roof has been moved more than 4,000 times during Championships matches since 2009. The No.1 Court roof has moved 1,000 times.
- The roof trusses are divided into two groups, north and south, both of which can travel independently to any position. The entire roof can be stored at the north end of the stadium when not in use, leaving the south end open to natural sunlight to help the world-famous grass courts grow.
- Despite its obvious role in ensuring that rain doesn't stop play, the retractable roof is also used as a gantry for overhead lights.

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About Wimbledon

The Championships, Wimbledon, is the oldest of the four tennis Grand Slams and the only one played on grass. Managed by The All England Lawn Tennis Club and staged on the AELTC Grounds, Wimbledon has evolved from its origins as a private members' croquet club in 1868, to one of the world's biggest annual sporting events and one of the most well-respected brands in sport. Visit www.wimbledon.com and follow us @wimbledon on all major social media platforms.

About the Kinetic Solutions Group

The Kinetic Solutions Group solves complex kinetic engineering challenges for demanding applications. Together, we combine agility, exceptional communication and wide technical expertise to ensure your project gets moving and stays moving.

The company's 30 years of experience includes projects for The All England Lawn Tennis Club, Tottenham Hotspur FC, Ascot Racecourse, The Sage Gateshead, Royal Opera House, King Abdullah Sports City, and Kai Tak Sports Park.

ARX, part of the Kinetic Solutions Group, specialises in kinetic architecture solutions for sports stadiums and entertainment venues. ARX designed, engineered, built and installed both retractable roofs for AELTC. For more information visit: www.arx.co.uk

ISX, part of the Kinetic Solutions Group, provides in-service support solutions for kinetic architecture and mechanical handling systems. ISX has supported AELTC since 2009 ensuring that both roofs are maintained, tested and always ready for action. For more information visit: www.isx.co.uk

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