

SPORTS MANAGEMENT

Growing youth participation

Sport England's new insight research revealed

MENTAL HEALTH

How sport is making a difference

Nigel Walker

The director of the EIS on delivering Olympic success



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SCHOOL SPORT – COULD TRY HARDER

Secondary school sport is in the spotlight, as new research shows memories of cold showers and gung-ho, all-weather schedules put many people off exercise for life. Radical change is needed if “PE” is ever to inspire the lifelong habits needed to get the nation active and healthy

In my mid-teens I went to a new school which turned out to have a tradition of playing tricks on new students. Within a couple of days of starting, someone dropped into a conversation that there were mixed showers after PE. Everyone was in on the ‘joke’ – even some of the teachers.

I still look back with incredulity that this could have happened, most especially with the knowledge of teaching staff – and bearing in mind this was an unremarkable English state school, not a public school with a history of punishing initiation ceremonies.

I’m not alone in having bad memories of PE at school. For all the wonderful work done by those PE teachers who get it right, school sport is increasingly being identified by researchers as the thing which puts many people off exercise for life.

A new survey from the University of Birmingham, *The Big PE*

Conversation, polled 1,800 people and discovered a quarter of males and a third of females “never or rarely” enjoyed PE while at school. The reasons were numerous and included things like being sent outside in all weathers in short sleeves and embarrassment about body issues. More than half said school PE didn’t help them become more physically active in adulthood.

“We thought it would be fascinating to ask people about their school PE experiences, with a view to shaping the PE lessons of the future to encourage sustainable, healthy lifestyles,” said University of Birmingham’s Kathleen Armour, who led the study.

“When you think about the money invested in our PE curriculum, we haven’t done enough to understand how this affects our level of activity as adults. Although there’s a great body of work on how investment translates into the performance of elite athletes and Olympic medal tables, this is an opportunity to help us to create more positive, effective PE experiences for every child.”

The wider sports industry is waking up to the huge impact which bad school experiences have on sports participation. Our feature in this issue (see page 38), delves into a new insight study from Sport England, called *The challenge of growing youth participation in sport*. This in-depth research examined the reasons young people don’t play sport and found a significant shift is needed if we’re to successfully engage young people.

There’s often a gulf between attitudes and behaviours – kids may say they love sport, but not take part, while others claim not to be interested, but take part on a more regular basis because of motivation from friends and family.

The negative references to school sports in the research stand out. One of the most challenging findings is that for many “sport was last viewed as fun in primary school.”

The report says that at secondary school, “sport starts to be perceived as a more serious pursuit for those who are ‘good’ at it and this drives a shift towards functional rather than sporting motivation.” Basically, selling sport as fun doesn’t resonate with many young people.

It recommends tapping in to more adult motivations such as demonstrating that taking part in sport delivers something they care about, such as “looking good, achieving personal goals, supporting a charity or providing a social setting to be with friends”.

So there’s much to change if ‘PE’ is to become the bedrock of adult health we know it could be. We need more awareness of the needs of young people, greater skill in engaging with them and in the delivery of experiences which are habit forming and leave them with the motivation to make it part of their adult lives.

Liz Terry, editor
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Selling sport as ‘fun’ to young people doesn’t resonate – it’s more effective to tap in to adult motivations

Share your thoughts – visit sportsmanagement.co.uk/blog



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PEOPLE

The hotel is our chance to give back and create something special for the fans

Nicky Butt, Ryan Giggs, Gary Neville, Phil Neville and Paul Scholes

Perhaps the most talented group of players to have simultaneously emerged from an English football academy is now spreading its wings in the field of business. Former Manchester United stars Gary Neville, Ryan Giggs, Paul Scholes, Nicky Butt and Phil Neville – who, alongside David Beckham, are often referred to as 'Fergie's Fledglings' – are the main backers behind the £23m (US\$38.7m, €28.3m) Hotel Football venture near the club's Old Trafford stadium.

The quintet have December as the launch month for the 8,000sq m (86,111sq ft) building – designed by AEW Architects – which will incorporate a 133-bedroom hotel with space for supporters' club members and spectators, a new Café Football and a club shop.

Giggs, who is now MUFC assistant manager after hanging up his boots last season, has said that the new hotel aims to offer something for United's loyal fans and the local community, but will also try to appeal to a wider market through a range of offerings. Giggs, who along with Gary Neville has been the main driver of the project through the pair's company GG Hospitality, said: "Gary and I have spent so much of our lives playing at Old Trafford and appreciate everyone who supported us there over the years.

"To make sure the hotel appeals to everyone, not just football fans, we are working with some of the most talented people in the industry to create something unique and inviting – with a focus on excellent customer service and nurturing young talent."



Gary Neville (left), managing director Stuart Procter (middle) and Ryan Giggs are driving the project

Scholes describes the project as a chance to give something back to the fans who cheered him throughout his glittering 20-year career. "When Gary and Ryan mentioned the idea of Hotel Football and Old Trafford Supporters Club I was really keen to get involved," Scholes said. "The hotel is our chance to create something special for the fans."

While Gary Neville and Giggs have been involved in every aspect of the project since its inception – their company GG Hospitality is behind it – the others are set to take on a more ambassadorial role, with at least one of them always on hand to meet and greet supporters on matchdays.

"We want The Old Trafford Supporters Club to become a place United fans can

think of as their own," says Phil Neville. The 11-storey Hotel Football, located on Sir Matt Busby Way, will be managed by Stewart Davies, who has previously headed up Manchester venues the Mint Hotel and Hilton DoubleTree.

GG Hospitality has already launched a 120-seat themed restaurant – Café Football in Westfield Stratford, east London. Like Café Football, Hotel Football is expected to be the first in what will become a worldwide brand.

Details: www.hotelfootball.com



The five former players (above) with the GG Hospitality team. The hotel is adjacent to Old Trafford stadium (left)





I just took what I saw as an unsolved problem and decided to crack it once and for all

Chris Boyle, founder, Soloshot

“I think I’ve always had an ability to recognise problems,” says Chris Boyle, founder of Soloshot, a new “automatic cameraman” system.

Designed to allow athletes to record their performances without outside help, Soloshot is set to help make video analytics (as well as sport-related home videos) available and cost-effective to everyone. But how did Boyle, a biomedical engineer, come up with the concept? Being an action sport junkie helped.

“I was pretty obsessed with the ocean and travel – even as a kid growing up in Queens, New York,” he says. “So after playing a lot of field sports, I migrated to surfing and other action sports towards the end of school.”

Fitting then, that the idea for Soloshot came to him during a month-long surfing break. “Towards the end of my stay at a house I had rented, a north swell hit with offshore winds,” Boyle says. “I set a camera on the balcony, pointed it in the general direction of the break, hit record and went for a surf.”

“When I got back and watched the footage I realised three things: not having an amateur operating the camera made for a better video; forgetting to worry about the camera made the surf more fun; but also that not having the camera zooming in and out made it hard to tell which one of the surfers I was.”

That’s where Boyle’s problem-solving skills kicked in. “A lot of groups put effort into developing automated camera stuff for the professional market but they were too expensive. I just wanted to be able to set up a camera on a beach and film some



Starting life as a photographic aid for surfers, Soloshot is being introduced for a number of sports

surfing without having to pay someone a bunch of money or impose on a friend,” he says and explains how Soloshot is based on a wearable tag that the camera “follow”.

“Our system is inexpensive and easy to use and the best thing is that the footage from Soloshot is better than everyone

but the most professional guys. Now my girlfriend can relax on the beach or better yet come for a surf with me.”

Since its launch, Soloshot has been a success. While he doesn’t want to reveal exact sales figures, Boyle says that the cameras are currently available in 17 countries. Boyle is looking to expand the number by marketing the camera to an ever-increasing range of sports – as well as non-sports. “I really feel as though we’re just scratching the surface,” he says.

Details: www.soloshot.com



Olander has been at the forefront of the Nike+ revolution, creating the FuelBand consumer products



Once you establish a direct relationship with a consumer, you don't need advertising

Stefan Olander, vice president of digital sport, Nike +

Described as one of the sport industry's leading digital marketers, Stefan has held a number of key leadership positions with Nike over the past decade. Blending his passion for the digital world with traditional communications skills, he has led many of Nike's most innovative and cutting edge initiatives – from launching EMEA's new digital platform in 2000, to overseeing all communications for one of Nike's most comprehensive global football initiatives; The Secret Tournament in 2002. He also led the creation of Run Americas, inspiring 115,000 people in five cities throughout South America (Sao Paolo, Buenos Aires, Mexico City, Santiago and Lima) to run a 10k race on the same day.

His most significant work, however, is the creation of Nike+ and FuelBand – an innovative product which integrates fitness with digital media. He has been credited with generating new consumer connections and for bridging the digital

and physical worlds, changing running forever. He now leads an innovation team dedicated to enhancing the consumer experience through the use of digital tools and his team is responsible for the entire Nike+ ecosystem, including the FuelBand as well as Nike+ Basketball, Nike+ Training, Nike+ Kinect Training and the popular Nike+ Running experience.

Due to the success of Nike+, Olander's views on customer engagement through the digital world are listened to and in 2012 he authored a book which changed the digital marketing landscape

– *Velocity: The Seven New Laws for a World Gone Digital*. In the book he criticised companies for taking an 'old' approach to social media, focusing on clicks or 'likes' and measuring success in numerical terms.

"Too many businesses are thinking 'I need to sell inventory', rather than 'How can I add value to a smartphone, or a new device?'" Olander says. "A whole industry is stuck on trying to force old metrics on to new channels."

Olander says that Nike, as a brand, has moved away from investing in advertising and concentrates on the creation of digital services such as Nike+. It is part of a strategy which takes into account changes in the way people consume the digital media available to them.

"Advertising is an old model that's being squeezed into the new framework of social media, where people don't want to be interrupted. Once you have established a direct relationship with a consumer, you don't need to advertise to them."

Details: www.nike.com



The FuelBand makes it easy for users to set and monitor a daily goal

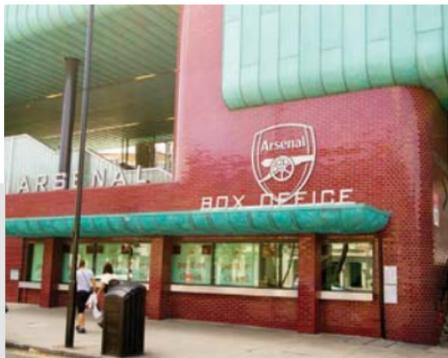
THOUGHT LEADERS

Six months to go until the general election – whats on offer?

John Goodbody, journalist, *Sunday Times*



Price of watching football has increased faster than cost of living – the most expensive tickets can be found at Arsenal FC



You can usually tell when a general election is imminent because suddenly there's a raft of proposals about sport from the political parties. And no sport attracts greater interest and potential votes than football.

This year's conference season saw all three main political parties weigh in as the BBC published the results of an extensive survey into the cost of watching the national game. Average prices have risen at almost twice the cost of living since 2011. The investigation also found that Arsenal had the most expensive season ticket at £2,013 while Premier League champions Manchester City offered one for £299.

However, the most telling statistic was that a season ticket at Barcelona costs £103, cheaper than any club in the top four divisions in England.

The Liberal Democrats voted in favour of an independent review of the sport, with stricter ownership rules, claiming that fans were being priced out. The Labour Party went further, saying that supporters would have seats on every board and the right to buy up to 10 per cent of the shares when ownership changes. Clive Efford, the shadow sports minister, said: "Too often fans are treated like an afterthought as ticket prices are hiked-up, grounds relocated and clubs burdened with debt or the threat of

bankruptcy." Currently only 14 league clubs have supporters on their boards.

However, as Tony Evans, the football editor of *The Times*, rightly pointed out: "Imagine the Glazers find a buyer for Manchester United at the sort of price they have already asked: £2bn. How could the supporters' trust raise the 10 percent needed to purchase a significant stake? Having the right to buy is one thing. Having the ability is another."

As a result of the controversy Helen Grant, minister for sport, set up a panel to forge stronger links between fans and clubs. The group is chaired by Joanna Manning-Cooper – member of the Portsmouth Supporters Trust and formerly head of media for LOCOP – and will include representation from Supporters Direct. However good these intentions are, one wonders just how successful any outcome will be.

Football is such a successful spectator sport – with 95 per cent of available seats sold in the Premier League so far this season – that clubs will argue that they are just obeying the laws of supply and demand. Also, seats at many clubs cost below the prices charged, for

instance, in London theatres.

It is not just football that recently attracted the attention of the politicians. So did another activity, which is particularly popular – cycling. Victoria Pendleton made an appearance at the Tory conference, preaching about the benefits of school sport as it builds discipline, character and determination – "things that do not necessarily show up in test results but employers are always looking for."

However, when the Department for Transport delivered its long-awaited 'cycling delivery plan', it wasn't well received by British Cycling because it "fell short" of what was expected, only providing an aspiration of funding to reach £10 per head of population by 2021. The governing body said this amount is the minimum starting point for targeted investment to improve the cycling environment in order to grow the number of cyclists.

As always, the economic demands constrain politicians in what they can deliver. As the election approaches, we can expect a number of proposals from all parties, many of which will not be carried out and may well be forgotten afterwards.



Cycling was one of two sports to get attention at the party conferences

The new code includes tougher sanctions on those found guilty of doping

The new anti-doping code is a fresh opportunity to protect sport

Andy Parkinson, CEO, UK Anti-Doping

With the New Year comes new resolutions. For the sporting community, 1 January 2015 marks a new era for anti-doping. After three years of global consultation, the World Anti-Doping Code has been updated, along with a revised set of UK Anti-Doping Rules. This is a fresh opportunity to protect clean sport.

To implement these changes effectively requires collective responsibility from all of our partners in the UK, across every sport. Ultimately we need to ensure that our athletes and athlete support personnel are aware of their responsibilities.

Tougher sanctions and a focus on investigations and intelligence-led approaches are major steps forward for the Code. Greater focus has



also been placed on athlete support personnel. Anyone found guilty of helping to cover up doping activity or avoiding detection could also face a lengthy ban from sport.

In the UK many of the new features of the 2015 code are already being applied, but that doesn't mean that there's not work to do. It's not only athletes and athlete support personnel who must adapt



to the changes. Sports have increased responsibilities and a duty of care to their members to manage the threat of doping. Failure to do so could damage the reputation of their sport and result in the loss of a high profile athlete, in whom resources have been invested.

UKAD is working with NGBs to ensure that by 1 January they have updated anti-doping rules, aligned to the

2015 code. For the majority of sports that adopt the UK Anti-Doping Rules this will occur automatically and no action is required. The message is clear – a new World Anti-Doping Code will not just impact our athletes. NGBs will feel the consequences too and need to be ready to implement revised strategies which protect and promote the reputation of their sport and athletes.

Is plugging in the key to playing out?

Emma Boggis, CEO, Sports and Recreation Alliance

It's no secret that recent technological advances have given us access to more information and data than ever before. The proliferation of connected digital devices and apps has not only re-invented our domestic routine, but is now also impacting upon our social, sporting and recreational lives.

In our new report, *Future Trends*, published in conjunction with the Future Foundation, we've identified an increasing adoption of and desire to utilise technology



to improve our sporting and recreational activities and as a result, our wellbeing.

However, it's not just the individual who can take

advantage of technological advances for their recreational needs, clubs and governing bodies should also be thinking about how they can adopt and embrace technology for the good of their members.

In an age where social media enables friends to connect, sync and share information, sporting organisations can encourage greater participation and competition by using the same channels and technology.

It's more pressing than ever for sports clubs and organisations to embrace

this change, because in the pre-digital age, joining a club was a way of interacting and building a network of like-minded individuals. Now with people becoming ever more connected, the power of virtual networks and the ability of people to participate in recreational activities on their own could slowly suffocate outdoor activity organisations.

One of the challenges is to ensure the integration of technology and sport doesn't destroy the primal thrill of competing and participating.

HEALTHY CITIES - HAPPY CITIES

In his latest in a series of columns, FaulknerBrowns Architects' Mike Hall explores the importance of sustainable, carefully considered sports facilities and how they can contribute to healthy, active cities

You may have blinked and missed it, but 6 October 2014 was World

Architecture Day. This year's theme was *Healthy*

Cities - Happy Cities and underlining it was the role good design can play in creating health and happy environments for people.

In terms of activity and participation, there are a number of cities in England which may rightly lay claim to the top participation honours. Sheffield frequently comes out as one of the top performing cities. Major landmark facilities such as Ponds Forge International Sports Centre and the English Institute for Sport have played a key role in contributing to community participation and elite training.

Manchester, UK can also boast its place as one of the highest performing cities, especially when the efficient cost of delivering these services is factored in. Manchester Aquatics, built to host all of the water-based disciplines for the 2002 Commonwealth Games, is still one of the world's most flexible pool complexes. Its central arterial location on Oxford Road also means that it is at the heart of one of the most sought after student locations in the country. This contributes to a healthy balance of community, student and high performance usage with a staggering 750,000 users through the turnstiles each year. Manchester City Council has consistently targeted a number of key sports development programs through to national and international events.

Manchester's National Cycling Centre has just celebrated its twentieth birthday and is still the world's most well used indoor cycling facility, having provided the bedrock for Britain's cycling success on the track for the last three Olympic Games.

There is, however, a new kid on the block. Derby City Council has a vision



The Derby Arena - playing a part in plans to make Derby the most active city in the UK

Manchester Aquatics, built for the 2002 Commonwealth Games, is still one of the world's most flexible pool complexes and benefits from a central arterial location

to be 'the most active city in the UK'. FaulknerBrowns were involved in the early stages of implementing Derby's leisure strategy, which included a technical review of wet and dry hub facilities as well as a series of satellite locations.

Building on lessons learnt from projects in Sheffield and Manchester, the recently completed Derby Arena - which incorporates a cycle track - is one of the most innovative facilities of its type in the world. Designed by FaulknerBrowns to break down barriers, the internal 250m track was lifted up one storey in height to create a stronger, more active connection to the Arena's interior.

These connections are expressed on the outside of the building, literally lifting the skin of the building to define

a clear entrance sequence, welcoming all members of the community into the building. This approach has driven improved access to a range of activities, including court sports and health and fitness, in addition to cycling. Importantly, the building is also flexible enough to accommodate revenue producing concerts and non-sports events.

In line with the aspiration of World Architecture Day, we share a strong belief in the role which carefully considered, sustainable and quality sports facilities play in contributing to healthy, active cities.

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Whether the priority is durability or an eye-catching design, Gerflor has a flooring product for all areas of your club

Over the years, the David Lloyd Leisure brand has become synonymous with health, sports and leisure. It has played a significant role in increasing the nation's awareness of how important fitness is to our overall health and wellbeing. Today, David Lloyd Leisure (DLL) exists to provide exceptional service and unrivalled facilities that enable members of all ages to enjoy active, healthy, satisfying lives.

A number of key areas within the business would need different flooring solutions and DLL turned to international flooring specialists Gerflor to supply a UK-wide solution for four very specific member areas within the brand's business.

Choosing a flooring solution for these

four very distinct areas would normally be a huge challenge for most companies, but by specifying Gerflor products the challenge was easily met. A David Lloyd Leisure spokesperson commented: "The range and quality of material which Gerflor provided enabled us to effectively deliver our design concept whilst guaranteeing performance. We are overjoyed with the final results"

One of the specific member areas included the kid's area at the clubs; these would need to sustain some tough treatment from the children as they enjoyed a vast array of sporting activities as well as arts and craft sessions.

Gerflor's Taralay range would be the perfect choice for this busy area. Gerflor has taken the best-selling designs from

Taralay Impression, Taralay Uni and Nera Contract wood to combine them into one high-performance, hard-wearing range. Taralay Impression was chosen for its R10 slip performance and acoustic insulation of up to 19dB. With a Group T wear rating, low-maintenance, low-overall lifetime costs and is 100 per cent recyclability. It was an ideal robust and reliable flooring solution for DLL.

Taralay is treated with ProtecSol® rendering acrylic polishes obsolete and is fungistatic and anti-bacterial protected to MRSA (3) ISO 22196, inhibiting growth for maximum hygiene. Backed by a 10-year warranty Taralay does not contain any heavy metals, is 100 per cent compliant with REACH and emission levels are < 70 µg/m³.

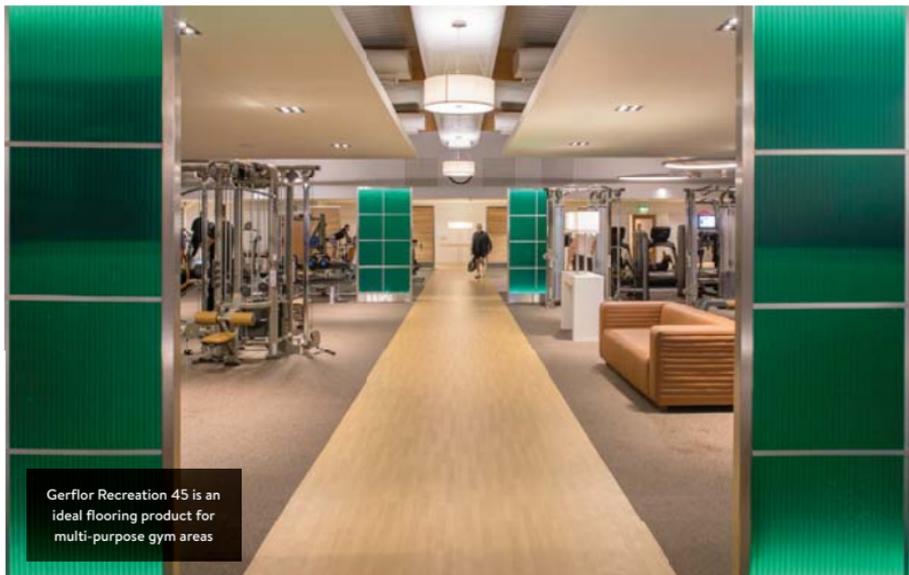
A new flooring product for their group exercise areas within the clubs was also required and again Gerflor were able to supply the perfect flooring product - Taraflex™.



Bespoke designs are created by water cutting, HD printing or line marking



Colourful Taralay is ideal for children's areas



Gerflor Recreation 45 is an ideal flooring product for multi-purpose gym areas



Gerflor's Insight LVT is ideal for high footfall areas



The Taraflex range offers 45% force reduction

Taraflex™ has been used in every summer Olympics since 1976 and is available in 17 colours and two wood-effect designs. The Sport M Evolution product offers a very high P1 category shock absorbency which exceeds 25% and meets the EN 14904 Standard for indoor sports surfaces. Taraflex™ is recognised for providing durability, safety and comfort without impairing performance. The range also offers greater than 45% force reduction, making it unrivalled in the marketplace in terms of offering comfort for users.

Bespoke designs are also available by either water cutting, HD printing or line marking. The Taraflex™ product also meets the EN Standard of 22196 for anti-bacterial activity (E. coli - S. aureus - MRSA) (3) returning >99% levels of growth inhibition. The product is also treated with ProtecSol®,

which renders polish redundant.

The new café areas would see Insight LVT from Gerflor as the preferred choice because of its technical performance as it's highly resistant to medium/high footfall and commercial traffic (European class 33/42). It comes in a large palette of mineral designs to suit all interior styles, has a R9 slip resistance with a group T wear rating and a 10-year warranty.

The fourth and final areas that would need Gerflor to supply the flooring solution were to be the gym facilities and Gerflor Recreation 45 was the specified product. Recreation 45 is an ideal solution for multi-purpose use and it is highly recommended for light recreation activities and multi-purpose use areas and gyms. It provides cushioning for children together with easy handling everyday sports and recreational

activities. This is also a product that reduces the danger of skin/rug burns and also meets the EN Standard of 22196 for anti-bacterial activity (E. coli - S. aureus - MRSA) (3) returning >99% levels of growth inhibition. The product is treated with ProtecSol®. The noise reduction qualities are at 17db, it is floor score certified and has comfort / shock absorption of ≥ 22% meeting ASTM F2772 for safe sports and play and is 100% recyclable. ●

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Government initiative to strengthen "fan power"

The coalition government has launched a new initiative aiming to ensure football fans have more say in the running of their clubs.

The Supporter Ownership and Engagement Expert Group will include representatives from government, the English Premier League, The Football Association, the Football League, Supporters Direct and the legal profession. The group will also include insolvency and tax experts and representatives from clubs which are run by supporters – such as Portsmouth FC, AFC Wimbledon and Wrexham. Areas that the group will look at include seeing what more can be done to help supporters' groups have stronger links with executives.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=x9f5M>



The centre will carry David Ross' name

Nottingham uni to build £40m sports complex

The University of Nottingham has announced plans to invest £40m in a new sports complex at its University Park campus.

The new complex will be part-funded by a "very significant commitment" from Nottingham alumnus and Carphone Warehouse founder David Ross, taking his total support for the university beyond £10m. As a result, the facility will be called the David Ross Sports Village. Construction of the new complex is due to start in February 2015 and be completed by June 2016. The complex will include a new main sports hall, 200-station health and fitness suite, sports science facilities and office accommodation.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=823f3>



The club has played at Goodison Park since 1892 and currently has a capacity of less than 40,000

Everton moves forward with stadium development

Everton Football Club can move forward with plans to build a new stadium in Liverpool park, according to the city's council which described the project as a catalyst for regeneration in the area.

The proposed 50,000-seat stadium, to replace Goodison Park, will be built alongside commercial and retail developments, although a statement from Everton chair Bill Kenwright said the plans are "still at a very early stage with a wide number of elements to be developed."

He added that the club is: "eager to engage with local residents before any major decisions are made."

The stadium is expected to cost somewhere in the region of £200m, part-funded by the sale of Goodison Park and a naming rights deal, but the club did not reveal how any shortfall would be made up.

"The council is going to put some money in and that will be around regeneration, not directly into the football club or stadium, without getting a financial or commercial return," said city mayor Joe Anderson. He added that keeping the football club within the city limits and seeing it contribute to regeneration was both economically and culturally

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=F2b9k>

UEFA signs landmark partnership with EU



UEFA president Michel Platini described the agreement with the EU as "historic"

UEFA has signed an "historic agreement" with the European Commission, designed to further improve the relationship between the football governing body and the European Union. The Arrangement for Co-operation aims to cement the structured co-operation in key policy areas and strengthens UEFA's commitment to working with the Commission.

As part of the agreement, the two organisations have committed to having regular bilateral and senior level meetings.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=w4c8k>

UK Sport to change funding criteria after Rio 2016

The government's high performance sport agency UK Sport is to reconsider its "no compromise" approach to funding elite sport. UK Sport chief executive Liz Nicholl said the agency would launch a consultation, during which all stakeholders – such as national governing bodies – will have an opportunity to voice their views on the current funding strategy.

UK Sport invests around £100m of public money into sport each year and its medals-based funding strategy has been credited with delivering Team GB's Olympic and Paralympic success in the past two Olympic Games.

Currently, sports which demonstrate that they are able to deliver Olympic medals are guaranteed financial support while those less likely to get athletes to the podium face cuts in funding. Sports which consistently underperform are

in danger of losing their elite funding entirely. While the "no compromise" approach has been hailed successful, as it has delivered impressive medal hauls at the Beijing (2008) and London (2012) Olympic Games, sports which have lost out on funding have launched bitter attacks against the system.

Perhaps the most vocal of the critics has been British Basketball, which lost all its Olympic funding earlier this year, after UK Sport said the sport had "not done enough" to prove it could win a medal at the 2016 or 2020 Games.

Other sports which have lost their funding entirely include volleyball, synchronised swimming, water polo and weightlifting.

It now seems that UK Sport is reconsidering its no compromise approach.

"We really do want to listen to all voices," Nicholl said.



British Basketball has welcomed the move

"We're not arrogant enough to think that we know how to do everything best. The questions that we need to ask, of the government, of our partners, are: What is it that they want UK Sport to be focused on? What is it they want UK Sport to deliver?"

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=p6b8z>

Cost of Olympic stadium conversion increases to £190m

The cost of converting the London Olympic Stadium into a 54,000-capacity multi-use stadium is set to rise from £154m to £190m due to complications in installing the new roof. Providing the support structures for the new roof have required significantly more strengthening work to the main roof truss than initially expected.

The truss was originally designed to be taken down after the Games. The London Legacy Development Corporation has allocated an extra £35.9m for the project.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=4s5p7>



The stadium is due to reopen in 2016



The floating bikeway would take cyclists past famous London landmarks

Floating bikeway in pot of ideas for London cycling

When it comes to how best to cater for cyclists in the UK's capital, more ideas are being "floated" than ever before. The latest is the Thames Deckway, a 7-mile (11km) stretch of cycle path which would float alongside the banks of the river.

Thames Deckway is a concept proposed by River Cycleway Consortium, which is led by architect David Nixon and environmental entrepreneur Anna Hill, in conjunction with Arup and David Broughton Architects. Running from Battersea to Canary Wharf, the waterside cycle path would decrease journey times by an estimated 30 minutes.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=d9c5y>

Arup selected to masterplan 2020 Olympic Games



The proposed Tokyo 2020 Olympic stadium

Consultancy and engineering firm Arup has won the contract to advise on venues and infrastructure for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The London-based firm says it has been appointed lead adviser to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, with its duties covering venue and infrastructure development. Arup will masterplan the Games, as well as advising on transport and legacy.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=2d755>

Academic partnership to explore legacy benefits

A new research collaboration between the University of Bath (UB) and the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP) in Brazil will explore the impact of major sporting events on society, politics and the economy. The new project – co-funded by a Researcher Links grant from the British Council and FAPESP – will enable academics from UB to share their research on the legacy claims of major sporting events with colleagues in Brazil. The partnership is being launched at a time when the amount of public money spent on providing the stadia and infrastructure needed to host Rio 2016 and the World Cup 2014 has resulted in widespread social unrest in Brazil.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=g2M5e>



The scheme will target people of all ages struggling with mental health

Sport to help people with mental health problems

A new £2m programme using sport to improve the lives of people with mental health problems will be launched in England next year (2015). The first of its kind in size and scope, the initiative will be run in eight areas across England and is designed to help more than 75,000 people.

A partnership between Sport England and mental health charity Mind, the scheme will offer peer support groups, taster sessions and events to help people make sport part of their everyday lives.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=c2x8e>



Since 2011, Sport England has invested a total of £94m into 1,800 community sport projects

Latest round of Inspired Facilities Fund announced

A total of 148 local sports projects will share £10m of National Lottery funding in the latest round of Sport England's Inspired Facilities Fund.

The funding is aimed at breathing new life into community sports facilities which have become worn-down or difficult to maintain. It is also being used to convert existing buildings into venues that are more suitable for grassroots sport.

Among the projects to receive funding are Streatham Youth and Community Trust (£67,900), which will use the money to convert a youth centre into a high quality sports facility and Bishop Auckland Canoe and Kayaking Club. The canoe club was

handed £54,900 towards a move to a new location – a disused swimming pool at St John's RC – and to set up its first permanent home.

The Inspired Facilities Fund is open to community and voluntary organisations which are able to bid for grants of up to £75,000. Other organisations such as councils and schools are able to apply for grants of up to £150,000. Following criticism from sports organisations over application procedures in the past, the grant is now an open programme – applications can be submitted at any time, rather than by specific deadlines.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=7c3U6>

Cambridge City FC gets green light for stadium



The club has waited for four years to get approval

Cambridge City Football Club (CCFC) has been given the green light to build a 3,000-capacity community stadium in Sawston, Cambridgeshire.

The club is now free to start construction work following a final approval for the scheme from secretary of state Eric Pickles. The plans had already been approved by South Cambridgeshire District Council in June, but the final decision had to be made by the government because the ground will be on green belt land.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=s9G9D>

NEWS UPDATE

London NFL franchise worth “more than £100m” to UK economy

A London-based National Football League (NFL) team would be worth more than £100m a year to the UK, according to a study carried out by Deloitte.

The figure is based on a London team playing eight regular season home games at Wembley per season.

It takes into account that the operational set up of the franchise – players, staff and auxiliary personnel – would visit the UK four times a year to play two home games on each visit, rather than being permanently based in the UK.

Spectator spending would comprise around 67 per cent of the £100m, with more than 600,000 fans expected to attend the eight regular season games.

The report states: “The potential direct impact to London of hosting an NFL



Jacksonville Jaguars are rumoured to be the team most likely to be relocated to London

franchise is estimated to be £102m. Spectator spending of almost £70m would largely drive this, along with an estimated spend in the host economy by the home franchise of more than £20m.”

Commissioned by the NFL, the report also shows that the two International Series fixtures played at Wembley in 2013 contributed £32m to the London economy. [Read more: http://lei.sr?a=T2y5e](http://lei.sr?a=T2y5e)

Public Health England launches framework to tackle inactivity

Public Health England (PHE) has published *Everybody Active, Every Day*, a framework for nationwide action to combat the physical inactivity epidemic.

PHE's statistics claim inactivity is responsible for one in six deaths in England and put its cost to the country at £7.4bn a year. The framework is the first consolidation of national and local



Sport and leisure providers have a crucial role

priorities, including the *Moving More, Living More* commitment to a physical activity legacy from the 2012 Games and NICE guidance. The heightened focus on tackling physical inactivity marks a win for ukactive, which has championed the cause and published its report *Turning the tide of inactivity*, in January this year. [Read more: http://lei.sr?a=a6F8j](http://lei.sr?a=a6F8j)

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WHAT WE LIVE FOR

Price of Football survey: ticket price increases outstrip cost of living

The annual Price of Football survey by the BBC shows that the average price of tickets for English football clubs has risen at twice the rate of the consumer price index. The average price of the cheapest match-day ticket (calculated for clubs from the English Premier League down to League Two) is now £21.49 – an increase of 13 per cent since 2011. In the same period, cost of living in the UK has gone up by 6.8 per cent.

Only five Premier League clubs have single match tickets available for less than £25 (Aston Villa, Hull, Leicester, Newcastle and West Ham), while fans of nine clubs will have to dish out at least £30 to see their team.

There are, however, regional differences. The cheapest season tickets at North



The most expensive season tickets at Arsenal's Emirates Stadium cost more than £2,000

London-based Arsenal FC – a club which has only won one trophy in the past eight years – cost a whopping £1,014, while fans of defending champions Manchester

City can buy a season ticket for £299. Arsenal also boasts the most expensive season tickets at £2,013.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=k3n7w>

AFC Wimbledon submits Plough Lane stadium plans

AFC Wimbledon has submitted a planning application to Merton Council for a new stadium at Plough Lane in South London. The League Two football club is planning to build an 11,000-capacity stadium on the site of Wimbledon Greyhound Stadium – a location the club calls its "spiritual home".

The application was submitted in partnership with residential builder Galliard Homes and seeks permission to build 600 residential units along with retail and commercial space and a leisure club.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=z9Y5D>



An artist's impression of the planned stadium

Olympic hero Jenny Jones launches snowsport club



Jones won the bronze medal at the Sochi 2014

Olympic medallist snowboarder Jenny Jones has launched a new snowsports club aimed at 11-18-year-olds in Southampton. Located at Alpine Snowsports – a facility operated by leisure charity Active Nation – the Snowsports Club will give young people the opportunity to experience skiing or snowboarding for the first time.

For those with previous experience, the club will offer taster sessions in ski racing and freestyle. Launched on 30 October, all sessions are led by qualified instructors.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=p4x5P>



The Games were a boost for tourism

Glasgow 2014 contributes £282m to tourism economy

The Glasgow Commonwealth Games contributed to £282m worth of Scottish tourism revenue in 2014, according to a study carried out on behalf of the Scottish government, Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Life and Glasgow City Marketing Bureau.

The Games Visitor Impact Study found that 690,000 people travelled to the city to attend the games and during August, hotel occupancy in Glasgow reached 95 per cent. The hotel occupancy rate exceeded 99 per cent on five nights that month, with visitors spending an average of five days in the country.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=u4P3n>

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LCCC's innovative way to raise Old Trafford funds

Lancashire County Cricket Club (LCCC) has launched a new retail bond in the hope of raising £3m to build a new hotel at its Old Trafford ground in Manchester.

Investors are being invited to put money into a five-year initial fixed-term bond offering 7 per cent gross interest per annum for investments from £1,000. The interest will be made up of 5 per cent paid in cash and 2 per cent in Credit4Cricket vouchers, which can be redeemed against the international tickets and hospitality products at LCCC, including food and beverage packages and membership fees.

Read more: <http://lei.sr7a=x4W3e>



Heather Stanning, Royal Artillery captain and gold medalist at London 2012

UK Sport to search army ranks for medal hopefuls

UK Sport, the British Army and the English Institute of Sport (EIS) have launched a new talent partnership programme aimed at identifying future Olympic medallists from within the ranks of military personnel. The £1.4m Army Elite Sports Programme will reach out into the garrisons and units to identify men and women in targeted sporting disciplines who possess the potential to go all the way to the podium in the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and beyond.

Talent scientists from the EIS will run assessments in the garrison towns nationwide and further afield in Germany and Cyprus.

Read more: <http://lei.sr7a=K9r8x>



Around 70 per cent of disabled people would do more sport if it was more accessible to them

New guidelines for disability sport providers

The English Federation of Disability Sport has published a new set of guidelines for sport and fitness providers. The guidelines form a part of the Talk To Me report – published on 31 October 2014 – and draw from consultations with both active and inactive disabled people. In total, the report identifies 10 key principles aimed at helping providers improve their offer to disabled people and make it more appealing.

Talk To Me goes through each principle in detail, providing evidence of what disabled people are looking for and recommendations of how to meet expectations.

According to Barry Horne, EFDS chief executive, the key findings of the report

can be grouped under three main headings – drive awareness, engage the audience and offer support and reassurance.

“We know that a great majority of disabled people are more likely to respond to opportunities to get physically active which tap into the things that matter to them most,” Horne said.

“These include: building connections, family and support systems and health. Simply having fun is what most of us seek out, and more often than not disabled people are looking for opportunities which are as likely to appeal to their non-disabled friends and family.”

Read more: <http://lei.sr7a=Q7b5k>

London's 'Rom' becomes Europe's first listed skatepark



Four Leaf Clover, Rom's main skating attraction

The 'Rom' in Hornchurch, East London, has been given Grade II listed status by English Heritage and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Opened in 1978, the Rom, named after a nearby river, is one of the finest surviving examples of early skatepark design in the UK. The decision to protect the park follows the publication of a new book by sports historian Simon Inglis called *Played in London* – which examines London's sporting sites of historical importance.

Read more: <http://lei.sr7a=2u6b5>



INVESTING IN A FITTER & HEALTHIER UK

As the UK obesity statistics soar, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport is investing over £1 billion in the next few years to help people get fitter and healthier through a range of programmes designed to make access to sports facilities easier for everyone

These investments are crucial in getting people more active as a report released by the Institute of Economic Affairs in August 2014 revealed that Britain's obesity problem is more to do with lack of exercise than with eating too much, or eating the wrong things. So, with grants and funding available to schools, sports clubs, community groups and local authorities, this is a great opportunity for neighbourhoods all over the country to get new sports pitches and facilities in place and get people more active.

With the latest statistics showing that 64% of UK adults are overweight or obese, as are one in every ten children when starting primary school, it's vital that schools and communities make the most of this opportunity.

PITCHING IT RIGHT

Investing in new sports facilities has to be done right for two important reasons: firstly, so that this crucial funding is put to best use, and so that people can and will use them for years to come. To do it right you need to work with the best sports pitch providers you can and O'Brien Contractors is the first and only civil engineering firm in the UK able to offer turnkey solutions for a range of sports pitch installations.

The company can deliver projects ranging from stadiums and arenas through to



sports tracks and football pitches, tailored to meet your individual needs. O'Brien's team of experts has a proven track record of delivering design and build sports projects to a diverse range of exacting client specifications and all of the work is completed in-house with no outsourcing required, meaning you get better value for money and projects are always delivered on time and on budget.

The sports installations the company delivers include natural sports pitches, such as those used for rugby, football and cricket, and synthetic and MUGA (Multi-Use-Games-Area) pitches with surfaces suitable for just about every sport and user, from professional sports teams to schools and communities.

Recent projects that O'Brien has completed include the construction of a FIFA-compliant football pitch; an

Olympic-standard athletics track complete with long jump, triple jump, high jump, pole vault and a 400m running track; a football club with 11 natural turf pitches, changing facilities, entrance road and car park; and a full size sand dressed synthetic grass Hockey pitch, installed upon an in situ rubber shock pad on an engineered base.

"From my perspective, it was a delight to work with O'Brien Contractors and would not hesitate to recommend you to anyone. One of the reasons for choosing O'Brien was the fact that we were dealing with the top management from the start (Mick) and because you are the actual contractors rather than a middle man. The construction itself wasn't straight forward due to a large cut and fill exercise, but the end result is spectacular and we are very pleased with the outcome. In addition, all of the subcontractors used for the specialist areas (floodlights, fencing, and pitch surface) were very reputable with no shortcuts in quality once the contract had been won. Overall, we are very pleased."
Phil Bowd - Bursar at Oswestry School

To find out how O'Brien can deliver sports facilities for your community or school that are tailored to your needs and budget call 01926 423 918 or email info@obriencontractors.co.uk

Sheffield's Olympic Legacy Park a step closer

Plans to create an Olympic Legacy Park on the site of the former Don Valley Stadium in Sheffield are a step closer after Sheffield Eagles rugby league club secured a £6m funding package towards the project.

A joint venture between Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals, Sheffield City Council and the private sector, the development will include a community stadium – the new home for the Sheffield Eagles – a hotel, restaurant and a 3,000-capacity indoor sports arena. The arena will become the new home for the Sheffield Sharks basketball club.

Read more: <http://lei.sr7a=U6T7D>



Wasps skipper James Haskell at Ricoh

Wasps secure 100 per cent ownership of Ricoh

Wasps Rugby Club has completed a deal to become the sole owner of Arena Coventry Limited (ACL), the company which owns the Ricoh Arena in Coventry. The club secured the remaining 50 per cent stake from the Alan Edward Higgs Charity, having already acquired 50 per cent of ACL from Coventry City Council in a deal in October 2014.

The deal is part of Wasps' move from its current home at Adams Park in Buckinghamshire to Ricoh Arena. The club has shared Adams Park with Wycombe Wanderers Football Club since 2002 and had in recent years been actively looking to build its own stadium.

Read more: <http://lei.sr7a=J5G3k>



The survey suggests that women with a sporting background will have more successful careers

Sport accelerates leadership potential in women

The majority of women executives believe a sporting background can accelerate their leadership and career potential, according to a report commissioned by the EY Women Athletes Business Network and espnW. *The Making the connection: women, sport and leadership* report was based on a global online survey of 400 women executives, conducted by Longitude Research.

Of the highflying respondents, 94 per cent said they had actively participated in sport while three quarters agreed that a background in sport can help accelerate a woman's career potential.

Beth Brooke-Marciniak, EY's global vice chair for public policy, said: "We've long known that sport has a positive impact on society. These findings show that participation in sport not only influences leadership skills, style and career development, but it is also a powerful motivator for female executives."

Other findings include that 61 per cent of women leaders accredited past sporting involvement to their current career success and said that a background in sport has a positive influence on their own hiring decisions.

Read more: <http://lei.sr7a=G3K55>

Sport England launches This Girl Can campaign



The campaign aims to get women more active

Sport England has launched a multi-million pound marketing campaign aimed at getting more girls and women into sport.

Delivered with a range of partner organisations, This Girl Can aims to be a celebration of active women and seeks to include women of any size, ability or experience. It follows from a survey by Sport England which revealed that 75 per cent of women would like to exercise more – but are put off by issues ranging from body confidence to motherhood.

Read more: <http://lei.sr7a=D2x8F>

NEWS UPDATE

Welsh sport and health partnership to focus on preventative healthcare

A partnership agreement between the Welsh NHS Confederation and Sport Wales has been described as a “major step” towards a healthcare system based on preventative measures.

In the first agreement of its kind the two organisations are due to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU), set to create a healthier and more equal Wales.

The three-year MOU will set out six areas of co-operation. These include making people in Wales more active, to encourage people to look after their own health and to take care of the health of future generations.

The two will also work together to support the drive for a mass shift in public thinking about their health and exchange information of mutual interest – while



Sarah Powell: “We have a National Health Service, not a National Sickness Service”

developing joint areas of work that promote “sport for all”.

Helen Birtwhistle, director of the Welsh NHS Confederation said: “We know the

importance of the links between sport and health and this new memorandum demonstrates a commitment from both sectors to come together. Health cannot be seen as a standalone issue and strong links with sport are vital in addressing the challenges that we face.

“Collaborative working is key if we are to drive a mass shift in public thinking.”

Sarah Powell, CEO of Sport Wales, added: “This is not just a partnership that sits on paper; we’re not just talking about sitting in committees discussing the issues. That would be pointless.

“What we’re talking about here is genuine collaborative working to promote healthier, more active living. We will be judged on continuing to increase participation in sport and on the overall health and wellbeing of the nation.

“We have a National Health Service, not a national sickness service. We need to help people to stay healthy.”

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=X4c3J](http://lei.sr?a=X4c3J)

One in five Britons ‘don’t feel fit enough’ to play sport

One in five people in Britain say they don’t feel fit enough to play sport or exercise with other people, according to new research conducted by Mintel.

The findings show a reluctance from 22 per cent of people to engage with fitness and sport because of a fear of exposing their low levels of fitness. The research has also discovered that a quarter of



More than a third would like to be more active

Brits say they find it hard to motivate themselves to play sport or exercise.

The data also suggests, however, that more than a third of those surveyed say they would like to be more active to improve their health, with this figure rising to over 50 per cent among those who say they don’t feel fit enough to exercise.

[Read more: http://lei.sr?a=B6q7S](http://lei.sr?a=B6q7S)



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Ryder Cup moments

The 40th Ryder Cup, held on the greens of the idyllic Scottish resort Gleneagles, attracted 135,000 spectators and utilised technology to improve fan engagement

For three days in September, the picturesque Gleneagles Golf Course in Perthshire, Scotland, was transformed into a bustling, vibrant, world-class sporting venue. More than 135,000 spectators and hundreds of support staff were catered for by an impressive network of temporary structures and overlay.

This year's event was a landmark in the way technology was used to improve fan interaction. As part of that, radio frequency identification (RFID) was used for the very first time.

In an initiative managed by Intellitix, more than one hundred thousand visitors were provided with an RFID-enabled "Ryder Cup Experience" wristband, enabling various interactive activities across the course. These included virtually "high five-ing" your chosen team and sharing a message of support on the leader board and personal Facebook and Twitter accounts, which proved a huge success with almost 45,000 interactions.

Tournament partners Standard Life, BMW, Gleneagles and Sky Sports each created their own activities to amplify customer interaction with the brands, while collecting valuable data.

Antonia Beggs, operations director for the 2014 Ryder Cup, said: "Ryder Cup Europe wanted to lift the event this year beyond the standards set previously. As social media, smartphones and mobile internet have become a part of everyday life for our customers, RFID technology seemed a natural choice.

"We've had positive feedback from both the audience and sponsors, who are always looking for additional ways to amplify their sponsorship. We're certain that RFID and the interactivity that it brings will become the future of major sporting events. We're proud to among the firsts to offer it."



Arena Group provided the spectator seating as well as a three-tier hospitality structure

THIS YEAR'S EVENT SAW THE INTRODUCTION OF RFID, WITH 100,000 VISITORS PROVIDED WITH WRISTBANDS

TAKING A SEAT

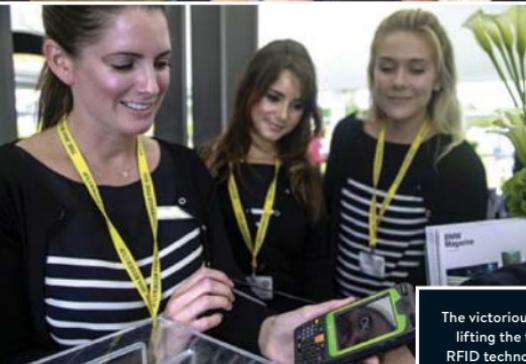
To accommodate the fans, Arena Seating managed the installation and construction of 14,700 seats across 18 grandstands using the company's innovative clearview seating system. While parent company Arena Group has a long association with the Ryder Cup organisers – spanning two decades of European tournaments – the clearview is a new addition to the Ryder Cup.

Meanwhile, Arena Group's structures arm installed 32 temporary buildings around Gleneagles. The triple deck Aviemore Pavilion, overlooking the 18th fairway and green, became a familiar backdrop for those watching the action unfold on TV screens – and provided unrivalled views for corporate partners onto the action of the final hole.

Elsewhere, Serious Stages created the settings for the opening ceremony and

celebratory trophy presentation. As part of the stage, the company installed a 22m Supernova roof, with wing extensions for the pipe band, creating a 46m wide space with Ryder Cup branding – a visually stunning feature for the spectators – as well as global TV audiences. The stage, overlooking the 18th hole, was also the location for the culmination of the event – Team Europe's captain Paul McGinley lifting the Ryder Cup trophy.

Commenting on the structures, Ryder Cup match director Edward Kitson said: "Arena made positive contributions as we planned and designed infrastructure for the 2014 Ryder Cup. The company delivered exceptionally well and the quality of product, from premium hospitality, public and media facilities combined with the best grandstand seating we've ever seen, ensured a great performance."



The victorious Team Europe lifting the trophy (top). RFID technology in action (middle). Arena Group provided more than 14,700 seats across 18 grandstands



What can sport do to support people with mental health issues?

A shocking study has found athletes are especially vulnerable to developing eating disorders and depression. We ask leading experts why this happens and what can be done about it

Sport is a proven contributor to high self-esteem, confidence, positive outlook and good health. Therefore it would be reasonable to assume that athletes have higher than average protection from mental health issues – such as depression and dysfunctional eating. On the contrary, athletes are considered three times more likely than

the norm to develop an eating disorder and there's strong empirical evidence linking eating disorders and depression.

A recent study, *Eating psychopathology as a risk factor for depressive symptoms in a sample of British athletes*, published in the *Journal of Sports Sciences*, asked whether depression leads to eating disorders in athletes or vice versa. Conducted by Dr Vaithehy Shanmugam

from the University of Central Lancashire with colleagues from Loughborough University, the report found that eating and diet disturbances were a precursor to depressive tendencies. Perhaps more worryingly though, it also found that 17 per cent of competitive athletes show symptoms of psychiatric disorders.

What then, can and should sport do to better support those involved?

DR VAITHEHY SHANMUGAM

Lecturer in sport psychology, UCLan



Eating disorders appear to be a common problem within competitive sport. This isn't surprising given that athletes face not only societal demands and pressure to attain and maintain

the perfect body, but also pressure from their sport and teammates to achieve the optimum body for their event. Increased exposure to pressure from both, can result in dissatisfaction with body shape and weight, feelings of shame and guilt – especially if their body doesn't meet the set ideal – increased rumination and low self-image, which can sometimes trigger the onset of depression.

Athletes also equate weight loss or low weight with peak performance. Therefore, to enhance performance, they may engage in unhealthy methods to control their weight, such as excessive exercising, using laxatives or self-induced vomiting.

Awareness and knowledge about eating disorders, healthy nutritional practices and positive coaching are all key strategies to prevent eating disorders in sports people. Therefore, it's imperative that significant others and professionals who work closely with athletes, such as coaches, nutritionists and physiologists, are appropriately informed and educated, so that they're in a position to identify, help and support athletes.

Professional bodies and sport organisations have an ethical and legal obligation to ensure the physical and psychological health of their athletes. Therefore, they need to invest time, resources and money to comprehend the pressures faced by competitive athletes, so that the contributors and consequences of eating disorders within sport can be identified, contained and managed.

AMANDA WOODROW

Former athlete



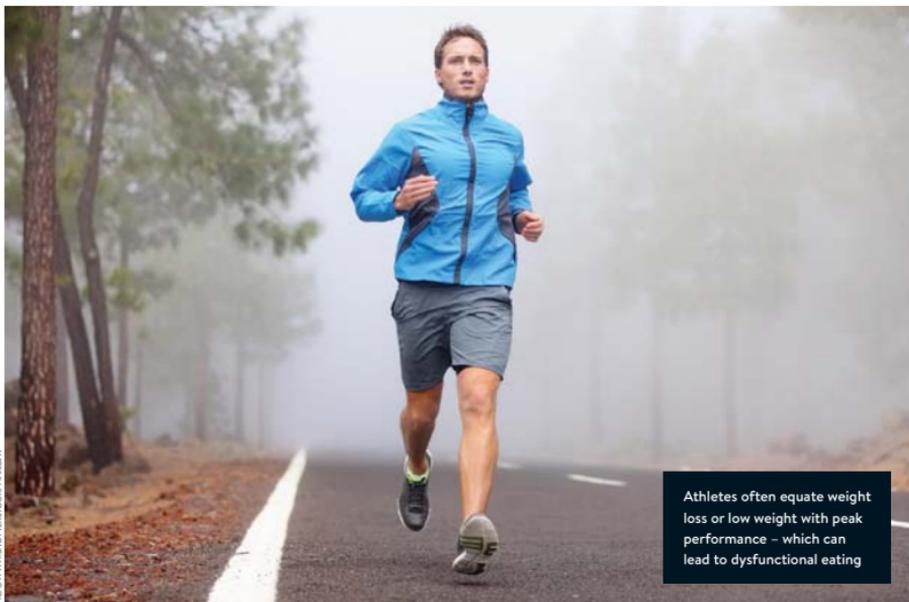
Focus, commitment, determination and single-mindedness are all attributes which made me an excellent distance runner in my youth.

Conversely, they also made me a rather successful anorexic. After a throwaway comment from a coach about my 'thick thighs' my adolescent self became particularly focused on my weight, size and shape in relation to the other athletes I would race against. This 'focus' descended rapidly into obsession and I found myself meticulously controlling every calorie I consumed, and logging every minute of exercise.

Perhaps I was a particularly sensitive or susceptible individual, but this one single comment triggered a battle which spanned nearly 10 years. It was a decade of skipped meals and secret workouts; of deceiving others and kidding myself.

In the beginning the weight loss meant faster times on track, but within a mere few months I experienced blackouts and palpitations, barely able to run at all. I had to walk away from the intense competitiveness of the sports environment, and it took many years, many failed attempts, and a lot of outside help to return to competition. It's in my nature to work hard and try to be the best I can possibly be. Identifying these traits in athletes, and being aware of that fine line between dedication and obsession is vital for early intervention and the prevention of eating disorders. I kept my ill health hidden for so long, blaming the weight loss on my strict training programme. I found myself under dangerous illusions that the only way to remain at the top was to be the lightest, leanest and therefore the fastest.

As a coach now, I believe communication, education and awareness goes a long way, especially with vulnerable athletes.



Athletes often equate weight loss or low weight with peak performance – which can lead to dysfunctional eating

DEBBIE LAWRENCE

Development manager at Active IQ



There are a whole myriad of factors which may contribute to eating disorders and depression. Depression is a mood disorder which is diagnosed when these symptoms are reported. Eating disorders involve behaviours, such as food restriction and self-starvation or binge and purging (vomiting, over-exercise or use of laxatives) which may be a mechanism for managing the underlying feelings. Athletes are human beings – they're not immune to neurosis. They experience the same stresses and strains of daily living as the rest of us.

They also have to learn to cope with the pressure of competition and performing to the expectations of self and others; and when performance is under par, the public and media response (including comments on social media) is often very negative and critical and athletes have to find ways to handle this, along with their own feelings of disappointment and failure. For young athletes, it's a real challenge and awareness and support from their respective coaches, governing bodies and family will be crucial.

Discipline and sacrifice are part of an athlete's lifestyle. They commit to gruelling training routines and sacrifice some of the pleasures that others enjoy. They also have to manipulate and control their diet to meet energy demands, as well as aesthetic or weight restriction which are required for certain sports.

Eating disorders may develop as an extension of that control. Restricting food intake and controlling weight may be the only coping strategies the person feels they have. Ultimately, there is much to learn and understand and listening to the individual will be key to understanding how they respond to their world.

DR ALAN CURRIE

Consultant psychiatrist



It seems to come as a surprise to some that elite sports people can suffer the same sort of mental health difficulties as the rest of us. It seems to be a particular surprise that there are a few mental health problems, such as eating disorders, that are especially common in athletes. Once we recognise that athletes are people too and that many exist in a psychologically hostile environment, then the observations appear easier to understand.

Athletes are subject to most of the same risk factors for eating disorders as the rest of us – the same genetic vulnerability, the same personal and cultural attitudes to shape, weight and diet and so forth. There are additional risk factors in the sports environment. Examples include perfectionism and determination which is misdirected into compulsive overtraining, misunderstandings over nutrition and weight management, competing in revealing clothing and being judged on your appearance, pressure to make weight, unhelpful critical comments from coaches and specialising too early.

Once we accept that there's a problem we can start to make appropriate treatment available by making links with the right therapists and the best clinical services. Most athletes and sports clubs understand the risk of injury. In consequence they know the most helpful professionals to consult. We can't yet say the same about treatment for athletes with eating disorders.

If the question had been 'what can sport do to support people with sports injuries?' the answer would be to recognise the risks and manage them and ensure that good treatment and rehabilitation is readily available. Substitute 'mental health issues' for 'sports injuries' and you have your answer.

NIGEL WALKER

He represented Great Britain as a hurdler and Wales as a rugby player, now Nigel Walker is helping other athletes achieve in his role as national director for the English Institute of Sport. He talks to Magali Robathan

UK Sport believes Great Britain can make history at the Rio Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2016 by being the first host country to win more medals at the Olympics and Paralympics after the home Games. It's an ambitious target, but there's no denying that Team GB is flying high in terms of success.

The recent Commonwealth Games in Glasgow saw the home nations win 63 per cent of the medals in Olympic and Paralympic disciplines (including 77 per cent of the gold medals), the Sochi Winter Olympics were Team GB's best in terms of medals since 1924 and Team GB far outperformed its target of 48 medals at London 2012, with a total of 65 medals.

This success is not a matter of chance. The UK now has a very well-funded elite sports system and behind each athlete is a whole team of people – from coaches and physiotherapists to performance analysts, scientists and engineers – all working to improve their chances of success.

This is where the English Institute of Sport comes in. The EIS – or the 'team behind the team' as it's often referred to – is UK Sport's science, medicine and technology arm. Introduced in 2002, the publicly-funded body now has more than 300 staff and delivers more than 4,000 hours of sport science and medicine to around 1,700 athletes every week out of its network of high performance centres around the UK.

The organisation worked with 86 per cent of the Olympic and Paralympic medallists at London 2012 and 70 per cent of Team England, 30 per cent of Team Scotland and 35 per cent of Team



Nigel Walker has been national director for the EIS since 2010

Wales at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow this year.

Next on the horizon, of course, are the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Rio and the EIS is already working hard to prepare Great Britain's athletes for success. Here we talk to EIS national director and former athletics champion and rugby player Nigel Walker about how the EIS works, the athletes it's helped and its plans for Rio and beyond.

How would you sum up the aims of the English Institute of Sport?

The EIS is there to provide support and intervention across science, medicine, technology and engineering; in short to

make our athletes more equipped, better equipped, more robust and technically more proficient, so that their chances of success on the international stage are increased. Science covers strength and conditioning, physiology, nutrition, psychology, performance analysis, biomechanics, performance lifestyle and talent ID. Across medicine our work centres mainly around the provision of physiotherapy, soft tissue therapy and doctors. Our work within technology and engineering is mainly done with our partners – including BAE Systems and McLaren Applied Technologies – and is in those sports, predominantly, which have a vehicle of some description, such as rowing, canoeing, sailing, cycling, bobsleigh and skeleton.

Can you give an example of an athlete EIS has helped?

Lizzie Yarnold is a good example. Lizzie was identified by one of the initiatives we run as part of our Performance Pathways scheme [the Girls4Gold talent identification scheme is a joint initiative by EIS and UK Sport]. Once Lizzie had been selected as a skeleton athlete, we helped her with physiotherapy, strength and conditioning and all the science and medicine. We also helped design her sled, helmet and suit to cut down wind resistance. Of course she went on to win a gold medal at the Sochi Winter Olympics.

What does your role as national director of the EIS involve?

My role is to set the direction of travel for the organisation; to make sure it's equipped to provide the support service

The EIS helped to identify Lizzie Yarnold and worked with her to prepare for Sochi 2014





In 1996 in Atlanta, Great Britain only won one gold medal. A lot has happened since. The biggest change has been the National Lottery. We're very well funded now.



► we offer today, and that we also have an eye on the future four or eight years ahead. We haven't got Rio out of the way yet, but already we're beginning to plan for the PyeongChang Winter Olympics in 2018 and Tokyo 2020.

We look at trends and establish what changes might take place in sport. The world of sport is very different today from the 2004 Athens or 2008 Beijing Games. We've made changes and are moving towards a more technical interface with sports, working together to identify what it takes to win and ensuring the right expertise is applied to deliver results.

If I take you back to 1996 in Atlanta, Team GB only won one gold. A lot has happened since then. The most significant change has been the introduction of National Lottery funding in 1997; we're very well funded now. Back in 1986, if you'd said that in 2008 Team GB would win 47 medals, of which 19 would be gold, people would have laughed at you.

If you'd said that four years later Team GB would win 65 medals or ParalympicsGB would win 120 medals, no one would have believed you. It's been a huge change.

How important is partnership working to the EIS?

It's very important to us. Our best known partnerships are with UK Sport, the national governing bodies of the various sports, the British Olympic Association and the British Paralympic Association. We also have established partnerships with those involved in the facilities we operate out of, such as Sport England and the landlords of the partner sites we operate out of, including Bath University, Loughborough University and Bisham Abbey National Sports Centre.

Then of course we've got commercial partnerships for everything from nutrition products to engineering and software. These partnerships are vital to us, because they have the products and/or expertise we need. If you think of McLaren F1 and the speed those cars

EIS SITES

Through its network of nine high performance centres across England, the EIS is able to provide athletes and coaches with access to high quality facilities which are specifically designed for elite athletes. English Institute of Sport's high performance sites:

- Sportcity Manchester
- EIS Sheffield
- Loughborough University
- Bisham Abbey
- University of Bath
- Alexander Stadium, Birmingham
- Lee Valley Athletics Centre
- Lilleshall National Sports Centre
- National Badminton Centre, Milton Keynes

The EIS also has a further nine partner sites

go, you can imagine the engineering and technological advances which McLaren have at their disposal which we couldn't otherwise afford. Our partners open up their facilities to allow us to test and stay one step ahead of the opposition.

We also have academic partnerships with universities which allow us to further our understanding of performance questions in an applied environment.

We talked about Lizzie Yarnold and the aerodynamics of her suit and helmet. All of that work was done in partnership with other organisations.

Who takes the lead on your partnerships with McLaren and BAE Systems?

We've got a performance solutions team which is responsible for putting a team in place to work alongside sports to provide bespoke performance-impacting solutions. Each performance lead within the team has three or four sports they work with. It's their job to identify with the sport what the performance solution will be to particular performance issues.

The EIS will then go out and establish the best partnership to strike up to solve the issue within the sport.

Our research and innovations team has a series of partnerships with external providers who help develop solutions, test equipment and give us in-kind expertise or technology that will provide expertise or solutions that we simply couldn't provide in-house.

How has 2014 been for you?

It's been good. Sochi was the best Winter Olympics and Paralympics in living memory for Great Britain. Knowing that employees of the EIS have contributed to the success of those athletes is enormously gratifying.

We've also just come off the back of the Commonwealth Games where not just Team England, but also Team Wales, Team Scotland and Team Northern Ireland did particularly well. Glasgow was fantastic. It's not just about the sport – of course that's very important – but also about the atmosphere and the camaraderie between athletes.

People were beginning to question whether the Commonwealth Games had a future; I believe the Games in Glasgow have very firmly answered that.

You started your career as a hurdler. What were the highlights?

I represented Great Britain on more than 30 occasions. I first competed in the Olympic Games at Los Angeles in 1984 and was a semi finalist that year. I won bronze medals at the World Indoor Championships and the European Indoor Championships in 1987.

My personal highlight was probably winning bronze at the World Indoor Championships in 1987. I felt absolutely amazing on the day.

At the time, way before Lottery funding, I was working full time in the civil service. I was training eight or 10 sessions a week around my job. To be rewarded with a medal made me feel that all the sacrifices were worth it.

There were also plenty of low points.



The EIS has worked with Ed Clancy (above) and Gemma Gibbons (below), who both won medals at the Commonwealth Games

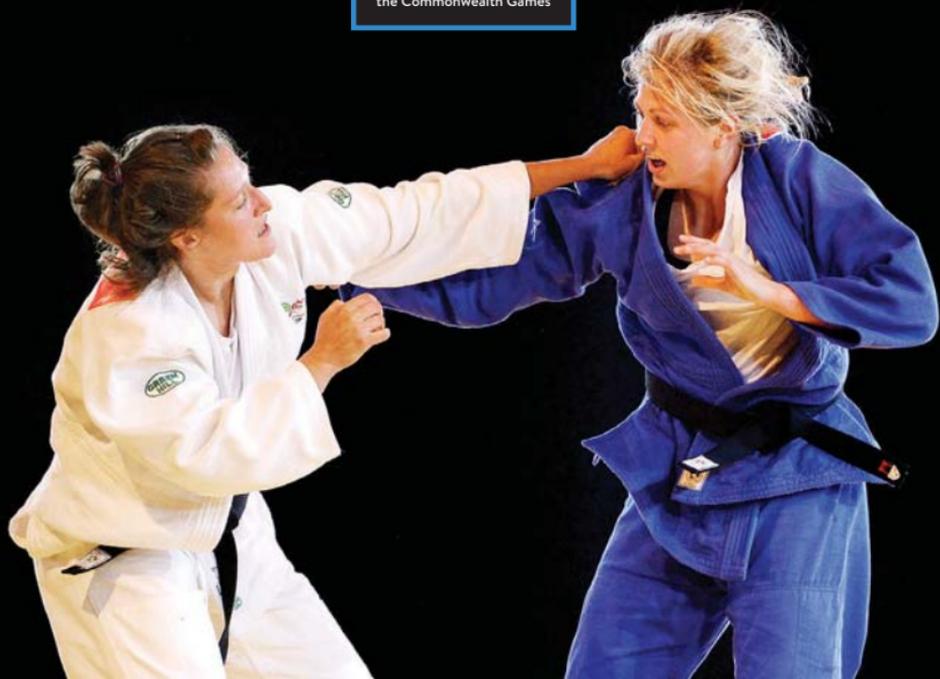




PHOTO: BRITISH GYMNASTICS

CASE STUDY

Athlete profiling: gymnastics

The English Institute of Sport (EIS) sport science and medical team, working with British Gymnastics, has built an athlete profiling system to help inform individualised performance plans as well as collect a breadth of data they hope will inform their work over future Olympic cycles.

"We've been screening athletes for years," says EIS head of sport science and medicine for British Gymnastics, Louise Fawcett. "However, what we've been working towards over the past cycle is a profiling process, giving coaches and athletes immediate feedback and information but also storing data which could help inform work we do in four, eight, 12 years."

EIS physiotherapist Simon Spencer, who has worked closely with the team on rehabilitation and profiling, explains what profiling aims to give to the programme.

"Profiling provides an opportunity to identify intrinsic risk factors that may predispose an athlete to injury, the ability to establish potential links between the physical characteristics of athletes and injuries they sustain, and individualised performance targets for return to play following injury."

The process involves athletes being put through a series of tests arranged by

EIS practitioners working in medicine, strength and conditioning, physiotherapy and performance nutrition as well as performance analysis.

The results are then fed back to athletes and their coaches within 24/48 hours, something the team says is vital in giving athletes a picture of where they are right now – as opposed to weeks or months down the line.

Spencer then reviews the data in an attempt to identify potential performance benchmarks before a more detailed meeting is held between sport science and medical staff and national coaches. These meetings help establish the significance of the data collected, potential links to performance and what work is required to achieve the agreed benchmarks.

"We're beginning to understand what physical abilities underpin elite gymnastic performance," explains Spencer.

"Some physical qualities help identify athletic competency and robustness and are capped at an acceptable level – once they are achieved, further improvements are unlikely to result in performance gains. Other qualities are directly linked to performance output where on-going development is an important part of the gymnast's overall training plan."

“

When I was an athlete, performance analysis was me remembering to ask my mum to tape my race so I could watch it afterwards

”

I fell in the semi final at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games, I was injured for a large part of the 1988 season and therefore didn't get to go back to the Olympics in 1992. I came fifth in the Olympic trials in 1992, which prompted me to retire and take up rugby.

As a Welshman, I'd always had a yearning to play rugby and had played as a teenager. I knew at that stage that I'd no longer be able to represent Great Britain at the highest level and at 29, it was a question of now or never, so I decided to throw my lot in with my local club, Cardiff.

What was the highlight of your rugby career?

Playing for Wales. In 1994 we played France at home, after beating Scotland and Ireland. I scored the try that sealed the game against France and we went on to play the grand slam decider against England. All these years later, people still come up to me to talk about that game.

What did you do next?

I made my final appearance against England in 1998, then worked as a broadcaster for three or four years. I worked for ITV, Channel Four and British Eurosport as an athletics commentator and rugby pundit. I joined the BBC as head of sport in 2001 and went on to work for the BBC in various roles, including head of internal communication, until I joined the EIS in 2010.



How did you get the role at the EIS?

I was on the board for UK Sport from 2006 to 2010 so people were aware of me. I was asked to apply and was successful in my application. At the time, I wasn't working in sport, although I was on the board of UK Sport. I was aware of the sea change that was going on across the high performance system and I wanted to be part of it. There was a real shift in terms of funding, the attitude towards elite sport and the development of UK Sport's 'No Compromise' approach.

What are the biggest trends affecting the work of the EIS?

The biggest trend is probably in other nations becoming equally well funded, or bridging the gap in funding, and then putting in place a high performance system like we have in the UK.

What is the EIS doing to prepare for the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games?

We're working very closely with the BPA and the BOA to prepare our athletes. I

Walker retired from athletics in 1992 to pursue a second career as a rugby player for Cardiff RFC

have to be a little bit coy about the details of what we're working on with them, but I can say that we're looking at wind direction, climate, humidity and suitable clothing for our athletes.

As soon as our athletes leave this country they will go to a holding camp either in Brazil or in some cases other destinations, in order to acclimatise them. We're helping to do a lot of the work involved in identifying those holding camps and the conditions the athletes are going to face in Rio.

What are our chances of being the first nation to win more Olympic medals post-hosting?

I think we've got an excellent chance. It's a very challenging target – you'd expect it to be, as no-one has ever done it before – but I think the sports are going to rise to

the challenge. We're two years away from the Rio 2016 Olympics and we're better placed than we were two years away from the London Olympics. That's not to say anybody's getting complacent, of course, but we're in a good position.

What are biggest differences between when you were an athlete and today?

It's the level of support available. Today our athletes have 360 degree support from experts in performance lifestyle, psychology, physiotherapy, nutrition and so on. I had a full time job outside of athletics and I didn't have any of those support services. My physiotherapist was the wife of a friend, nutrition was what my mum put on the table, performance analysis would be me remembering to ask my mum to tape my race so I could look at it afterwards.

How do you spend your free time?

I'm married and have three daughters, aged 21, 19 and 16 so I have my hands full. With the amount of travelling I do, just being at home is relaxation enough. ●

Do we really understand what young people want from sport?

Young people are becoming an increasingly mature and demanding market in grassroots sport, writes Sport England director of insight Lisa O'Keefe – but there are plenty of opportunities to engage them

Sports practitioners are increasingly turning to the insights derived from high-quality data and research to find new and creative ways of getting people active. Crucially, insight is now being used in boardrooms to lead investment decisions and identify the best methods to measure impact.

The value of insight to community sport is becoming more widely recognised and is inspiring change. This is certainly the case at Sport England, where I lead the relatively new Insight Team. We're tasked with building a deeper understanding of people's attitudes and behaviours to develop both our thinking and that of community sport. We use information and insight in a way that drives change – translating insights into actionable business recommendations. The importance of insight is highlighted



Jennie Price, Sport England CEO (left) and Lisa O'Keefe, director of insight

when you consider that, as an organisation, Sport England will invest more than £400m into the 46 national governing bodies between 2013 and 2017.

The challenge of participation

One of our early pieces of work has been to draw together a picture of the key forces shaping the lives of young people today and, importantly, what that means for community sport.

Although the number of people playing sport once a week continues to grow and now stands at 15.6 million, participation among 14- to 25-year-olds has remained stubbornly flat since 2008. Looking deeper, this overall trend masks a significant volatility – with a large number of young people continuing to form, and then break,

sporting habits as they travel through life. To start to understand what drives these patterns of behaviour and how to change them, it's important to understand the current generation of young people, as their environment is so different from the one many of us experienced at their age.

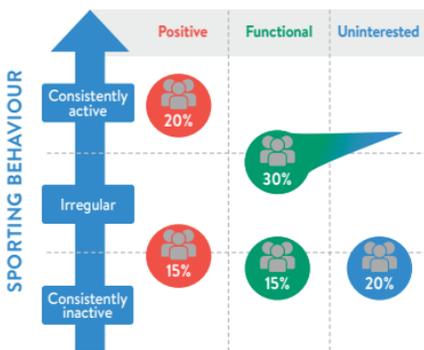
We recently published the findings of our review and many of the insights challenge some of grassroots sport's most established thinking.

Analysing a wide range of existing data and research, as well as commissioning new field work talking directly to young people, we discovered the following:

- Young people's behaviour does not always reflect their attitude to sport. Sport has previously looked at young people's engagement with sport too much through its own lens. Seen this way, it has been assumed that attitudes and behaviours tend to be linked and growth will result from just changing the offer to tap into the large number of "semi-sporty" young people waiting to take part in sport. In reality, the picture is more complex than simply loving or hating sport.

Behaviours can vary from month to month and, crucially, attitudes and behaviours do not always align. By that I mean that young people who are positive about sport aren't necessarily actively looking to take part. Indeed, some disinterested young people actually find reasons to be far more active than those with a positive attitude towards sport. Add this to the fact that, for some young people, the word 'sport' itself has very negative connotations and you start to get a sense of the complex nature of the youth market. We need to focus on changing behaviours and not attitudes as we previously thought.

Graph 1: Young people's attitudes to sport





Young people seek meaningful experiences which benefit them as an individual – so offering non-traditional activities can help engage new audiences

Leaving education is a cliff edge in terms of accessing sport. Work colleagues are less of an influence than friends and family – it's no wonder many young people drop out at this stage

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/STORM

■ **Passive participation can give a false impression of engagement with sport.** Many young people are carried along by friends or family, or what's happening in their educational setting. This may lead to a false impression of a young person's engagement with sport, and put them at risk of stopping when their physical environment, or those around them, change. It is a given that young people's lives are characterised by change whether that be leaving education, starting a job, leaving home or starting a family.

Leaving education represents a cliff edge in terms of accessing tailored sporting offers and work colleagues are less of an influence on participation than friends and family. As horizons broaden,

sport has to compete with or connect to wider interests and priorities to stay relevant in the lives of many young people. Overlay the requirement (perhaps for the first time) to make an active choice to 'opt-in' to sport, it's little wonder that many young people drop out at this stage.

Although there are existing examples of good practice, there's no question that community sport could be far more targeted when it comes to supporting young people at the precise moments of change in their lives. Asking the question 'what would make it incredibly easy to take part?' is a good place to start.

■ **The supply of sport is designed for and reaches those who are already engaged.** Young people are seeking meaningful

experiences which benefit them as an individual and help them develop and reinforce their place in their social group. In reality, sport can require compromise and isolation from peers; leading large numbers to turn their back on sport. It's clear that there's a need for a broader offer which meets more diverse needs.

The shape of the market

Using the insight, we've broken the market down into its component parts. From this, we can determine the relative size and significance of different sections. We know that 20 per cent of young people are consistently active and positive about sport. And 20 per cent are also consistently inactive and uninterested. But it's the ▶

Insight-driven delivery in practice



The Run Dem Crew describes itself as a "collective of creative heads with a passion for running and the exchange of ideas"

RUN DEM CREW (RCC), an east London night-running collective founded by Charlie Williams, redefines a traditionally solitary sport to empower and engage young people and give them something extra.

RDC provides young people with mentoring and advice, in addition to the

opportunity to explore London in a safe, unique, positive and supportive running environment. The message is that it's not about just running. It's about being in the pack and a valued part of the crew. It offers real-life benefits and uses relatable icons (such as celebrities) to set good examples.

Charlie Dark, from RDC, said: "Sport for young people in the UK isn't inspirational – at primary school they're always running, but lose their love of moving. Competition is good, but focus should be on improving individuals, not comparing them to others. Competition can put people off for life."

- ▶ massive 45 per cent who sit in the middle ground where potential participants are less interested in sport but see a functional relevance which, if tapped, could deliver a real boom in participation. Many of these young people dip in and out of participation – the challenge for the sector is to talk and deliver directly to their needs and aspirations to help them build habits.

Finding solutions

Function over fun

One of the most challenging findings is that – while young people are looking for experiences to be fun – for many people sport was last viewed as fun in primary school. Valuing sport for its own sake gets lost in secondary school as it starts to be perceived as a more serious pursuit for those who are 'good' at it and this helps drive a definite shift in teenage years towards a functional rather than sporting motivation for taking part. By this I mean that selling sport as fun will not resonate with many young people.

Key to understanding young people and sport

- Young people are looking for functional benefits, not just fun.
- Involve them in design and delivery.
- What friends think of them is key so don't make the experience isolating.
- Make sessions tailored, personal, social and interactive.
- Old perceptions are no longer valid.

More success is likely to be had from more adult motivations; demonstrating that taking part in sport can deliver something that they do care about – whether that be looking and feeling good, achieving personal goals, supporting a charity or providing a social setting to be with friends. Another solution is to help them track their progress towards their own goal and reinforcing that a particular activity is helping them.

■ The baggage of sport

Sport is an emotive word. While many young people have positive associations with sport, we cannot ignore that many others have a strong negative response to the language of sport, and that this is a key driver for not taking part.

Interestingly, when asked, young people said that front of mind associations with the word 'sport' often focus on traditional, competitive school sports. Barriers to participation are often linked to past experiences, levels of interest and perceived competence. The universal concern expressed by the young people we spoke to was a desire not to be embarrassed in front of their peers.

So while the activity may be sport, the message doesn't need to be and a good place to start is to ask what outcome you're selling to young people.

Putting the insight into practice

Having better understood the audience it's trying to engage, the sports sector needs



Smash Up is based on creating a new image for badminton

SMASH UP! BADMINTON targets 13- to 16 year-olds and aims to break the perception of badminton as something that happens in church halls for 'fuddy duddy' older people. To attract younger audiences wanting a less formal way to play, Badminton England created a 'music and mates' environment and branded the related social media activity as Racket Heads to appeal to the youth market. In particular, it specifically separates this version from the more structured PE lesson experience of badminton. Small things like allowing participants to have their mobile phones with them to take breaks to use social media means they feel as though they're not missing out on their

social lives while being at a session. The way instructors blend into the session – rather than stand out at the front giving instructions – is also a key part of the programme. They provide ideas and facilitate the sessions, giving the young people ownership and allowing them to shape the session their way.

George Wood, from Badminton England, said: "Smash Up! has been focussed on taking what's great about badminton and presenting it in a way that really engages young people looking for a relaxed, casual way to play. It's as much about music, mates and having a laugh as it is about sport and 1,500 sites have already taken it up."

to then design and deliver the type of experiences young people are looking for. As a general rule, young people are looking for experiences that are:

- **Interactive** – using technology where and when possible
- **Social** – maintaining social lives and making connections with other like-minded people
- **Rewarding** – giving them something back
- **Personalised** – tailored and able to make/create their own
- **Inspiring** – unique, different, something they can be proud of
- **Creative** – allowing them to create their own version of sport

However, our insight has taught us that the way these should be applied differs depending on the audience group. As a result, one of the outputs of our work is a series of "design principles" for the key youth audiences.

For example, the more functional audience is looking for activities they recognise as providing the benefits they

are after and they want to see results. The principles are the questions that any delivery plan should be able to answer if it's to provide the right experience for young people – "will it give me what I want?", "will I see results?".

There are already some great examples of national governing bodies, colleges, universities and sports projects taking a different approach to engaging young people – designed around their needs rather than sport's.

Oldham College, for example, is advertising rock climbing to performing arts students as a way of building upper body strength and overcoming a fear of heights to help them to work in theatre production and set rigging.

Meanwhile, South Essex College is linking up with the Peter Jones Business Academy and offering golf coaching to business students who recognise that many deals are made during an 18-hole round. In other colleges, health and beauty course tutors are supporting



Be yourself with Morning Gloryville

MORNING GLORYVILLE gets people active by bringing exercise to an existing group of club-loving party people. Created by two event producers, it plays to the strength of those who dance into the night and challenges those who fall out of bed reaching for the alarm. With the likes of 'rave your way into the day' events, the project provides the dance floor, music and the coffee – the rest is up to participants.

Samantha Moyo, founder, said: "It's about letting people experience something new. People spend all day not being themselves at work – we want to change that." To see *Morning Gloryville* in action, visit: <http://lei.sr?a=h7a5m>

their students to recognise the benefits of being fitter for a profession that can be physically demanding. People are now putting the functional first. And then there's badminton – which has successfully recreated itself around the needs and wants of young people with its Smash Up! programme for 13- to 16-year olds (see pp. 54-56 to read more on *grassroots badminton*).

Insight is beginning to change the way sport is planned and delivered across the UK. Those responsible are now diving into the detail deeper and further than ever before in the pursuit of interventions which make a guaranteed and lasting impact. We should all be placing insight at the heart of everything we do. ●

Find out more

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THE COPPER BOX ARENA

managing the legacy

The first Olympic venue to open in legacy mode – nicknamed the Box that Rocks during London 2012 – celebrated its first legacy anniversary in July 2014.

Carole Pendle looks at how the unique venue has catered for both the local community and the demands of national and international events.

A UNIQUE CHALLENGE

Home to handball, modern pentathlon and goalball during the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Copper Box Arena, opened to the public on 27 July 2013, exactly one year after the success of the Games with more than 10,000 visitors coming through the doors over the launch weekend. The challenge for the legacy operator, charitable social enterprise GLL, which runs the venue on behalf of the London Legacy Development Corporation, has always been how to ensure that it remains a valued, relevant facility which not only delivers on pre-Olympic legacy promises but also makes commercial sense.

Tony Wallace, head of Legacy Venues at GLL, explains: “The Copper Box Arena works for three primary markets: as a community sports hub for local residents and clubs, as a health and fitness facility and as a venue for regional, national and international events. Each element of the business is equally important.”

LEGACY COMMITMENTS

The Copper Box hosts between 10 and 20 community events each month and a dedicated sports development team runs a proactive outreach programme with



local schools and community groups. The building of local links has led to a number of schools using the venue on a regular basis, along with further education institutions such as Queen Mary’s University and the University of East London.

The community ethos is further underlined by GLL’s recruitment strategy, which has seen 90 per cent of the 52 new jobs and apprenticeships created at the venue go to local residents; many of whom live in areas of social deprivation and had previously been long-term unemployed.

One of the cornerstones to GLL’s bid to manage both the Copper Box Arena and its neighbour, the London Aquatics Centre, was to create long term social and sporting opportunities – and this commitment sits alongside every commercial decision which is made.

The venue’s simple, yet striking design has contributed to it becoming an iconic landmark at the Olympic Park

The Copper Box Arena is also home to an 80-station, two-studio health club, which runs 25 classes per week. For Wallace and his team, attracting members was one of the first challenges they faced.

“Because we opened while much of the Olympic park was still undergoing redevelopment, it was a difficult to attract members to the gym in the early days, particularly as there was minimal natural footfall past our doors,” he says.

“However, that’s all changed now, membership and usage figures are strong and as the residential population on



Invictus Games

The inaugural Invictus Games attracted 413 competitors from 13 nations to compete for gold in nine sports over five days at the Copper Box.

More than 79,000 spectators attended the sporting events and opening and closing ceremonies. Widely covered in the media, more than 10m viewers watched the Games on the BBC.

Much of the media coverage was attributed to the high profile involvement of Prince Harry. As co-founder of the Games, he spent the entire week at the Games and



was actively involved in the organisation and events.

"The Invictus Games was about inspiring people to overcome their challenges and raising awareness of the issues facing wounded servicemen and women on a global scale," he said.

"I believe we achieved that, as the public support for the Games was nothing short of phenomenal, and the impact it had

on the competitors was unforgettable.

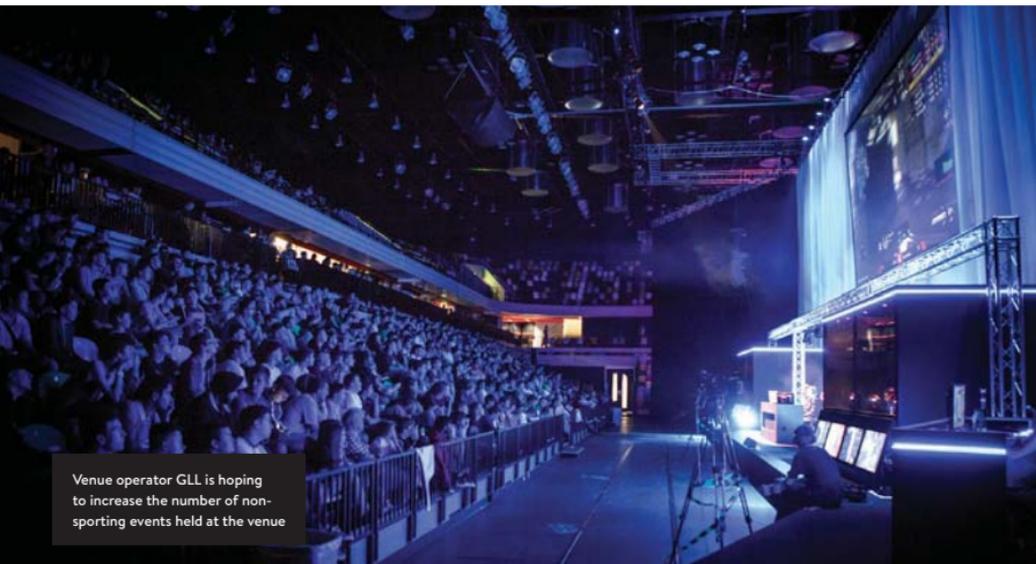
"But for every competitor at the first Invictus Games, there are 10 others who would benefit from having the same opportunity. I always hoped the first Games would just be the beginning and I'm delighted there's an appetite to build on the success and broaden the concept in the future."

Harry will continue in his role as president and added that there won't be any Invictus events during 2015. Bidding is, however, now open for 2016 and 2017.

The process will be managed by a committee led by Sir Keith Mills.

NEC GOSSETT IMAGES





Venue operator GLL is hoping to increase the number of non-sporting events held at the venue

- ▶ the park grows, we believe demand for membership and sport will continue to grow at rapid pace."

MAKING ITS MARK

Over the past 18 months, the Copper Box Arena has often hit the headlines as London's third largest indoor arena. Sporting highlights have included international basketball matches, world class boxing fights from promoter Frank Warren and Sport Relief 2014, which included six hours of live broadcasting and performances by Kylie Minogue, Little Mix and Boyzone. More recently, Prince Harry and his team chose to host the Invictus Games at the Copper Box, attracting 30,000 spectators over three days and wall-to-wall TV coverage.

The first anchor club to base itself at the arena was the London Lions Basketball team, which signed a five-year deal, including a commitment to grassroots development of the sport, working in partnership with GLL. Year one highlights included a sell out, 6,500-seat first game when the Lions played Iowa University from the USA. In what has been described by Vince Macaulay, the London Lions' team coach as "a sensational first year" the club finished a credible sixth in the British Basketball league.



The London Lions was the first sports team to make the Copper Box its home

According to Macaulay, relocating to the Copper Box Arena has had numerous benefits. "The main plus for the team has been the growing fan base, nearly 70,000 people saw the Lions play in the first season. However, the sport as a whole has benefited too, with TV cameras regularly filming at the Copper Box Arena when the team plays or practices and this is creating a lot more interest, more sponsorship and more corporate opportunities."

Boxing promoter Frank Warren was one of the first to recognise the potential of the Olympic legacy venue. He signed a six-fight deal which kicked off with a British Middleweight Title fight between the unbeaten champion Billy Joe Saunders from Hatfield and the undefeated challenger John Ryder from Islington.

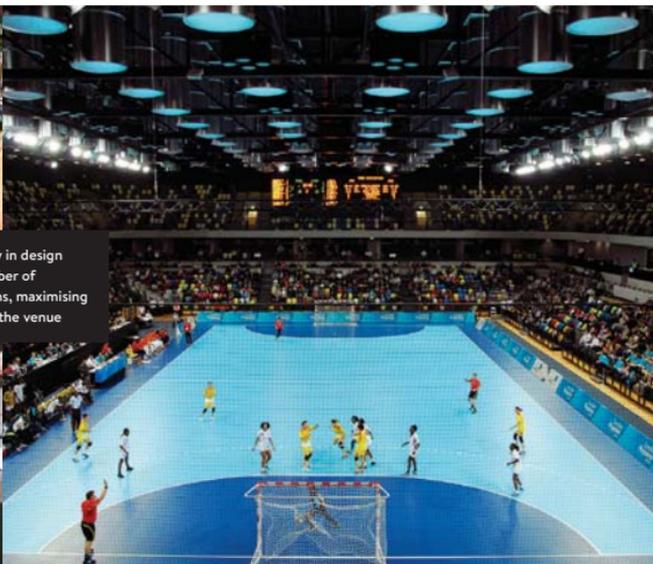
Warren comments: "This is a superb setting for boxing. The Copper Box Arena is what all the investment in the Olympics was about – legacy and giving London a fantastic arena."

The venue is also building a reputation among businesses and recently hosted Toni & Guy's annual staff awards and fashion show for 3,500 people. Wallace acknowledges, however, that GLL's reputation has been built within the sports and sports management sector, so attracting more non-sporting events will be a focus for the next 12 months.

"GLL is renowned as a sports operator," Wallace says. "We worked on the 2012 Games and manage other high profile facilities like Crystal Palace National Sports Centre and York Hall in Bethnal Green. Although a number of our centres already host large-scale music events, most notably Rivermead in Reading, it is not what we're primarily known for. So we're working hard to communicate that our event



The flexibility in design allows a number of configurations, maximising the usage of the venue



The Copper Box has already found a place in the market and that's something operator GLL intends to build on



management experience is in fact far wider than many assume. A key new appointment saw a specialist events manager with a background in entertainment join the team in November (2014), demonstrating our commitment to growing this sector."

BUSINESS STRATEGIES

The combination of a community driven ethos, combined with a commercial business strategy makes the Copper Box Arena difficult to categorise. The gym, which boasts the latest Technogym equipment competes against any locally-based private-sector gym, although unlike its commercial counterparts it offers a broad range of concessionary rates and the option of a 'pay and play' entry.

As an events venue, Wallace is confident that the Copper Box Arena has already found a place within the market and that's something he intends to build on. "We're a great facility, with a fantastic infrastructure and excellent transport links. Because of our 6,000-seat capacity, we offer a more intimate space ideal for bands or acts that can't quite sell out the biggest venues yet,

Key facts

Build Costs: £44m
Designers: MAKE architects, Populous, PTW Architects and ARUP
Principal Contractor: Buckingham Group Contracting
Capacity: Electronically activated retractable seating for 6,500
Total footprint: The arena covers a 2,750sq m (29,600sq ft) field of play
Environmental efficiency: A total of 88 light pipes have been incorporated into the roof and draw natural light into the venue, while rainwater collectors reduce both energy and water consumption by up to 40 per cent
Exterior: The building is clad in sustainably-sourced copper

which gives us a great place in the market for the up and coming stars of tomorrow and somewhere that fans can get up close and personal."

A STANDING START

For what is essentially a new build venue sited within a newly emerging district of London, the traction that the Copper Box Arena has already created is impressive.

A typical week now sees community use by local schools, higher education colleges and over 55s during the day between Monday and Thursday.

The evenings are then occupied by some of the Copper Box Arena's anchor clubs for training sessions. During the weekend it transforms into an international events venue. Regardless of what is scheduled, gym users visit as usual using their own dedicated entrance, which means they are unaffected by any of the other activities taking place.

According to Wallace, the Copper Box Arena is now at capacity during peak times and consistently achieving between 60 and 70 per cent occupancy during the day. He reflects: "During our first 12 months we welcomed 400,000 visitors through our doors and hosted 155 events. It's been an exhilarating start and it's a great base to build on." ● ▶

STUART FRASER

The architect behind the Copper Box goes takes us through the process of creating an iconic, multi-use venue able to deliver both a major event and a long legacy

The aim of creating a venue capable of hosting a memorable Games-time experience as well as hosting a multitude of events after the Olympics was at the very heart of the architectural brief. That was reflected in the very first things we ever produced on our Copper Box bid – two presentation slides. The first one was titled “simplicity, efficiency and flexibility”, as that’s what we thought the venue needed to be and that’s what our design was all based on. The second slide was “*Design for legacy: an overlay for the Games*” – reflecting how long-term sustainability was at the heart of our design.

We wanted the slides to demonstrate that while the building would have to meet very specific IOC requirements – such as sightlines and support facilities – the Games would still only cover the first 15 days of the venue’s life. We were determined that while the building had to meet the requirements for London 2012, the design shouldn’t be at the expense of the following 40 years of the venue’s life.

I think we did a good job with those slides – when we saw the client, the Olympic Delivery Authority, a number of years later,



Stuart Fraser, partner, Make Architects, designers of the Copper Box

presenting the concept of the Copper Box to the GLA and the DCMS, they used those original slides! It made us realise that we’d hit the nail right on the head with our pitch.

DESIGN

The design of the Copper Box was all about making it flexible and able to host a wide range of events. We wanted to keep the building quite simple in its shape and form,

which would allow it to be both efficient and flexible. What we wanted is for the venue to be used pretty much 24-7 – for people to be coming and going constantly.

As part of the planning, we did a number of consultations where we met with local sports clubs, schools and people and simply asked: “what do you want?”. The talks acted as a sounding board for the local community and were really interesting and rewarding – and they did have a direct impact on the design and content of the venue. A great example is the dance studio. None of us had it on the list of possible facilities to begin with, but it quickly became obvious that it was something that was repeatedly asked for in consultations with the local population.

SUSTAINABILITY

One of the key things we did sustainability-wise were the light pipes in the roof. There are 88 light pipes in total – stainless steel mirror polished tubes which are 4.5m deep and 50cm in diameter. They draw natural light indirectly into the heart of the venue and make the quality of the internal space feel better. The amount of light we draw in also means that the requirement for electrical lighting is cut by 40 per cent. So not only is there an environmental benefit but also a significant cost saving in terms of load.

The light pipes are also a source of personal satisfaction. When we first suggested the use of them we encountered a lot of resistance – mainly because they’d never been used before for sports and certainly not on the scale we would be using them. We had a battle on our hands to get our way and spent the best part of eight months convincing the likes of Sport England that they would be the way forward. Satisfyingly, since the experience of Copper Box, Sport England has actually changed its technical documents to include light pipes as a viable and sustainable option. ●



Now in its legacy mode, the venue is one of the largest indoor concert arenas in London



Proposed design – Rio 2016 Olympic Park, Brazil



Oxylane Village, Brompton



Edgbaston Cricket Ground, Warwickshire



Cardiff International Pool

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GREEN SHOOTS

Sport is increasingly adopting environmentally sustainable practices. Tom Walker looks at how sport can be used to promote environmental awareness and social and economic development.

Major sporting events have shown their potential to be catalysts for the creation of sustainable, healthy environments and economies. The London 2012 Olympic Games changed the landscape of a previously dilapidated part of the capital, creating a brand new environmentally-friendly neighbourhood in east London with world class leisure facilities, 2,800 new homes and an urban park.

This year's FIFA World Cup in Brazil was widely credited as the "greenest" in history. Crucially, the tournament provided an impetus for positive change beyond the competition, as the Brazilian public embraced initiatives such as the Green Passport – published and distributed to all fans – and its message of adopting ecologically-friendly practices in everyday life. As a direct result of the change in public attitudes and the widened environmental

awareness facilitated by the World Cup, the Brazilian government passed a new waste management law to better regulate recycling in the country.

It's not only major events, however, which can deliver lasting, positive change to their surroundings. The spaces needed for sport have an impact on the natural world. Stadium construction projects, venue operations and even the building and running of local sport pitches change landscapes and have an impact on habitats. Those responsible for building and operating sport infrastructure have an opportunity to make a positive impact on their environments and communities.

According to Russell Seymour, chair of the British Association for Sustainable Sport (BASIS), interest in making venues more sustainable has increased rapidly in the past decade. He says, however, that there remains fragmentation in the way green issues are

approached. "There are now a number of professional clubs and venues which have really embraced the idea of being environmentally friendly – and the same goes for community sport," Seymour says. "It's still, however, a case of having great but isolated examples of good practice. Even within venues it's sometimes a case of picking and choosing certain aspects of environmentally-friendly operations, while ignoring others."

GREEN DESIGNS

When sustainability is incorporated at the very core of stadium development, the end results can be impressive. In 2007 the city of Incheon in South Korea was selected to host the 2014 Asian Games and was faced with a need to build a main stadium for the event. From the outset, the Incheon City Government made sustainability a primary requirement. It wanted a venue that would deliver a memorable games but also provide a lasting legacy for the city.

Architects Populous took up the challenge and came up with the innovative



The Green Passport scheme at the FIFA World Cup this year helped increase the Brazilian public's awareness of environmental issues



design solution of having only one permanent stand. Rather than building a 60,000-capacity stadium and then shrinking it down to 30,000 for the legacy mode, Populous came up with a vision of creating a multi-purpose, 30,000-capacity stadium and adding 30,000 temporary seats for the Asian Games. Perhaps the most revolutionary aspect of the stadium is that the entire added capacity was on one side of the playing field – meaning that in legacy mode the venue will be reduced down to a single sided-grandstand. The temporary East stand will be removed and replaced by community parkland which will be contoured around the football pitch.

Sarah Ciuffetelli, communications manager at Populous' Brisbane office, says the design offers a number of advantages when it comes to delivering a sustainable legacy. "Firstly, the design financially reduced the building by two-thirds, meaning there are substantial savings in operational and maintenance costs. The management only has to deal with one permanent stand and the maintenance costs were cut in half once the temporary stands were gone. The space created by removing the temporary seating also allows

Above: The London 2012 Games created an entirely new, modern district in East London
Below: How the Incheon Stadium will look in its legacy mode



these areas to be used for other things – in Incheon's case, a green community park.

"Secondly, from a fan experience perspective, only having one permanent stand meant we were able to move the field of play right up to the action on the western side and to site the permanent seats in the optimal position for sport."

As well as the sustainable design, the Incheon stadium boasts impressive energy-saving solutions which offer direct savings to the venue's operator, Incheon Main Stadium Department (IMSD). The main energy-generating infrastructure is the solar panels which have been installed on the roof of the West stand. 238kW panels generate power for the internal lighting, while 135kW solar panels generate power to heat water for the shower rooms. In addition, rainwater is harvested and used for the irrigation of the parkland. IMSD expects to save around US\$600,000 a year in energy costs as a result.

ADVOCACY LEADS TO ACTION

While green stadium design will ensure sustainability at new venues, improving environmental practices at existing stadiums is an ongoing challenge. ▶

Arsenal Football Club now recycles nearly 80 per cent of its total waste – a dramatic increase from the 25 per cent it recycled in 2012





Arsenal's success was based on involving all stakeholders in its environmental programme

Through effective employee engagement, awareness raising and management there was a dramatic increase in recycling rates

► Re-evaluating procedures and upgrading hardware is paramount – not least due to constant technological advances in the field of energy-saving – but in most cases, significant cost savings and notable environmental benefits can be achieved without large-scale investments or infrastructural changes. One of the ways to ensure success is advocacy and the involvement of all stakeholders and staff.

GREAT EXAMPLES

A great example of this is English Premier League club Arsenal FC, which achieved great results by concentrating on one single aspect of its operations – waste. By the end of the 2011-12 season, events waste at the club's Emirates Stadium in north London was approximately eight tonnes per day – of which only around 25 per cent was recycled. The club set itself a target of recycling 50 per cent of its refuse, while making savings in its waste handling operations.

The club involved a number of stakeholders in the process, including catering, cleaning and waste contractors. Following consultations, it was decided that separating organic waste would have the greatest impact and a number of simple yet effective steps were taken to achieve it. Food waste bins were put into all the kitchens throughout the 60,000-capacity stadium's concourses

and all catering and cleaning staff were instructed regarding the new system. To encourage participation, the club enrolled the help of the Arsenal In The Community department to spread the word about what was required of those delivering and handling the waste.

Through effective employee engagement, raising awareness and management there was a dramatic increase in recycling rates. By the end of the 2012-13 season the club was recycling a remarkable 78 per cent of its total waste – surpassing all expectations and targets. There was also a notable reduction in waste removal and processing costs.

Another example of gaining results through advocacy is the success of the National Hockey League (NHL) in the US. Since 2010, the league has coordinated and focused all environmental efforts by its 30 clubs under one umbrella. The impressive results achieved in the past four years were revealed in the recent 2014 *NHL Sustainability Report* – the first document of its kind produced by a major sports league in North America.

A marquee figure of the report – and in all likelihood a sporting first – is the disclosure of the league's overall, collective carbon footprint. This takes into account league and club business activities and travel for 182 game days, 1,230 regular-season games, more than 60 play-off



▶ contests and nearly two million miles of team air travel per season. The total footprint is approximately 530,000 metric tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year, with the league referencing the 23 million metric tons emitted annually from the single largest coal power plant in the US by way of comparison.

The motive behind putting a figure on total carbon spend is best explained by Allen Hershkowitz, the head of sports programmes at the US-based Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). Hershkowitz describes the work achieved by the NHL as remarkable and adds that having such a concrete figure will help future green initiatives, as it can be used as a tool to inspire fans and partners to commit to environmental stewardship.

"The 2014 NHL Sustainability Report is arguably the most important statement about the environment ever issued by a professional sports league," Hershkowitz says. "The report's focus on controlling fossil-fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions is a mainstream wake-up call that climate disruption poses an existential threat to everything we hold dear, including sports and recreation."

COMMUNITY MATTERS

While initiatives by large-scale venues and sports organisations can make significant differences to the environment, it's also important to highlight what can be achieved at community level. At a time when public funding is scarce and energy costs are rising, amateur clubs and grassroots operators are increasingly

Above: The NHL will use the report to inspire ice hockey fans to commit to the league's sustainable stewardship
Below: The wind turbine at Poppleton Tigers saves the club £1,300 a year



looking to reduce outlays to a minimum. Poppleton Tigers, a community club in York, UK, undertook a study to appraise the most practical renewable energy solutions for its clubhouse in terms of energy savings and environmental benefits. Wind turbines, solar panels and biomass heating were all assessed and following the study the club decided to invest in the creation of wind-powered energy. The chosen product, an Evance R9000 5kW turbine, now generates

10,000kWh per year – saving the club £1,300. As an added plus, the wind turbine acts as a marketing tool – a visual demonstration of the club's commitment to sustainable energy.

Val Duggan, secretary of Poppleton Tigers, says the turbine has made a big difference. "We wanted a renewable energy source to both save CO2 emissions and help with the ever increasing energy bills," Duggan says. "The turbine was installed with financial support from the Community Sustainable Energy Programme and the FA. We all get a buzz seeing it turning, knowing we're producing green energy and saving more than four tonnes of carbon emissions annually. We've got 25 active teams, so have around 750 visitors a week of all ages. The turbine provides a fantastic sustainable energy learning resource for all of them."

For Seymour, this is a great example of what can be achieved at grassroots level if clubs can create conviction and a desire to do the right thing among members.

"If you have individuals who are passionate about the environment and sustainability, they'll often create and drive the efforts through the first stages," he says. "There also has to be a business case behind any measures – if something isn't viable then it's obvious it won't get done. Ultimately though, to make an environmental pledge or action work and for it to achieve its targets, there also has to be a philosophy behind it.

"If people within an organisation buy into the idea they're doing the right thing, rather than something they 'have to do', it's much more likely to get results." ●

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The fastest racquet sport in the world has more than 3.5 million occasional players in the UK – and the figure is growing each year



SMASHING IT!

AMANDA ELLISON, SPEED COMMUNICATIONS

Badminton – the art of rallying a shuttlecock to and fro across a net – is one of the world's oldest sports and thought to have originated in ancient Egypt. Variations of the game have since been recorded dating back to 5th century China but it wasn't recognised on English shores until the 1860s, when British army officers stationed in Poona, India, brought the game back to Badminton House in Gloucestershire.

The Duke of Beaufort hosted a lawn party and the game of badminton was born. The Badminton Association of England (BAoE) was formed in 1893. Badminton is still one of the country's most popular 'garden pursuits', although it's debatable whether that helps or hinders the image of the sport.

SPEEDY SHUTTLECOCKS

Badminton is the fastest racquet sport in the world. Clocking a top smash speed of 206mph, it quite literally smacks squash (172mph) and tennis (164mph) out of the park. It's also the most widely played racquet sport, with 3.5 million occasional players in the UK, 615,000 weekly players and more than 1 million regular monthly players – and the numbers are rising. Badminton is a steadily growing sport, and since 2009-10, the number of adults, aged 16+ playing weekly has risen by 26,500. In 2014, Badminton England reported an increase of 66,500 in the 14-25 age group, particularly among women.

GENDER DIVIDE

One of the biggest advantages of badminton is that it is gender neutral.

From a young age, boys and girls play alongside each other and our most celebrated badminton heroes, Gail Ems and Nathan Robertson, stood side by side when claiming their silver medals in Athens 2004. Thirtyseven per cent of weekly players are female, rising to 41 per cent on a monthly basis. For 14 to 15-year-olds the female numbers are slightly higher, with 44 per cent of weekly players and 47 per cent monthly. Badminton is the fifth most popular individual or team sport for women (after swimming, cycling, athletics and equestrian) and those who do play are upping their game, with 44 per cent of female badminton players doing more activity this year. In a climate where the pressure is on NGBs to get more women physically active, it seems badminton is in a very strong place.

PICK UP A RACQUET

Badminton England is committed to increasing grassroots participation, with a whole sport plan for 2013-17 which includes programmes designed to attract and grow the game at all levels.

The National School Championships currently attracts more than 30,000 participants across 1,600 schools and in total badminton is offered at more



Badminton is popular among girls - 47 per cent of young players in the UK are female

PHOTOGRAPH BY IAN HARRISON



The number of people playing the sport is constantly increasing and there are now 3.5 million occasional players

than 2,300 schools. The aim is to impact on more formal play, integrating badminton into the curriculum and GCSE requirements, as well as to develop a new national junior league. Badminton England is also redesigning its primary school offering and investing in further education. Currently offered at 56 universities, the NGB is looking to expand to 70 by March 2017, adapting its programmes to suit the college market.

One of the key challenges for NGBs is to fund and maintain a sufficient workforce to grow the sport. Badminton England's community-based approach is helping to circumvent this. The introduction of Community Badminton Networks (CBN) – where a group of key local partners comes together to build a development plan for badminton in their area – means there's an organic focus designed to increase participation and enable anyone who wants to play badminton to find activity appropriate to their ability and desire. The people are effectively championing the sport on Badminton England's behalf.

Under the modern PLAY Badminton initiative, Badminton England has a flexible approach to listening and responding to the needs of its providers, such as the leisure centre market. Rejecting the one

Dedicated badminton centres are proven to be the best way to develop the sport at all levels – but there are very few centres in England where badminton is the priority sport

size fits all approach, badminton now comes in all shapes and sizes, from No Strings pay and play options, to Battle Badminton singles leagues and coached sessions, the NGB is making it as easy as possible to encourage playing.

The programme that is possibly the boldest move for badminton, however, is the Smash up! campaign. Designed for 13- to 16-year-olds, the innovative product is currently in 1,000 schools, plus 500 community and leisure sites. Delivered by trained 'activators' the sessions involve music and casual play and focus more on allowing teenagers to try the sport and experiment with the speed and skills involved. Badminton England

is also supporting it socially, creating a 'racquetheads' Twitter channel to make young people more familiar with the sport.

COURTSIDE

Badminton is an indoor sport and, therefore, somewhat restricted by the availability of court space and time. Badminton England has established a strong relationship with a number of national operators. As part of the PLAY Badminton programme they invest in partnerships with operators to upgrade and increase the use of sports halls under their management in identified priority areas. In return for this investment they seek to secure increased court access.

The aforementioned CBNs also play a role in galvanising the support of local partners to refurbish courts or even to access untapped community resources such as schools and churches.

However, it's the dedicated badminton centres that have proven to be the best way to develop the sport at participation and performance level. Unfortunately, England still has very few centres where badminton is the priority sport. Currently, in Denmark – one of the major European competitor nations – almost every town has a hall designed for badminton as

- ▶ a priority sport and most badminton clubs own their own purpose-built badminton facilities or have great access and guaranteed tenure. This is thought to be a major factor in Denmark's high participation rates and international success. Badminton England wishes to invest in the development of more dedicated centres.

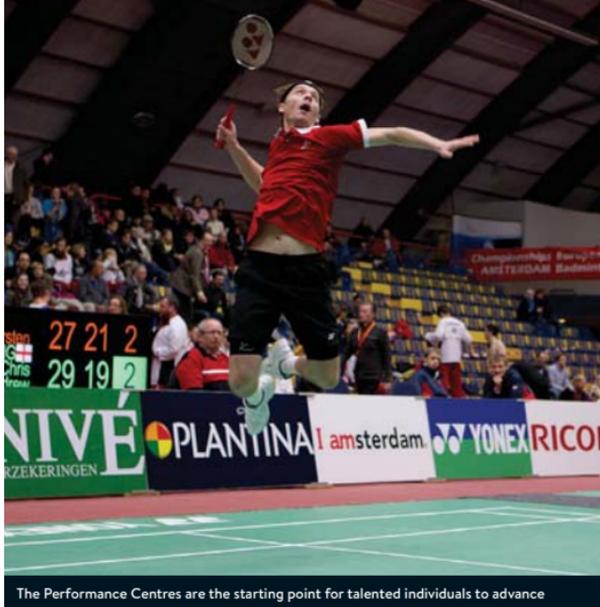
TALENT PATHWAYS

The International Badminton Federation (IBF) – now the Badminton World Federation – was established in the first half of the 20th century. However, it was not until 1992 that badminton gained Olympic status, demonstrating its relative infancy on the international playing field. In October 2014 it was also confirmed as a Paralympic sport for 2020 in Tokyo.

In England, the badminton Performance Centres are the real starting point of the talent pathway, being fed from schools, clubs, CBNs and aimed at youngsters from primary school to 17- and 18-years old.

The 10 England Performance Training sites around the country provide opportunities for the most talented individuals within the Performance Centres. The England Junior Programmes provide individual places for the most talented from 13 upwards. The most talented players among the England and GB senior teams are based at the National Badminton Centre in Milton Keynes.

One of the key challenges facing the sport is that unlike tennis, there is no Wimbledon fever, with coverage of the sport not yet screened on terrestrial channels. This year, however, has seen



The Performance Centres are the starting point for talented individuals to advance

the spectator offering grow, with the successful launch of the National Badminton League, which is being televised on Sky sports. This means more exposure for some of Britain's best players, such as Chris and Gabby Adcock. The duo, partners both on and off the court, are ranked fifth in the world at mixed doubles.

FANCY A GAME?

Yet in spite of the investment which has been made in improving facilities and programmes and the obvious love and affection surrounding the sport, badminton is still struggling to be taken

as seriously as an innovative, strong performance sport. It's one of the easiest entry level sports, every leisure centre offers it and 3.5 million people pick up a racquet! In Asian cultures badminton is extremely popular, and it's a true cradle-to-grave sport.

Having to compete against other giants of sport such as football, rugby and tennis, badminton's main challenge may well be the way it's perceived. Despite being incredibly fast, competitive and gender neutral, badminton has yet to challenge its outdated reputation head on. The small steps taken so far, such as Smash up! have proven successful, so clearly there's a desire to play if the message is right. If anything it's frustrating that the top badminton players are not household names and that badminton fever is not yet gripping the nation.

As part of its Whole Sport Plan Badminton England has set a weekly participation target of 153,000 for 14-25 year-olds. The hope is that targeted marketing campaigns, the presence on Sky TV, and the increased level of social media activity will help to promote the sport. However, unless badminton begins to invest in repositioning the sport towards a younger, performance-motivated audience, then it may forever be seen as nothing more than the nation's favourite summer pastime, played by grannies and girls alike. The key question still stands – can you name a professional player? ●

BADDERSBIRDS

The brain child of an inner city London badminton club looking to cement badminton's appeal to young professional city girls. The concept is to enable girls from a variety of backgrounds to give badminton a go and see the benefits. In

the majority of cases, women take up badminton looking to lose weight or get fitter but at first the emphasis has to naturally be on learning the skills needed. Baddersbirds, set up by four



county players, had the idea of integrating a 45 minute yoga and fitness class (taught by a top London personal trainer) with an hour of learning to play. Promoted only on twitter and with flyers designed by a local artist, "the girls who come get to burn calories and enjoy a game," the campaign literature

states. "Life is so busy these days, it helps to know you'll get your fitness fix and still get to hit a feather or two. Badminton is fast, fun and a great way to get fit and we want to prove it!"

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Futsal is growing at all levels across Europe



Futsal, football's small-sized, indoor version, is now among the fastest growing team sports in Europe. The FA's Tony Snow outlines the reasons behind the success

INSIDE FOOTBALL

Brazilian star Ronaldinho swears by it, Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi says it's the reason why he became the player he is today and perhaps Pelé would never have reached his legendary status without it. Such is the influence of futsal.

Hailing from the large urban conurbations of Uruguay and Brazil in the 1930s, futsal is football's little brother – an exciting, fast-paced small-sided football game that places a large emphasis on technical skill and ability in situations of high pressure.

Densely populated cities and a shortage of playing pitches forced a football mad populace to play small-sided football and in 1936 the first rules emerged. The name futsal was chosen by FIFA and is a combination of the Spanish words for 'football' (futbol) and 'hall' (sala). Subsequently as it has proved, it is an excellent breeding ground for football competencies which can be translated into the 11-a-side format of the game.

As it grew from its South American roots, it has not only helped produce some of that continent's finest players but has also had a defining influence on the European stage. Barcelona's tiki-taka has its foundations in futsal, with Iniesta and Xavi among the ones to play the game to develop their skills.

KEEPING IT SMALL

Portuguese superstar Cristiano Ronaldo, another disciple of futsal, cites the small playing area of the pitch as a key factor in the way it improves personal skill.

"If it wasn't for futsal, I wouldn't be the player I am today," he says. "It helped me improve my close ball control, for example. Whenever I played futsal I felt free."

Football and futsal have a great deal in common – players of both must be able to master the ball and make quick decisions – but there are subtle differences too. One of these is the size of the ball – Futsal is played with a size 4 as opposed to a regulation size 5 ball.

Futsal is a five-a-side game, normally played on a flat indoor pitch with hockey-sized goals. It is played to touchlines and all players are free to enter the penalty area and play the ball over head-height. Games are 20 minutes per half, played to a stopping clock (similar to basketball) with time-outs permitted.

There are a number of differences between futsal and the various versions of "small-sided" football played in England. However, the dominant elements are the absence of rebound boards and rules which encourage and foster skillful, creative play above the physical contact, which tends to be a feature of the English

game. As a result, futsal is an extremely powerful way for kids to develop their touch and dribbling skills.

TECHNICAL PROWESS

Although futsal is very much a game in its own right, it creates an environment which allows young people to develop and practice many skills which are transferable to the 11-a-side game. Because of its nature, futsal supports the technical development of young players in a multitude of ways. The smaller confines of the pitch make it harder to find space, the line markings prevent easy escape from tight situations (unlike traditional five-a-side, where the ball can be played off the wall) and the smaller, heavier ball supports closer ball control and manipulation.

Research indicates that individuals playing futsal receive the ball six times more often than they do playing 11-a-side football, resulting in players needing to pass, control, feint and dribble more often. As well as having more touches on the ball, players will often receive the ball under pressure from opponents, developing their confidence on the ball.

Futsal as a game naturally brings players into regular one-on-one situations with their opponent. This encourages players into quick decision-making – whether to



Participation - The latest figures show that in 2014 there were 20,132 adults and 42,196 youth players (under 16yrs) taking part in FA-affiliated Futsal activities

try beating the opponent using dribbling or through passing to a team-mate. Another core attribute futsal teaches young players is the importance of ball retention due to the threat of an immediate counter-attack.

Confidence on the ball, receiving a pass under pressure, decision-making in one on one situations and ball retention are all fundamental skills that coaches look to develop in young football players – all which are practiced regularly in a game environment of futsal.

Due to the limited space on a futsal court, the game intrinsically encourages movement and rotation from players, as well as a sense of innovation and creativity, to unlock defences and to create some space for themselves and their team-mates. In many ways it replicates the skills required from successful attacking midfielders and forwards in the 11-a-side game when trying to break through opposition in and around the 18-yard box.

THE RISE AND RISE OF FUTSAL

Since 2003 the FA has been supporting the introduction of futsal in England and during that time the game has grown rapidly. From humble beginnings, with limited awareness and even more limited structures, The FA has established a



REC: DANNY WATKINS/GETTY IMAGES/CELESTO INFO

Many of the world's leading players, such as Lionel Messi, grew up playing futsal

framework for promoting and developing the sport. A number of initiatives have been launched and expanded to drive the growth of futsal in England.

The FA National Futsal Leagues were established in 2008 and are divided into three regional leagues (North, Midlands and South). Each comprises two divisions which are played throughout the season. The top teams in Division 1 at the end of

the season progress into the FA National Super League and on to the Grand Finals to contest for the title of National Futsal Champions. The National Champions progress into the UEFA Futsal Cup to represent England.

Meanwhile, the FA Futsal Cup has been running since 2003 and is the oldest national futsal competition in England. The 'FA Cup of Futsal' offers clubs the opportunity to play the top clubs in the country. In 2014 more than 500 male and female teams entered the competition.

At the very top of the elite set-up sits the England Senior Men's Team. The team enters the FIFA Futsal World Cup and UEFA European Futsal Championships, as well as playing a number of international friendly matches each season. Beneath the England team is the England Development Squad and eight Regional Centres of Futsal Excellence for 16 to 19-year-olds, which support the identification and development of talented futsal players.

GRASSROOTS

There are also a number of grassroots structures to support organised games. The FA Futsal Fives are local recreational futsal leagues which The FA has established to help provide local ▶



The futsal leagues not only increase participation in and awareness of futsal, but also generate significant returns for the local delivery partners

▶ opportunities for participants to play the game. There are currently more than 60 adult and youth futsal leagues running across the country.

The FA National Youth Futsal Festival has been running since 2007 to encourage young people to participate in futsal. Boys' and girls' teams from across the country between the ages of 10 and 16 progress through regional festivals to reach the National Youth Futsal Festival. This event is hugely popular and is helping to promote the game in schools and youth clubs. In 2014 more than 2,500 teams participated in this competition.

British Universities and English Colleges (BUCS) Futsal Championships are two competitions which have been going from strength-to-strength over recent years, with a large number of colleges and universities across Britain entering male and female teams. BUCS announced in 2014 that over the past three years futsal has been the fastest growing team-sport in universities.

To support the leagues, The FA has established a number of coaching and

refereeing courses to support the development and learning of both coaches and referees within futsal.

GETTING INVOLVED

The FA is keen to support organisations and facilities which are interested in and motivated to develop local futsal participation opportunities. It provides licences to local delivery partners to run and operate youth and adult FA Futsal Fives leagues. As part of the license The FA will provide grant funding to help set the league up, as well as a host of FA branded marketing and operational resources to make it easy for the operator to get things started. There are currently more than 60 leagues operating across the UK that not only increase participation in and awareness of futsal, but also generate significant financial returns for the local delivery partners.

The FA is also aiming to be flexible when it comes to facility requirements. It recognises that facilities can act as a limitation and barrier to playing futsal across England. However, at the

recreational level of the game, The FA believes that with a little bit of creativity and flexibility, facilities should not pose too significant an obstacle for recreational and social participation in futsal.

Although The FA encourages teams and participants to seek to play futsal on a proper full-size indoor futsal pitch with appropriate markings, it's clear that this will not always be possible – especially as the sport is still in a developmental stage. By getting in touch with the FA, operators will be able to find the best solution to provide a workable futsal facility. ●

Find out more

To find out more about how you can adapt an existing sports-hall to incorporate futsal, The FA has produced a guidance resource with further info: www.sportsmanagement.co.uk/FUTSAL

If you are interested in becoming an FA Futsal Fives license holder, contact Stephen.Brown@TheFA.com

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Scan to see The Hub in action



British Cycling's Shane Sutton (second from left) has joined the team at Athlete Lab, bringing elite expertise to the programming

PEAK PERFORMANCE

With its first UK site now open in London, the team behind international indoor cycling brand Athlete Lab is already eyeing up more sites in the capital.

Approaching 50 per cent capacity in the first quarter since opening, the club's performance indicates a positive outlook and quick growth for the brand, especially as it opened in what the owners expect to be their quietest time of year.

Moving quickly is something founders – Michael Flynn – a former Glencore oil trader – and Neil Franks, head of South East Asia and Australia at Cordea Savills private equity group – know well, both in business and in the saddle.

They met during cycle training sessions in Singapore, where they were both working at the time. Looking for better places to train, but failing to find quite what they were after, they decided instead to open their own studio where cyclists could bring in their own bikes to train indoors in a convenient location.

Within two weeks of the first Athlete Lab opening, the pair already had two sites: the inaugural site in Singapore and a club in

David Thompson pays a visit to the new Athlete Lab cycle hub, to see how its focus on cycling enthusiasts rather than fitness fanatics is giving it a different spin

Sydney, Australia. Two years later, Athlete Lab has arrived in London with a £1m studio targeting the cycling fanatics of the city's financial heartland.

"London was the obvious next step for us," says Flynn. "Cycling is massively popular here, and it's very difficult to train year-round due to the infamous English weather. Wherever there are dedicated cyclists and triathletes who have busy jobs, there will always be a demand for convenient indoor training."

LONDON MODEL

Unlike the Athlete Labs in Singapore and Sydney, the London club only has fixed bikes, custom-made for an authentic experience – the other clubs have the option of bringing your own. There are 20

bikes in the main studio and 10 more in the basement studio, along with a stretch and conditioning area. The bikes, called Adjustabikes, are made exclusively for Athlete Lab by Powerwatts, a Canadian company which developed the training hardware for Olympic athletes. They feature clip-in pedals (with shoes available from reception), gears and the rear wheel of a real road bike, mounted on a modified frame which sits in a turbo trainer.

Data from the turbo trainer and sensors fitted to the pedals generate an impressive array of performance information. This data is displayed on a huge screen at the front of the studio, and this is the driving force behind the workouts. By matching power output and cadence (pedal speed) to the targets on-screen, you're guided through the ride. The system also links up with heart rate monitors and results can be sent to tracking programmes and apps such as Strava. You also get a ride report by email.

There are ride programmes for endurance, sprint intervals, HIIT, five-minute intervals and Ironman triathlon training, all of which make up the club's regular schedule of 16–18 classes a day. The rides at Athlete Lab have been developed



Above: Athlete Lab London offers Adjustabikes, so members can train as they would on the road. Right: The club's data-led offering is designed to improve sporting performance

by the in-house team of cycling coaches, and the recent addition of British Cycling's Shane Sutton will add even more elite expertise to the programming. "We're very proud to have Shane on board," says Flynn. "His knowledge and experience in training top level cyclists is invaluable to us, and it's fantastic to have him not only help with improving our rides with his own methodology, but to join the team as a shareholder of the London club."

PERSONALISED EXPERIENCE

"Our specially designed rides are central to our appeal to dedicated cyclists, covering all the bases across different disciplines," says Flynn. "Data is hugely popular, so we give all the data we can and it's extremely accurate."

Each ride is tailored to individual riders' ability by using a functional threshold



power test (FTP) to produce a score on which to base the target power output. The FTP test is performed by every new member and involves riding as fast as you can on a 2 per cent gradient for 20 minutes, to calculate your maximum power output. For customers dropping in to a class for the first time, the coaches running the class will estimate the FTP based on general fitness level and experience.

Flynn says: "It's a simple system, but it works well for getting the most effective training for each individual, regardless

of ability, while enjoying the same class together. Our coaches are the key here – the FTP can be adjusted manually throughout the ride to make sure each rider gets the most out of the workout."

SPORTS PERFORMANCE FOCUS

Athlete Lab London currently has around 100 members, with capacity set at around 250–300. Unlimited access membership costs £129 a month, while ride packs of 12 (£288) and eight (£216) are also available, to be used over a three-month



Members at the London club are 50 per cent cyclists, 50 per cent triathletes, who want to complement their outdoor training

► period. Alternatively, drop-in classes can be attended for £30. "Our customers and members are about 50 per cent cyclists and 50 per cent triathletes at the London club so far," says Flynn.

"We're not targeting fitness customers, but rather sports performance. Many cyclists look for fitness alternatives during the off-season, and for a convenient substitute during the working week. Group cycling on flywheel bikes is great for cardio, but it doesn't replicate the true pedal stroke of a real bike. We offer all the

convenience of a group cycling studio, but with much more beneficial training for cyclists – ours are real bikes, so you train just as you would on the road. Add to that our personalised cycle coaches, on-hand to fine tune your performance, and I think Athlete Lab is way ahead of the pack."

He continues: "It's been a bit of a challenge coming into the London market though, as nearly everyone has a gym membership already. That's very different from Singapore and Sydney." Nevertheless, the Athlete Lab team is already starting to

think about its next club, with an eye out for sites in prestigious areas such as the West End and Kensington.

"We're looking forward to building the social aspect in London's cycling community," says Flynn. "We have real rides where you can take on the challenges of famous cycling routes and race nights where members can race everyone else in the room, or against riders at other clubs. As soon as we have more clubs, we can host more challenges to make it an even more enjoyable training experience." ●

FIRST PERSON EXPERIENCE

David Thompson reports...

Arrive at Athlete Lab and you could be forgiven for thinking you'd stumbled into a Tour de France team's training centre. Everything is shiny and new: clean white lines and hi-spec finish in everything from the reception desk to the bar stools crafted from professional (read painful) looking bike saddles. After a warm but somewhat perfumy greeting from the coaching team, I'm fitted out with some cycling cleats and taken through the large glass doors to the main studio.

With 30 bikes set out in three rows facing the huge screen, which takes up most of the front wall, the room still

manages to feel spacious. A full class with 30 riders must be a sight to behold, with all those gears whirring and legs spinning in unison, but in my class there were just four of us. The coach meticulously set up my bike position, making adjustments which I'm told they save and set up for members ahead of time when they've booked in for a ride.

Then we get down to the serious business of cycling. The characterless but energetic dance music plays, and my legs spin the pedals around, but similarities with other indoor cycling classes end there. This is not the place for supercharged fitness instructors: it's the place to get your training in because it's hard to get out for a decent ride when you're stuck in the office all week. The two riders next to me are prime examples



of Athlete Lab's target market – City boys with money to spend and a keen interest in cycling. They talk the talk, and as I can see from the data on the screen as we match our leg speed and power output to targets, they walk the walk.

The bikes are absolutely authentic and a single-minded determination to keep turning the pedals is required to get you through – just like being out on the road. There are only three things I could have asked for: swapping out my saddle for my own, the wind in my hair and the sun on my back. If you're married to your bike and addicted to data, then Athlete Lab is the perfect place to train. If you're after a good workout that happens to be on a bike, consider the nearest Spin studio.

MATRIX HAS WHEELS IN MOTION FOR 2015 CYCLING SUCCESS

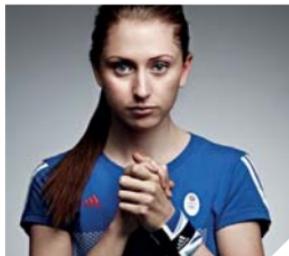
Olympic champion, Laura Trott OBE, signs for Matrix Fitness cycling team

Matrix Fitness is delighted that World and double Olympic cycling champion, Laura Trott OBE, will be joining the Matrix Fitness cycling team in 2015.

The current British road race champion will move to the team with effect from 1 January 2015, and will ride a program of key events that complement her track racing commitments and intended build up for the Rio Olympic Games in 2016.

Commenting on the signing, Jon Johnston, Managing Director of Matrix Fitness said:

"Laura brings a new dimension to the team in her role as ambassador for cycling and as a role model for young people. She is still only 22 years old, but she has already achieved so much. I cannot think of a better person to inspire youngsters to get active."



Dani King MBE launches IC7 Indoor Cycle

"The most relevant, smoothest, static bike I have ever trained on!"

Olympic Champion cyclist and 'Team Matrix' Ambassador, Dani King MBE, officially launched the power-based Matrix IC7 Indoor Cycle and Coach by Color® Power Program to the UK market at Leisure Industry Week.

The IC7 is the latest product in the Matrix Fitness portfolio to be 'Powered by ICG®', and boasts indoor cycling's first two-stage drivetrain, which enables the market's most accurate (+/-1%) direct Wattrate® (Power) meter. The bike's performance metrics are delivered to the rider via the patent-pending Coach By Color® Training Console, which vividly displays the user's effort and power in various coloured zones.

Another giant leap on the horizon for Matrix Fitness' cycling team

After five years' concerted effort to develop women's cycling, On The Drops – the management team behind Matrix Fitness-Vulpine – hopes to create a domestic professional team for British road riders to aspire to. Their ambition looks set to be rewarded with plans in place for them to become a full UCI pro team in 2015.

After working hard to secure superb elite riders, including Laura Trott MBE, and World Team Pursuit champion, Elinor Barker, the final team line-up has now been confirmed as: Laura Trott, Elinor Barker, Lucy Martin, Molly Weaver, Jessie Walker, Harriet Owen, Mel Lowther, Sara Olsson, Christina Siggaard, and Penny Rowson.

One to watch... Mel Lowther

Following two years on the British Olympic Development Programme (ODP), Matrix Fitness rider, Mel Lowther will be joining the ranks of the elite riders in 2015. The aggressive rider, known for her breakaways, has demonstrated superb form since joining the Matrix team in 2013, including securing an impressive 7th place at the recent Junior World Championships in Spain.



healthy body healthy mind

A £2m programme that uses sport to improve the lives of people with mental health problems was announced in October. Can the new initiative, led by Sport England and mental health charity Mind, make a difference?

*Names changed to protect identity

Twenty year old Londoner Peter* lacked confidence. He was too eager to please, anxious to fit in, and this got him into trouble. He fell in with a bad crowd, drank, smoked and ate too much. He was too impulsive and by his own admission, he didn't do anything constructive with his days. He wasn't working and only had this one group of mates. "I felt my life was going in the wrong direction," he says.

Not long after the 2010 World Cup, however, Peter started playing football. Since then, his life has got better.

Non-competitive treatment

At the weekly football session, Peter met Michael. The 24-year-old had been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. Because of his mental health issues, he lacked confidence and was anxious about meeting new people. Michael wasn't at

work, but when he did get some money, he just wasted it on drugs. "I thought I needed them to relax and to enjoy myself," he says. Playing football taught him otherwise.

Peter and Michael didn't join a football club. A cut and thrust, win at all costs environment where players were pushed to improve their own performance or risk letting the team down would have only made things worse for them. Instead, they took part in fun coaching sessions, designed specifically for people with mental health issues. The sessions were run by Leyton Orient Football Club community coaches – coaches who'd had mental health training – and organised by the London Playing Fields Foundation, as part of their Coping through Football project.

Four years on, and Michael is off drugs. He swims, goes to the gym, gained a catering qualification and works part time in a café. He's even thinking of joining

a Sunday League football team. "I'm no longer in that dark place, I feel more in control of my life," he says. Peter has lost lots of weight, quit smoking and drinks less. He's made new friends who understand him and his previous problems and has started volunteering as a boxing coach.

Direct action

Sport England, the mental health charity, Mind, and the government hope that the new £2m scheme they launched this October will use sport to help 75,000 people who, like Peter and Michael, have mental health issues; 25,000 during the first 15 months. The new scheme is set to start next year and will run across eight areas in London, the West Midlands, the north west and the north east. It will cost £2m – £1.5m Lottery funding through Sport England, the rest raised by Mind. The government hasn't yet released



Taking part in organised sports can help people with mental health issues gain more confidence



Outdoor activities can significantly improve the moods of those suffering from depression

precise details of the rollout, but there will most likely be specific targeted and adapted activities, support for people who want to join mainstream clubs and take up new sports, taster sessions, fitness classes and support groups.

"There is clear evidence that physical activity as part of a rehabilitation programme improves recovery speed and reduces health costs," says Mike Diaper, Sport England's executive director for community sport. According to Mind, research shows that outdoor exercise can reduce depression and anxiety. The charity hopes that the new project will encourage

more people living with mental health problems to take up sport.

"Structured physical activity programmes can help people recover from a mental health problem and stay well long term," says Paul Farmer, Mind's chief executive. Mind's information manager, Sam Challis, adds that for a person with mild depression or anxiety, physical activity gets the endorphins going and can lift their mood almost immediately.

"Just being outdoors can help people," he says. "There's light and you're surrounded by nature, away from bustling environments which hold negative associations."

Department of Health figures show that one in four people in the UK will suffer from mental health problems in their lifetime. That's anxiety, addiction, obsession, phobia, depression, bipolar disorder, personality disorder, schizophrenia and eating disorders. According to the 2013 Sport and Recreation Alliance report, the *Game of Life*, schizophrenia and bipolar disorder reduce life expectancy by between 16 and 25 years. People with depression are twice as likely to develop heart disease and 58 per cent more likely to become obese.

The King's Fund and Centre for Mental Health found that £13bn of NHS expenditure each year is spent on long-term conditions linked to poor mental health and wellbeing.

"The horrible thing about mental health issues is they can strike indiscriminately," says Alex Welsh, CEO of the London Playing Fields Foundation, which set up the Coping Through Football project in Waltham Forest seven years ago.

"People go through life and all of a sudden something happens. Some cope better than others," he adds.

Welsh, also a Tottenham Hotspur community coach, adds: "Suicide is the biggest killer of 25- to 28-year-old men, alongside road traffic accidents. There's an over-reliance on medication as a treatment for mental health problems.

Coping Through Football takes referrals from GPs, NHS home treatment and

© ILLUSTRATION: JIMMY NOLAN



The Coping Through Football project in Waltham Forest received an UEFA award this year



You need to show health professionals how sports organisations can add to what they're already doing, that you can help them achieve their objectives around recovery.

► community outreach teams across London, while early intervention teams send younger people at risk of developing chronic issues. Local Mind groups have also been running sports activities for people with mental health issues. Rochdale has put on taster sessions in Zumba, Bollywood and line dancing, aerobics, tai-chi, yoga, five-a-side football, table tennis and badminton. Brentwood Mind runs a walking group, where people socialise, exercise and explore the local area.

In Croydon, Mind works with Duke McKenzie, to put on boxing fitness classes at the former boxing world champion gymnasium in Crystal Palace.

"People who've been on these projects score better on measures for depression and anxiety," says Richard Paccati, Croydon in Mind's CEO. "They see the GP less, are less likely to be admitted to hospital and need less medication."

Keep them coming

A sports session for people with mental health issues is not about training a team or promoting a sport. Nor is it about learning skills and improving performance. All that can create pressure to do well, to be better than someone else and to win. That means more stress and anxiety.

There is, actually, only one aim. That the people who come along to the sessions will come back the next week, so they can continue to benefit from the activity. "This activity is supposed to be therapeutic, to

make people feel better," Sam Challis says. "You don't want the coach shouting at people to do that little bit extra. The coach needs to have an understanding of why the people are there and what they need."

Alex Welsh agrees. "You're not looking for sporting outcomes," he says. "If the coach shouts anything it'll be 'well done', or 'good effort' and it will be targeted at building up an individual's self-esteem."

Mike Diaper wants sports professionals to try and understand just how difficult it can be for someone who has a mental health issue to actually come through the door of a sports activity.

"Even if they really enjoy the sport, it can be a really big deal for them," he says.

Sam Challis says this is because a person may have had a bad experience at school, or be worried that they don't have the skills to do as well as they want to. Or it might just be because they haven't done it before. Alex Welsh adds that the environment needs to be relaxed and welcoming. "Like Cheers, the American sitcom – but without the beers," he says.

Whether involved in the new project or setting up an independent one; it's important to make links with local authority health practitioners and GPs. It's the health professionals who will refer people to these activities through local Mind offices.

"Show the health professionals that we're here to help," Mike Diaper says. "That sport isn't all about competition and team sports. That we have more to offer, easy to access

activities that don't require people to have a lot of skills to take part."

Alex Welsh adds: "The industry needs to show health professionals how sports organisations can add to what they're already doing. That we can help them achieve their objectives around recovery and help people live normal lives."

Mike Diaper suggests involving people who have, or have had, a mental health problem, in designing the sessions. "They will know what helped them, what to include that might be of benefit to others, and how to communicate with people who have similar issues," he says.

"Sport needs to get involved with projects like these. We use public money and the government, local authorities want to see health and economic benefits as well as sporting achievements."

What sport people do in sessions like these might seem pretty basic, but Alex Welsh argues that organisers and deliverers need to work just as hard to get it right, and do it well, as those who work with the elite performers.

"At elite level it's only sport," Welsh says. "Here, it's lives that are at stake." ●

Find out more

www.mind.org.uk

www.copingthroughfootball.org

www.mindincroydon.org.uk/active-minds.asp

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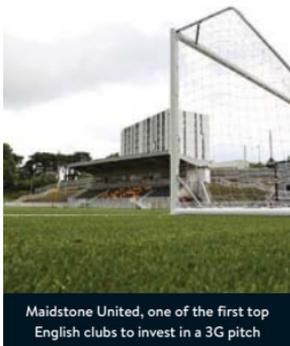
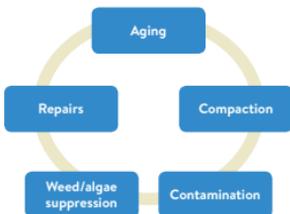
Proper maintenance can add years to the life of an artificial playing surface

KEEPING IT CLEAN

Artificial turf pitches are not maintenance free. In recent years the industry has woken up to the need to provide best practice advice on the benefits of proper, appropriate and regular maintenance – and its impact on performance and the safety of the playing surface. The requirement to maintain standards which meet those laid out by global governing body certificates – such as the ones for FIFA and IRB – is also driving a much more robust approach to maintenance. Some football leagues insist on annual certification via pitch registration schemes.

The importance of having properly maintained artificial surfaces has also been heightened due to the increasing popularity of 3G surfaces at all levels and sports. Artificial surfaces are now the first choice at most community clubs and facilities, mainly due to the many more hours of use an artificial surface offers when compared with a grass pitch. Meanwhile, as turf technology advances, many professional leagues and clubs are looking at changing rules which currently prevent elite level competition from taking place on non-grass pitches. One of the latest examples is the Football Conference

Figure 1: maintenance is used to combat the affects of the following issues



– the fifth tier of English football – which decided to allow 3G pitches in all three divisions from the beginning of the 2015-16 season. The women's FIFA World Cup will also take advantage of artificial pitches when it is held in Canada next year.

Paul Langford, managing director at TigerTurf UK, says the Conference's decision represents a landmark for English Football and is a sign of the growing predominance of synthetic turf. "The decision to permit the use of synthetic turf has wider benefits for the community," he says.

"Not only will local people enjoy the frequency of matches as less games are postponed, but there may also be the opportunity for the pitch to be used at community level. With the Premier League, government and FA committing £102m to improving grassroots football for three years from the beginning of 2014, this decision may have implications for new funding opportunities."

THE ART OF MAINTENANCE

Ultimately the aims of maintenance are obvious – to retain as far as possible the performance and safety of the playing surface. Without proper maintenance all artificial pitches deteriorate; first performance is compromised, then life expectancy can be severely affected. The maintenance processes used to combat deterioration of the pitch are illustrated in figure 1 and maintenance types in table 1.

Third generation (3G) pitches form a significant part of the market for artificial pitches globally and warrant special attention when it comes to maintenance practices. It isn't just the surface which needs to be considered though, as the types of construction materials used will also affect maintenance. The construction of the artificial turf and the type and manner of infill materials used means that

Table 1: Artificial turf by type and its relevant maintenance

Type of turf / frequency	Sand filled	Sand dressed	Water based	3G filled
Regular brushing - weekly	✓	✓	✓	✓
Drag mat - weekly	✓	✓	✓	✓
Decompaction of infill - annual	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cleaning - bi-annual	✓	✓	✓	✓
Weed suppression - bi-annual	✓	✓	✓	✓
Top dressing - annual	✓	✓	✓	✓
Minor repairs - annual	✓	✓	✓	✓

This table indicates of the type of maintenance activity associated with the type of turf. The frequency of the maintenance process will depend on use, type of surface etc.



a number of maintenance procedures are required to retain the characteristics of the artificial pitch. Other types of artificial pitches such as sand filled/dressed or water-based pitches call up some, or all, of the same procedures.

One of the businesses providing services that aim to prolong the life of a pitch is Replay Maintenance. The company specialises in maintaining synthetic sports surfaces – such as 3G pitches – and has seen an increasing number of facilities who are appreciating the value of maintaining their sports surfaces. According to Garry Martin, Replay's director, an artificial pitch which is constantly in use has different maintenance needs to a natural grass pitch, which can only take a few hours' use a week.

"Artificial turf pitches, over time, become contaminated and compacted," Martin says.

De-compacting and increasing the porosity of a 3G pitch will create a safer surface for the players

"Playing on the pitch becomes more difficult and more dangerous, particularly if there is surface water on the pitch that won't drain away.

"The types of services we offer not only improve the playing performance but will create a safer surface for the players by

de-compacting the surface and increasing the porosity of the pitch."

The intensity of use and football is by far the most critical factor to take into account when considering how much and what type of maintenance a pitch will require. Other factors, however, are important – for example, the quality of the turf product can have a significant affect on how a pitch responds to maintenance. Further, contamination and aging will affect pitch maintenance especially as the pitch reaches maturity. ▶

The following formula characterises the maintenance requirements of a pitch:

Aging [a] + Contamination [b] + ability to sustain use [c] x intensity of use [d] = maintenance factor [e]

a = age in years 1-10 b = level of contamination 1-5 c = quality of product 1-5 d = 10-60 hours of use

The maintenance factor MF [e] is expressed in units of 100s. The MF indicates the approach to maintenance and whether low of high frequency intensive maintenance is required.

Replay Maintenance at work at Repton School, which suffered flood damage from contaminated water

▶ KEEP IT SIMPLE

The most appropriate type of maintenance is fairly simple to carry out. A simple tractor unit with a drag brush and a drag mat, when properly used, is all that is required to keep a pitch in good condition. Weed suppression is also important. Additional fill materials should be applied infrequently, based on use and the relative amount of free pile exposed when assessed against the manufacturers recommendations.

A specialist maintenance company should be employed to carry out specialist maintenance such as decompaction and decontamination. In all circumstances the manufacturer's recommendations should be followed. Often, the issue of drainage becomes a priority following heavy rainfall or flooding – as in the case of Repton School in Derby, UK where a local river flooded both of its water-based and sand-dressed surfaces. Replay Maintenance responded to an urgent call from the school after severe damage to the facilities completely stopped play.

Darryl Parkinson, grounds manager at Repton School, said: "We suffered from severe flood damage from contaminated water, but the equipment, speed of reply and speed with which Replay were able to assess and repair the damage was very impressive. It all ran very smoothly and is definitely an avenue we would like to go down on an annual basis."

UNMAINTAINED – UNWORKABLE

If a pitch is not maintained then it does not take long for the negative effects to become apparent. The fill materials will become uneven and the distribution will be poor. Compaction will occur and the free pile level may exceed the design parameters resulting in the pile



IF A PITCH IS NOT PROPERLY MAINTAINED, IT DOES NOT TAKE LONG FOR THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS TO BECOME APPARENT

becoming flat. If left the situation may become difficult to remediate. Loss of fill and contamination occur making the pitch firm and fast in terms of ball surface interaction. A pitch which lacks maintenance can fail NGB requirements and become somewhat unsafe.

Ground staff can perform rudimentary testing to index the performance of a pitch to assess the need for maintenance and can be used to assess the effects of maintenance processes. The ball roll and ball bounce tests are very effective at assessing the condition of a playing surface and can be carried out quite easily by trained ground staff. During inspection of surfaces, the most common problems

observed are compaction of infill – characterized by the pitch being firm under foot – can cause pile flattening. This is sometimes caused by loss of infill, which occurs under normal use from players and environmental conditions. Seam failures – in lines, penalty spots and seams – and wear and tear in the goal areas are other problems sometimes associated with artificial surfaces.

END GAME

In an increasingly litigious society, maintaining a pitch in a safe condition is fundamentally important. What more, certification rules which require cyclic (annual or bi-annual) testing effectively provide an audit of the facility. These directly measure the effectiveness of maintenance procedures – bringing increasing focus to the issue.

Evidence suggests that the average owner hasn't yet grasped that maintenance is an essential part of post-construction responsibilities. Brushing 'little and often' and top dressing can result in a lot less intervention work by specialists early in the lifecycle of a pitch facility. ●

Table 2: Maintenance factors for different pitches

Maintenance factor	Maintenance intensity	Typical venue
Less than 200	Very low maintenance	Club only stadium pitches
250 - 500	Low maintenance	Club training grounds
500 - 800	Frequent maintenance	Schools/clubs
800 - 1000	High maintenance	Community pitches
Greater than 1000	Very high maintenance	Five-a-side centres

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PITCH INSPECTION

We round up the latest sports pitch projects and developments from around the UK – from artificial clay at a tennis club to the “perfect grass” for rugby

FIELDTURF

FieldTurf launches eco-friendly VersaTile

FieldTurf has launched VersaTile, a new underlayment solution from recycled products which combines drainage properties with shock absorption.

VersaTile has been designed not to interfere with water flow thanks to its 82 per cent free draining surface area, which allows the system to drain up to 72,000 mm/h. It also has shock absorption properties – it allows impact attenuation of 60 per cent and more, mirroring the best shock pads currently available. Made using end-of-life artificial turf, VersaTile is a sustainable product and can be used as



underlay for a second field when the initial one needs replacing.

Meanwhile, FieldTurf has supplied Welsh Premier League club Newtown AFC with a new Vertex RGF surface at its Latham Park stadium. Working together with contractors S&C Slatters, the project was completed over the summer months in time for the 2014-15 season.

VersaTile has improved draining and shock absorption properties

Owen Durbridge, club secretary at Newtown AFC, said: “We sought advice from Cardiff Rugby Club which had the 65mm version installed and we’re delighted with the feel of the 3G surface.”

SIS

SIS Rams it in

SIS Pitches has recently completed two new 3G pitches at Derby County FC’s training centre. SIS began work on the new pitches in early August at the Rams’ Moor Farm Training Centre, with works completed in early October.

Work included installing a new outdoor pitch with spectator area and resurfacing an existing indoor pitch at the facility.

SIS Pro Soccer 50 was installed for both pitches, along with a 15mm shockpad to the pitch which was laid in situ using the SIS mini paver, which is part of SIS Pitches’ specialist machinery used to install these types of pitches. New lighting and fencing systems were also added, with installation of 4.5m high twin bar rebound fencing to the perimeter and a 1.2m high twin bar



SIS Pitches handing over the new pitches to Derby County Football Club

rebound fence to the spectator area – both powder coated green.

Darren Wassell, academy manager at the club said: “The full size outdoor floodlit pitch will completely revolutionise our academy winter training programme.

“Our U9 to U16 age groups will now be able to train throughout the winter months knowing that their training hours will be guaranteed. The space will allow all age groups to train onsite and outdoors for the first time in our academy’s history.”



NOTTS SPORT

A pitch fit for Ramblers

Cheshire-based Deeside Ramblers hockey club has had its synthetic turf pitch resurfaced by Notts Sport with a new sand dressed synthetic grass hockey surface. Notts Sport – which is England Hockey's approved supplier – began working with the club in 2010 after being invited to complete a free pitch condition report and performance test on the original sand filled pitch. The report offered advice with short, medium and long term recommendations.

Following Notts Sport's initial survey, the club took the recommendations on board with further free condition surveys

being completed each year until spring 2012, when the club started to develop detailed grant applications with Sport England, England Hockey and the National Hockey Foundation.

Following an initial grant aid body support, the resurface project was extended to include the construction of a new fully floodlit and fenced 36m x 28m practice and warm up area adjacent to the new pitch. The surface choice, manufactured by Domo Sports Grass, was coupled with a high quality foam shockpad, manufactured by Trocellen. Once the pitch

The new surface – a Domo sand dressed grass pitch – is the first of its kind for a hockey club in England

and practice area were specified, they were put out to tender and Cleveland Land Services was awarded the contract.

Notts Sport's free Design and Advisory Service also helped the club seek appropriate funding avenues available to it without incurring consultancy fees.

Howard Green, chair of Deeside Ramblers, said: "We've got the first hockey pitch in England surfaced with Domo manufactured sand dressed grass. This new facility will allow the club to develop the membership and provide us with additional capacity to promote hockey development."

PLAYRITE

Artificial clay surface for Margate club

Margate Lawn Tennis Club (MLTC) has converted two of its macadam courts to new artificial clay surfaces. Funded by Sport England's Inspired Facilities Olympic legacy investment, the club opted for Clayrite – the only UK manufactured sand filled surface which

simulates natural clay and is classified to International Tennis Federation Category 2 Medium Slow pace.

Installed by ETC Sports Surfaces, the new Clayrite monofilament fibre surface is supplied by Playrite, with the 'clay' infill being produced by Garside Sands.

The new courts are designed to perform as a 'real clay' surface and are easy on the legs and joints, compared with macadam and other hard surfaces.

MLTC's chair John Taylor said: "We chose Clayrite monofilament artificial clay based on performance, cost and other important parameters.

"They are a fantastic surface to play on, enabling players of all ability and age to thoroughly enjoy their tennis."

Playrite is currently awaiting confirmation of approval of ITF category 2 for Clayrite as a clay style performance tennis surface.

Playrite director Chris Pickles said: "The monofilament fibre has taken our tennis surface offering to the next level. The ability to simulate a natural clay court surface with lower maintenance costs and higher usage of the courts is a winning combination for any club."



The new artificial surface performs just like real clay but has a lower maintenance cost



The new surface at the Forest academy

TIGER TURF

New surface for Forest academy

Faced with the challenge of attracting and developing the region's most talented young footballers, Nottingham Forest FC took the decision to install a new outdoor 3G playing surface at its Nigel Doughty Academy.

The club contacted TigerTurf, which manufactured and supplied a 7,094sq m Soccer Real 60XQ surface, which was installed by Smith Construction. At the request of the academy coaching staff, the surface was manufactured with markings giving it the versatility to be divided from an FA regulation 11-a-side pitch into four smaller pitches to be used by younger academy age groups. Boasting FIFA 1 and 2 star accreditation, the Soccer Real 60XQ utilises polymer processing which eradicates weak points which may occur in the yarns as a result of the shape, therefore producing excellent split resistance.

Gary Brazil, academy manager at Nottingham Forest, said: "As we aim to achieve Category One status for our academy as soon as possible, it is essential that we offer a top-class facility with top-class surfaces. The new pitch enhances our grass pitches and indoor surfaces."

SISIS

SISIS delivers 'best pitch for 27 years'

SISIS equipment has helped Brentwood Rugby Club in Essex achieve what the club described as its "best playing surface for nearly 30 years".

The recent purchase of a SISIS Quadraplay and Multitiner drum type aerator – along with a compact tractor – was made possible through an RFU Get Fit for Rugby World Cup 2015 grant to help deliver a high quality natural grass pitch maintenance programme for the club.

It follows on from the club taking a bold step in taking the responsibility to maintain the council-owned pitches it plays its games on.

Peter Watson, the club's treasurer said: "We approached Brentwood Council to ask for their support in improving the rugby pitches which are in a public park, administered by the council under King

Georges Trust. The council were very supportive but pointed out, that like most local authorities, there were constraints in terms of the upkeep of their facilities.

"They offered us the innovative solution of the rugby club taking a lease of the pitches over a period of 25 years, thus making Brentwood Rugby Club responsible for the upkeep of the pitches.

"That coincided with the RFU launching two grants for funding leading up to RWC 2015 – one to improve social spaces and one to provide maintenance equipment in partnership with Iseki for the tractor and SISIS for the maintenance equipment."

The SISIS Quadraplay and Multitiner drum type aerator in action



SMITH CONSTRUCTION

New joint venture completes Marford project

Limonta Smith JV has completed a £185,000 project at Marford Playing Fields, funded by the Football Foundation's Premier League & The FA Facilities Fund. Marford Playing Fields in Wheathampstead had an existing large playing field, with a small children's play area and tennis courts, but with no clear access to the playing field, especially for wheelchair users.

The new facility provides the community with a seven-a-side 3G football pitch with associated fencing and floodlighting to ensure maximum and safe play, and also a tarmac pathway to allow much needed access across the playing field. The pathway was a key element in the contract to assist disabled users accessing the facility.

Julia Warren, from the Parish Council said: "It's a fantastic facility, a great asset to the community and we are absolutely delighted with Limonta Smith JV's professionalism in delivering the project".



The new facility will provide the community with a seven-a-side pitch

Limonta Smith JV is a new partnership formed by contractor Smith Construction and Limonta Sport, a FIFA-preferred producer of artificial football turf. The two combined their skills and expertise to form Limonta Smith JV to provide specialist design, build and maintenance services for artificial pitches.

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The latest Sports Facility Show included talks by elite athletes

© PETER ATKIN/AGENCY.COM

Scottish sport takes centre stage

The latest Sports Facility Show on 28 October at Ravenscraig Regional Sports Facility offered more than 200 attendees the opportunity to hear about sports facilities from the athletes that use them alongside leading Scottish sporting bodies.

The show, known throughout the sports and play construction industry as being a 'must see' event due to its excellent advice on the funding, construction, design and management of sports facilities, included a huge variety of speakers from across the

breadth of the industry. As SAPCA believes that the best way to create exceptional sports and play facilities is through a distinctly grass roots focus, the association spearheaded a new approach which made the seminars and speakers more engaging, more focused and more relevant to the future of sports. The line up included athletes at the top of their game, meaning that they are among the best people to advise on the requirements of a facility in their particular sports to yield maximum results.

The line up consisted of:

- CG14 Hockey team – Ailsa Wylie
- sportscotland – Graham Finnie
- Sarah Robertson/Derek Kier – guide to project development/help for clubs website
- Andy Kelly – funding
- Scottish Athletics – Nigel Holl
- FIFA – Nicholas Evans
- Scottish FA – Cameron Watt
- IRB – Marc Douglas
- SRU – Neil Carrie

Presentations from speakers at the show are now available to view online at www.sapca.org.uk/events-exhibitions/seminar-presentations

New membership co-ordinator to offer critical contact point

The Sports and Play Construction Association (SAPCA) is thrilled to announce the newest member of their team. Rachel Douce will take on the role of membership co-ordinator, whose core role will be providing critical support and advice to SAPCA members about any past, current or future projects.

She will also be helping members to maximise the return on their investment by ensuring members get the most out of their membership. Having previously worked in a similar role for the British

Association of Landscape Industries (BALI), Rachel is more than qualified to provide crucial support and guidance to SAPCA members.

Rachel is excited about taking on the new role: "I'm absolutely fascinated by the specialist aspect of what SAPCA members do and I would be delighted to hear your thoughts on how the association can support you further," she said.

You can contact Rachel by calling SAPCA on 024 7641 6316 or emailing rachel@sapca.org.uk.

Dates for your diary

Building on the growing success of this year's Sports Facility Shows, the association has announced preliminary details of next year's events.

Sports Facility Shows 2015

- 10 March 2015
Lee Valley Athletics Centre, London
- 24 November 2015
AJ Bell Stadium, Salford
- Details of the third Sports Facility Show of 2015 are to be confirmed.

For a full list of SAPCA's events visit www.sapca.org.uk



A number of elements need to be considered when choosing a surface for a facility

Put the right foot forward: Selecting a suitable sports surface

For years now people have looked to Sport England for guidance on selecting the right playing surface. Sport England is clear in stating that “the floor is the most important part of any sports building and it must be considered at the outset”. There are a number of very good reasons for this: the obvious factor being the cost of sports surfaces.

The properties of sports floors differ massively in terms of price, material and design. It is important to recognise that each project is unique and should be looked at for its own precise specifications and needs.

BE USER-SPECIFIC

If it's a sport building, let sport drive the project. Establish the priorities of the sports to be played and the levels at

With so much choice for the surface of your sports installation, where do you begin? David Carter, sports specialist from Gerflor, talks us through the definitive dos and don'ts of selecting a non-timber sports surface which doesn't just promote play, but enhances it through intelligent design

which they are to be played. Some sports will have definite needs and others will be more flexible. While most governing bodies will give you the perfect floor specification for the sport it is responsible for, the requirements from differing bodies will conflict in most cases, so compromises will have to be made.

Think about the profile of users. Some types of floor work fantastically well for 16-stone basketball players but are they as beneficial to an 11-year-old child

running around half-heartedly? Each project is about context.

The main headline figure test used is the Force Reduction test carried out with apparatus called “the Berlin Athlete”.

This is one form of measurement and uses criteria typical of an elite athlete, so some say it is not particularly representative of all that use sports facilities in that it is very specific, which is why we use the European Standard EN14904 for our parameters.

“As well as the type of floor, operators should also consider the material to be used. There’s plenty of choice so why not challenge the traditional choice of timber flooring?”

CLEARLY CATEGORISED

The Standard categorises floors as Point Elastic, Area Elastic, Combined Elastic and Mixed Elastic. Listed below are the three most commonly found in the UK with some important factors to consider:

Area Elastic

- Traditional tried and tested floor type
- Very durable for multi-use areas
- High Levels of Force Reduction according to EN14904 testing
- Only start to offer protection when forces akin to athletes are imparted upon it
- Regular maintenance is required including sand and re-sealing on systems with certain floor finishes such as Timber of Composite materials
- Low impact protection from player falls and dives

Point Elastic

- Innovative surface
- Type of floor means that all users, regardless of age or ability, receive a benefit
- Life long surface treatments reduce on-going maintenance costs and downtime
- Excellent impact protection from falls and dives
- Excellent design opportunities
- Cost effective refurbishment opportunities

Combined Elastic

- Expensive when compared with the two other types of flooring above
- Excellent protection for both your users and elite athletes



Operators should take into consideration the end user when choosing a surface

- Unsuitable for extreme loads in multi-use areas
- Excellent impact protection from falls and dives
- Excellent design opportunities
- Life long surface treatments reduce on-going maintenance costs and downtime

CHALLENGE TRADITIONAL TIMBER

As well as the type of floor, operators should also consider the material to be used. Construction and sport are two of the most innovative industries in the world – so why not challenge the traditional choice of timber floors?

There is no denying that beautifully polished timber floors like the ones which can be seen used in the National Basketball Association (NBA) are a wonderful sight, but in reality, how often does a timber floor remain so? To keep a floor looking so good often proves expensive and impractical.

Timber is of course a natural product but you should ensure that the supply is sustainable. Timber is also very temperamental so installation should be done by a specialist contractor – for this we recommend always using an approved SAPCA member from its expansive

database of international consultants, suppliers and contractors.

PVC PROVES PRACTICAL

PVC flooring is gaining market share helped along the way by its innovative properties. PVC floors are point elastic and coupled with undercarriages provide market-leading combined elastic floors. No longer are PVC floors the surface that you dare not walk on with high heels or place tables and chairs on. Now they are made with multi-use at the heart of its design. The innovation extends to surface treatments where they massively reduce maintenance costs and can even prevent skin burns for users. The nature of the product means bright vivid designs can massively enhance playing areas and can reduce electricity bills by providing excellent light reflection, minimising overall consumption.

POLYURETHANE PROTECTS

Polyurethane floors are laid with shock pads to give shock absorption and impact protection. The shock pad is then covered with a poured top surface providing a seamless playing surface.

The installation is key with this type of floor as it is technically configured on site, so site and atmospheric conditions can affect an installation, so much so that two identical floors can end up being quite different. The top surface is then painted, meaning later down the line when a refurbishment is needed it can be as easy as applying a coat of paint. With polyurethane being self-levelling there are sometimes issues of uneven floors giving uneven ball bounce.

COMPOSITES OFFER VERSATILITY

Composite floors are proven to be excellent in multi-use areas.

Historically laid as solid floors they are now also laid onto shock pads to give an area elastic properties. They are extremely durable but have very little impact protection for users. They are very long lasting but like timber, need periodic maintenance which adds to a facility's running costs, which in this sense makes them less cost effective than other more damage-resistant materials.

Remember all the while that the floor is the most important part of the project; it is the foundation of play and should be treated as such. ●



Non-traditional sports structures: Changing the shape of indoor sports

Tim Tracey, sales manager at Collinson, explains why temporary sports structures are ideal for short-term play and offer clear long-term benefits, not least in terms of maximising natural lighting and creating distinctly different facades

Tensile strength, not simply 'tents'

Tensile buildings are fast becoming an increasingly popular solution and are a far cry from the early tent-like structures they once were. They're very definitely not a 'make do solution'.

Lightweight framed structures originated in Scandinavia around 40 years ago, initially for agricultural and storage solutions, but the clear, open span nature of the structure was ideal for sport, offering a lower cost alternative to conventional structures. Tensile structures for sport have developed rapidly over the last decade, especially in the UK.

Often referred to as framed fabric structures, tension membrane structures or non-traditional structures, essentially they all comprised of a steel or aluminium framed superstructure which is then

covered or clad with a membrane covering material.

Natural lighting at its finest

Take time to look at tensile structures in a different light, and here 'light' is the operative word. Introducing a diffused natural lighting system into a sport environment can transform the space and be achieved in any number of ways using a seemingly infinite array of materials. The tensile membrane cover is available in a range of colours to meet aesthetic requirements; the off-white colour is most commonly used as it allows natural daylight to permeate into the facility without the problems of glare.

Aesthetically the membrane cover can effortlessly create attractive smooth flowing lines; other materials can be

incorporated to give the building a distinctive appearance, such as timber cladding or glass facades.

Getting lighting right is essential to creating the appropriate playing environment. sports.scotland actively encourages the incorporation of diffused daylight systems in new indoor sport and leisure facilities and there are many organisations following suit. Structures can be constructed to BREEAM performance ratings, and combined with a reduction in the need for additional artificial lighting the impact on running costs can be significant.

Choose from a range of pre-engineered standard structural designs or create a stylish bespoke building design for an eye-catching assembly. To offer a practical sports space, requests for the inclusion



Carefully considered and well-planned designs will help deliver facilities which have lower running costs



of changing rooms, dance studios and spectator galleries is common; these can be easily included which demonstrates the versatility of these buildings, all of which can be achieved on an affordable budget.

Strides ahead in synthetic surfacing

Sports surfaces have come a long way since the days of crash mats on slippery floors. Seamless synthetic surfaces like polyurethane and acrylic can be the ideal solution for multipurpose halls, or can be tailored to individual sports such as tennis or netball. 3G artificial pitches can offer safe and comfortable training for football, rugby and hockey. Fixtures and fittings have progressed to include rebound walls, sound-absorbing panels and partitioning equipment, which contribute to making an incredibly versatile space.

Generally designed around Sport England/government guidelines for a sport specific or multi-sport facility, structures are unique to meet individual requirements, with consideration to: flooring to suit the sport and energy efficient lighting which can be switchable per court or play area for optimum efficiency. Storage areas can be built in and consideration given to ancillary accommodation; changing, office, dance studio, quite simply any configuration to suit all your requirements in one structure.

Not limited to indoor sports

But the use of non-traditional structures needn't be limited to creating indoor spaces either; outdoor games areas

or MUGAs can offer many more opportunities when covered. Providing a rain proof sports space can be an invaluable asset.

Careful consideration during planning will deliver a virtually maintenance-free facility with low running costs.

Be sure to consider your overall objective and plan ahead to consider:

- Your budget (realistically)
- Design from the inside out
- Exactly what sport the facility will be used for, as this defines internal dimensions, playing surface and lighting requirements
- Who will be using the facility?
- Do you need storage space or any ancillary rooms?
- If changing, dry or wet, and with how many integrated showers/toilets?
- Who will run the project?

Crucial concepts

Visit sites of completed structures to get a better idea of your concept and speak to clients – what did they like? What would they do differently?

Look at the quality of finish, workmanship and attention to detail and consider what route is best for your project; commissioning an architect? Perhaps a consultant? A lower-cost option is speaking directly with manufacturers

“Look at the quality of finish and consider what is best for your project”

whose services can include assistance with planning and drawings.

A good manufacturer will be happy for you to visit their sites and often these visits clarify your choice of supplier. Get your game on track; when it comes to creating new sports facilities, the time has come for less 'creative accounting' and more creative thinking.

The list of possibilities is endless. All we need is a little vision and imagination and with this we are equipped to transform, rather than simply revamp and modernise our sports space. ●

SAPCA

The Sports and Play Construction Association (SAPCA) has 240 members. The members include specialist designers, consultants, suppliers and contractors. As the trade association which represents businesses committed to raising the quality standards of all sports, physical activity, recreation and play facilities that are designed, built and maintained across the UK, SAPCA is an essential element of any sports installation. Make it your first port of call. www.sapca.org.uk

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The Sports and Play Construction Association, SAPCA, is the recognised trade organisation for the sports and play facility construction industry in the UK. SAPCA fosters excellence, professionalism and continuous improvement throughout the industry,

in order to provide the high quality facilities necessary for the success of British sport. SAPCA represents a wide range of specialist constructors of natural and synthetic sports surfaces, including both outdoor and indoor facilities,

from tennis courts and sports pitches to playgrounds and sports halls. SAPCA also represents manufacturers and suppliers of related products, and independent consultants that offer professional advice on the development of projects.

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Product round-up



An industry first – disposable sports towels

A range of multiple-use disposable sports towels is new to the industry. The 'Easydry Sports Shower Towel' is lightweight at just a few grams but has the capacity to hold 10 times its own weight in water. The 'Easydry Two-pack Sports Towels' comprise a towel for the user and another to protect gym equipment. They have been created to be more hygienic, lighter, compact, faster-drying and at least three times as absorbent as a traditional cotton towel.

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vital



A winning combination of digital locking systems

Lowie & Fletcher has launched a range of contactless digital combination locks, which allow the user immediate and simple keypad access without the need for a key. The battery-operated locks can either be used independently or paired with existing wireless systems using RFID. Users have the flexibility to set and change their personal entry code. In addition, a preset master code ensures that supervisor access is always available.

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Golf club tees up solution to problem of lost keys

Oxfordshire's Heythrop Park has begun upgrading 250 key and coin operated lockers in its clubhouse changing rooms to Codelocks' 'KitLock' digital cabinet locks. The robust locks are fitted in place of standard key cam locks, with customers needing only to enter a four-digit code on the keypad, lock the cabinet and go. The lockers were identified as an area for improvement because customers didn't always have a pound coin with them and often lockers would be out of commission due to lost keys.



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safespace

An evolution in wooden lockers from Safe Space

Launched at Leisure Industry Week (LIW), 'Safe Space Evolution' is a wooden locker from Safe Space Lockers constructed from MFC (melamine faced chipboard) with a timber-based carcass and laminate doors. It can be positioned in any tier configuration and comes in a variety of widths (300mm, 350mm, 400mm). The locker also features 6mm toughened glass, and many colour options are available. All lock types can be added. Daniel Jones, sales director at Safe Space, said there had been "plenty of interest" in the new product at LIW, which was held at Birmingham's NEC.



Battle of the sexes in Craftsman's changing areas

Two "markedly different yet personalised" changing areas for male and female members have been created by Craftsman Lockers at Goodwood Health Club. Digital locking has been introduced to provide additional security and alleviate the problem of lost keys. Timed release also allows members

full access to any locker, rather than members laying claim to their own one. The women's changing area features a beach hut effect in cool pastel shades, which contrasts with the black upholstery and metallic hues in the men's changing room.

sport-kit.net **KEYWORD** craftsman



sport-kit.net **KEYWORD**
kemmlit

Plain sailing for Kemmlit

Kemmlit offers a range of integrated solutions for changing rooms, and among its sports facility installations is a 'Primo' partitioning system in the Allianz Arena in Munich. Elsewhere, Kemmlit's 'Variocell' cubicle system has been installed at Datchet Water Sailing Club in Berkshire, UK. The Variocell system is tough and durable and has been designed to be easy to maintain. Its anticorrosion features make Variocell ideally suited for wet area applications. The system specified by the club features 30mm composite elements of aluminium with a special sound absorbing lining.



Eco-friendly bags ideal for holding all sports kit

Ideal for use in the changing room, Kingswood Leisure Services' 'Eco-Friendly Premium White Bags' are large enough to hold all types of sports kit, including muddy golf shoes. At 28 x 55 x 8.5cm in size, dispensers are also available in either white or brushed steel and come complete with fittings. The company's 'Eco-Friendly Damp Kit Bags' can also hold sports kit but are also designed to fit towels, with dimensions of 23 x 35 x 5cm.

sport-kit.net **KEYWORD**
kingswood

Customisable wristband offers RFID integration



'EasyBand' is a new low-cost, waterproof RFID wristband which can integrate with locker systems. Launched by Glasgow-based Authentic8 ID Solutions UK, the wristband uses a NXP Mifare 1K chip and is made from silicone. Each one is laser engraved with a unique serial number. The wristbands come in adult and junior sizes and are available in a mixture of colours, although they can be customised to reflect branding.

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04 DEC 2014

Iog Conference and Industry Awards

**stadiummk Milton Keynes,
Buckinghamshire, UK**

The awards acknowledge the high standards achieved by volunteer and professional teams and individuals at facilities that range from grass roots through to professional stadia level. They recognise achievement, innovation and examples of best practice from the leaders in the world of groundsmanship. The aim of the Awards is to raise industry standards and professionalism.

Tel: +44 (0)1908 312 511
www.iogawards.com

10-11 DEC 2014

The Turf and Grass Expo

Palexpo Center Geneva, Switzerland

Find out the latest information regarding synthetic turf, such as: medical facts, technical analysis, financial benefits, community partnerships and others. Learn from clubs and sports governing bodies who will discuss the best practice, new developments and newest challenges. The event is part of the The International Sports Convention GENEVA 2014 – the world's largest sports convention consisting of 18 Sports Conferences, a combined exhibition and networking event.

Tel: +41 79 823 08 55
www.turfandgrassexpo.com

22-24 JAN 2015

UK Pool and Spa Expo

**National Exhibition Centre,
Birmingham, UK**

UK Pool & Spa Expo continues to develop and welcome new exhibitors, supporting partners and encourage new visitors to our 2015 event, designed to target the whole of the UK wet leisure sector and associated sectors, offering both UK and international companies a professional platform to meet.

Tel: +44 (0) 1483 420 229
www.ukpoolspa-expo.co.uk

01-03 FEB 2015

Spatex 2015

Ricoh Arena, Coventry, UK

The Spatex exhibition. It represents all sectors of the wet leisure. Primarily a trade show, it also welcomes members of the public. With more than 100 Exhibitors, Spatex brings together under one roof the country's largest showcase of new products and innovations but it is much more than just an Exhibition. Spatex hosts the Institute of Swimming Pool Engineers Workshops, which pass on valuable business and technical expertise.

Tel: +44 (0)1264 358 558
www.spatex.co.uk

9 FEB 2014

SAPCA Conference and Annual Dinner

Chesford Grange Kenilworth, UK

The annual conference will again feature informative key note sessions followed by a networking dinner.

Tel: +44 (0)24 7641 6316
www.sapca.org.uk

4-5 MARCH 2015

The Sport Business Summit

The Times Center, New York, US

The Leaders Sport Business Summit brings together top industry influencers to share ideas, spark discussions and build relationships capable of helping shape the future of sport. The event hosts 500 senior people across 30+ sports and over 40 countries all in one place at one time.

Tel: +44 (0)207 0428666
www.leadersinsport.com

10 MAR 2015

Sports Facility Show

National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, UK

SAPCA invites you to attend The Sports Facility Show, a special one-day event that comprises a series of informative and educational seminars together with an exhibition featuring specialists in the design, construction and maintenance of sports facilities.

Tel: +44 (0) 24 7641 6316
www.sapca.org.uk

14-15 APR 2015

Soccerex Asian Forum 2015

The Dead Sea Jordan

This two day event in the world's biggest football market provides a platform for networking and knowledge exchange between East and West. The event will once again be held at the iconic Dead Sea, bringing attendees from clubs, federations, rights holders and businesses together to discuss, network, learn and do business over two intensive days.

Tel: +44 208 742 7100
www.soccerex.com/events/asia

11-14 MAY 2015

15th Annual International Conference on Sports: Economic, Management, Marketing & Social Aspects

Athens, Greece

The aim of the conference is to bring together scholars and students of all areas of sports. Participants can present on sports topics within broad streams of research areas.

Tel: +30 210 36 34 210
www.atiner.gr/sports.htm

24-27 JUN 2015

20th Annual Congress of the European College of Sport Science

Malmö University Malmö, Sweden

Annual congresses have been organized since the inauguration of the ECSS in 1995. Today the ECSS congresses rank among the leading sport scientific congresses worldwide. The congress comprises a range of invited lecturers, multi- and mono-disciplinary symposia as well as tutorial lecturers and Socratic debates. The ECSS congress is attended by international sport scientists with an academic career. The ECSS congresses now welcome up to 2,000 participants from all over the world.

Tel: +49 221 4982 7640
www.ecss-congress.eu/2015



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Owen Durbridge, Club Secretary, Newtown AFC

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Michael Johnston, Kilmarnock FC Chairman



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