

SPORTS

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British Paralympic Association CEO Tim Hollingsworth

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creates a positive
agenda more than any
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IOC must fundamentally rethink the Olympics

We think of the Olympics as an unstoppable machine, but their future isn't guaranteed. It depends on the IOC developing bidding and delivery criteria which enable a wider range of cities to host the Games in a sustainable way, while championing excellence

Wealth distribution is one of the biggest challenges facing the world. In both developed and developing nations, the privileged few have such an abundance of resources, while the majority live in poverty or relative poverty. Much of the conflict and misery in the world stems from this imbalance.

All can play a part in addressing this challenge, but governments and organisations such as the IOC have far more power to change the world than the average citizen, so we look to them for constant improvement.

The Rio Olympics have highlighted these issues on a global platform and although we've largely been shielded from the protests which have been occurring in Rio, as the people express their anger at the presence of the event in their midst, their lack of engagement – for whatever reason – has been evidenced by the empty seats.

This has been especially emphasised by the Paralympics, for which the organisers have struggled with ticket sales. In effect, Paralympians are flying to Rio to compete in half empty facilities.

The budget shortfall experienced by the Paralympics has also illustrated just how stretched the Brazilian government has been by the Games.

There's no doubting the value of the Olympics in raising the profile of a nation, sparking a passion for sport and getting things done quickly – whole development agendas which would normally take decades to complete can be pushed through in just a few years with an Olympic deadline on their tail.



Making hosting the Olympics' possible for cities and nations with emerging economies is the challenge

However, in the case of Brazil, it's hard to reconcile when you consider basic healthcare and education is being denied to many and a large proportion of the population is living below the poverty line.

The IOC needs to take a hard look at this after Rio and decide on a way forward which enables cities and nations which are not wealthy or super powers to make a contribution to the Olympic movement.

There was only one bidder for 1984 – Los Angeles. The number of bidders increased to 10 in 2004, but dropped to five for 2020. Keeping momentum behind the Games, encouraging competition for the event, but also making it achievable for cities and nations with emerging economies, is the challenge.

If the IOC is able to fix this by adjusting the rules of engagement, while still ensuring that athletic excellence and legacy are the main priorities, then they will not only be ensuring the future of the Games, but also contributing to the wider health of the world.

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LIZ TERRY, EDITOR, SPORTS MANAGEMENT

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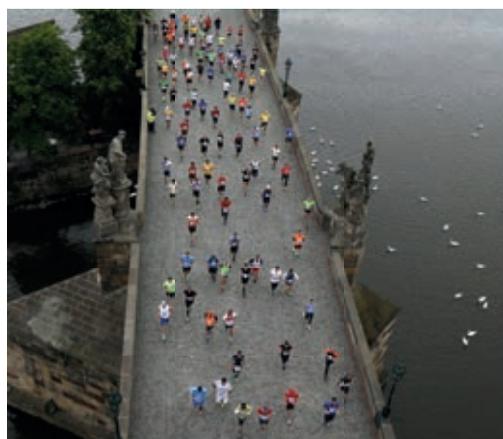


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Unleashing the potential of school sports facilities

In England 77 per cent of sports halls and 61 per cent of artificial grass pitches are located on school, college and university sites, yet it's estimated that 38 per cent don't have community use arrangements in place.

Many would agree facilities lying idle when people want to use them is a waste of a valuable resource. The investment in the school and higher education estate dwarfs that spent elsewhere, so it's vital that access to school facilities complements other

facility provision, to help realise the universal aim of a more active nation.

There are three main reasons for the current state of play. Firstly, sport and physical activity professionals are still not being included in planning and design teams, resulting in poorly specified sports facilities. Secondly, schools are often managing community programmes, but may lack the skills and experience to maximise use. Thirdly, many schools operating under private finance schemes are

locked into operating contracts on inflexible terms, which penalise the opening of schools outside core hours.

Now is the time for the government to designate schools as community assets with community use designed in. Councils should also consider alternative management arrangements to maximise use.

The Facilities Inquiry (2010) recommended 'schools must be obliged to open premises for out-of-hours school sport', however, little has improved in the intervening six years.

Tim Dent, sport and leisure management director

In 2010, the Facilities Inquiry said schools must be obliged to open out-of-hours

Sport England is right to open the door to private organisations

For years I've held the belief that the public sector model restricts the benefits which can be derived from private sector innovation. This closed shop of providers stifled creativity and was a costly and inefficient way of spending public funds.

As the owner of a social enterprise, I welcome the fact Sport England wants to work with any organisation which can achieve agreed outcomes, following the publication of the new government and Sport England strategies.

Engaging with private organisations will increase competitiveness, drive down costs and improve outcomes.

If we are to encourage more people to adopt healthy lifestyles, throwing

£30m into a 'volunteer strategy' isn't sufficient. Who will take ownership of this programme? Which parts of society are to be targeted and by whom? What role will volunteers play?

Furthermore, the new Sport England strategy has very little detail about on how the £2.5bn fund for apprenticeships will integrate into the sport and leisure sectors. This is a key time to ensure education and sport are connected at the highest level.

However, while I can complain about the lack of detailed execution plans contained in the strategy and express frustration that several topics have



Sport England is widening its funding to "any organisation" providing results

been given only cursory glances, overall I feel Sport England should be commended for an ambitious plan.

I very much relish the challenge which lays ahead, do you?

Neil Cameron, Sport Works managing director



“Demographics have changed, society has changed and sport needs to understand that it has to change the offer for specific communities”

Arun Kang, CEO, Sporting Equals

Does British sport have a race problem? On the face of it, most people would probably say ‘no’. Anthony Joshua, Jessica Ennis-Hill, Amir Khan and Mo Farah are among the most celebrated and recognised athletes in the country, while nine out of the 23 players (39 per cent) in England’s Euro 2016 squad came from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds (BAME).

However, away from elite sport, other statistics tell a different story. According to equality body Sporting Equals, only three per cent of board members at national governing body (NGB) level are from ethnic minority backgrounds – compared to the 13 per cent national average – while the number of BAME individuals taking part in grassroots sport is proportionally lower than their white counterparts.

MATCHMAKING

To try and make headway on the former point, Sporting Equals is putting together a checklist which provides advice on ways to engage with people from diverse background, and how to advertise jobs to the widest spectrum of individuals. The document will be distributed to interested governing bodies in the autumn. The Birmingham-based organisation – headed up by chief executive Arun Kang – has been active in this space already, hosting a Leaderboard event in the House of Lords in 2014 which presented the damning findings around the number of BAME people in executive and board positions within NGBs.

The event will take place again later this year, and will be the second time Sporting Equals has held court in parliament in 2016 after staging an event in March to raise the awareness around the challenges faced

by BAME communities in the sport sector, organised in part by former sports minister Helen Grant and ex-England footballer Sol Campbell.

Talking to *Sports Management* Khan reveals that the upcoming event will be more of a “matchmaking” setting, in which BAME professionals – lawyers, medical professionals and accountants etc – who have an interest in becoming sport administrators will be introduced to “the appropriate sports bodies”. He does, however, admit that there are a number of



IMAGE © JULIEN BEHAL / PRESS ASSOCIATION IMAGES

Successful athletes from BAME backgrounds, such as Anthony Joshua, are valuable role models





challenges that need to be addressed to improve the diversity on the boards of NGBs, with extensive work going on alongside Sporting Equals' programme of networking and brokering events.

SUSTAINED APPROACH

Firstly, Kang explains that there is a need to "upskill" some potential candidates to foster a "better understanding of how the sports sector works", and that the organisation was exploring the possibility of creating a development-type training scheme which involved mentoring and shadowing within NGBs. He adds that Sporting Equals will be showcasing a number of such pilots during its autumn event.

Kang also states the need for a "more sustained approach" from NGBs in their quest to shake up their

Sporting Equals worked with West Bromwich Albion FC on getting a local Sikh community physically active

boards – something they will need to do to comply with the government's UK Sport Governance Code, which has board diversity at its heart.

One recommendation made by Sporting Equals is to make use of the number of "ethnic media outlets" in the UK to showcase positions and make the case for sport. He points to a "huge network of Chinese TV channels, Asian magazines and The Voice newspaper" as fertile ground for building a rapport with communities.

"A good example is the Islam Channel," says Kang. "It's always looking for content, and it would be a good idea for an organisation wanting, for example, Asian women to apply for board positions to go on one of the shows and be interviewed and advertise off the back of that.

"If they just advertise and expect people to come rushing to sport, they're not despite the fact that a lot of professional Asian women would love to get involved in sport. It has to be sustained.

"They can't just put one advert out and say 'we didn't get any interest', but that's the experience I've had with some organisations."

UNTAPPED MARKETS

Another key part of Sporting Equals' mission is to open doors to grassroots sport for more people from more backgrounds, helping organisations shift their way of thinking and introduce them to cultural sensitivities.

"Sport needs to understand that it has to change the offer for specific communities," says Kang. "Demographics have changed, society has changed."

Sporting Equals encouraged West Bromwich Albion Football Club to engage with a local Sikh temple with "30,000 footfall a week". Members of that community now regularly use the club's sports facilities, and take part in a number of other activities on a regular basis.

Kang makes the point that if sport can engage people in such large numbers, NGBs should be looking at the business case rather than just the moral case for reaching for ethnic communities.

"There are untapped commercial markets out there – if NGBs and organisations can engage with 30,000 BAME people in a Sikh temple, then I'd be surprised if local Asian businesses wouldn't want to be part of it," he says. "We're talking about billions of pounds worth of business that sport just hasn't engaged yet." ●



Sport must do more to attract people from ethnic minorities to take part



“This really has been like putting together a huge jigsaw puzzle”

Gerry Carver, *Harlow and Beyond*

An ambitious initiative, tracking the development of the UK’s sports and leisure centres over the past 60 years, will be completed soon, with the launch of a new publication, called *Harlow to K2 and Beyond*.

As the title suggests, the story will begin in Harlow – where the UK’s first public leisure centre opened in 1959 – and cover the decades leading up to the opening of the landmark K2 centre in Crawley in 2006.

Moving “beyond”, it will then focus on the new and refurbished centres, examining facilities which have been opened in the current decade.

The purpose of the project is to record the history of the foundation and development of centres and

provide lessons from the past six decades, in order to assist future policies and sports provision.

The idea was conceived by leisure industry veteran Gerry Carver. One of the founders of consultancy L&R International, Carver’s life in leisure spans six decades and has a strong operational grounding, thanks to a number of roles in the “front line” in his early days, as a centre manager and director of leisure.

Having started his career in teaching, alongside semi-professional football, Carver turned his hand to consultancy. His work ranged from central and local government projects – as well as the European Union – to those involving Premier League clubs. He also spent 12 years as an operational planning and governance advisor to the Millennium Commission and Heritage Lottery Fund, reviewing 70 major grant applications.

DOUBLE VISION

“The idea for *Harlow to K2 and Beyond* first came to me in 2013 when in discussion with another long-serving leisure professional, David Fisher,” Carver says. “David had first entered recreation management at Basingstoke Sports Centre in 1970, some two years before I joined Carlisle Sports Centre.

“Having been involved in the early days of the UK’s sports centres, we realised that we were on the pivotal point of six decades of sports centre history.

“*Harlow to K2 and Beyond* will provide a unique record of the foundation in the 1950s of the need for community sports centres, bolstered by the Wolfenden Report in 1960, and the enormous growth of such centres in the subsequent decades.

“We’ve set out to encompass the philosophies, places, people, politics, buildings and activities



Harlow Leisure Centre –the UK’s first public leisure facility





The landmark K2 centre in Crawley, which opened in 2006, will act as an end-point for the study

that have characterised UK sports centres from the beginning and got us to where we are today.”

LESSONS LEARNED

In explaining the breadth of the study, Carver adds that *Harlow to K2 and Beyond* will reflect and document places throughout the UK, stretching from “the Shetland Isles to Penzance”.

It will also outline the stories of the people and communities which have benefited from the centres, and the managers and directors who ran the facilities – starting with the late George Torkildsen, the legendary first UK community sports centre manager who took up his post at Harlow in January 1961.

“David Fisher and I were friends of George Torkildsen,” Carver says. “George was the first community sports centre manager in the country, the founding father of the subsequent recreation management profession and later a most esteemed sport and leisure consultant. I was privileged to have been a consultant on several of his major projects.

“I’m also in touch with some of the very first managers and directors, including Geoff Bott, who began his career in 1964 at the Leeds Athletic Institute and Denis Molyneux, another industry stalwart who first worked for the Sports Council in 1965. Their enthusiasm and support for the project has been extremely encouraging.”

An anecdote relating to Denis Molyneux is, according to Carver, emblematic of the work faced by him and his team compiling the record.

“Denis was a Birmingham University lecturer who became very important to the story of sports centres,” he says. “He was an early advocate of government support for sport and the development of sports centres. In 1962 Molyneux wrote a pamphlet in support of public funding for sport, which then opposition Labour MP Denis Howell famously waved in the air at the House of Commons, as part of his efforts to convince the Conservative government to set up a Sports Council.

“When Labour won the election in 1964, Howell was made the UK’s first sports minister and Molyneux found himself as deputy director of the freshly launched Sports Council. So that pamphlet is a crucial part of the UK’s sporting history and significant to our story, but one which we had failed to find anywhere.

“Molyneux is now 90 and lives in Australia. I spoke to him as part of this project and he managed to send us an original copy of the pamphlet. So this really has been like putting together a huge jigsaw puzzle.”

The record will be finished by the end of this year and a publication date will be set for early 2017.

“We hope that all the hard work that has gone into the record will be valued by past, present and future managers and directors,” Carver says. ●





“It would be a sad state of affairs if we developed our disability programme over the next 20 years and there was no one else in the world to share it with”

Patrick Bonner, foundation and disability manager, British Gymnastics

“I’ve been an acrobatic gymnast since the age of six,” explains Patrick Bonner, British Gymnastics foundation and disability manager. “My mum took me along to a leisure centre when my sister was doing ballet and she told me to go around the centre until I found something I liked.

“I remember going around and there were people playing five-a-side and swimming. Then, I walked past this room and I saw kids running up onto springboards and diving onto a mat and rolling. They were flying, and that is exactly what I wanted to do.”

Bonner’s enthusiasm for his sport is infectious, and he has spent the best part of 20 years spreading that feeling around as a coach and now as disability manager at British Gymnastics, where the governing body’s *I’m In* initiative has attracted 1,500 members.

The Sport England-funded scheme was developed three years ago as a way to make the sport more

inclusive, and now more than 200 affiliated clubs offer gymnastics to people with physical or learning disabilities with specialist coaching support.

The scheme is now on the cusp of evolving, with British Gymnastics “completely revising” its disability gymnastics module and providing recognised coaches with a “new disability gymnastics education model”.

ADAPTING FOR DIFFERENT NEEDS

Developed in collaboration with the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) and Scottish Disability Sport, the model includes three hours of theory, featuring work on disability equality legislation and developing adapted practice for different impairments. This is supplemented by three hours of practical work in scenario-based sessions.

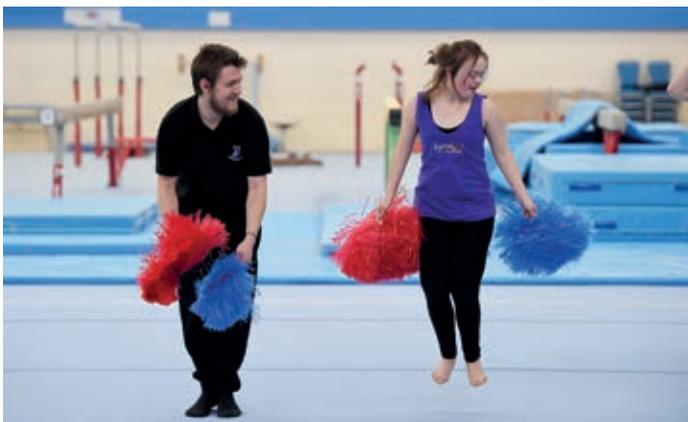
The model was developed by Bonner and his team, with the former drawing on his experience as a gymnastic coach in special schools and with County Sports Partnerships in the North-East.

Bonner explains that his strength as a coach lies in adaptation – an essential ingredient for teaching groups with a variety of different needs – and this is reflected in the *I’m In* scheme.

“You might have a group of gymnasts doing vaulting practice,” he says. “One of the gymnasts has a visual impairment and finds it difficult to locate the springboard visually, so how is the coach going to successfully integrate that gymnast?”

“It’s about practice; try some adaptations. A coach might use tactile matting so the gymnast can better orientate themselves. It’s about thinking about what kind of impairment they have.”

When *I’m In* was launched, says Bonner, there were



British Gymnastics is “completely revising” its disability coaching modules





A step up in standards and a more gymnastics-focused approach has resulted in impressive retention figures

“around 136 clubs” that reported being inclusive and having a disability programme, but there was very little in the way of measurement. Now, the 200 affiliate clubs making that claim have to adhere to prerequisites, including an “inclusive club development toolkit” and a facility checklist.

The step up in standards and “gymnastics-focused” approach has resulted in impressive retention figures. As well as the *I’m In* scheme, British Gymnastics has launched a number of taster days with 850 people participating to date. Of those, a quarter have gone on to become regularly attending members of clubs.

Bonner tells *Sports Management*: “The prerequisite to that retention is having the right coaches who are properly trained, properly educated and know how to differentiate properly and be absolutely centred to the gymnasts. That’s the bedrock of retaining people.

“I also genuinely believe that the versatility of gymnastics compared with other sports is unparalleled. We have competitive pathways, disciplines for strength and power, elegance and grace, or if people just want to be social.”

TAKING IT ABROAD

The success of the scheme has seen British Gymnastics take its knowledge abroad and design

similar participation initiatives for other nations. Bonner and his team went to South Africa last year to consolidate a relationship with its own governing body which has been ongoing for more than a decade.

The basis of the visit was for British Gymnastics to share its education programme and increase the South African Gymnastics Federation’s expertise when it comes to adapting the sport for disabled people. Bonner and his team of coaches – who had a combined total of 60 years experience teaching gymnastics – tutored coaches at affiliated clubs and the special school network of coaches.

“Their clubs are far less well-equipped in terms of facilities, so we looked at our model and adapted it to their circumstances,” he explains.

“You can’t replicate someone else’s model verbatim, so we took the time to understand how their club network is set up and what the coaches require.”

Next up for Bonner is Brazil, where British Gymnastics is planning to share its best practice with a nation currently basking in the glow of the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

“It would be a sad state of affairs if we forced ahead and developed our programme over the next 20 years and beyond, and there was no one else in the world to share that programme with,” he says. ●



EVENT BIDDING

Liverpool assesses Commonwealth bid

Liverpool will launch an assessment of its infrastructure – including all its sporting facilities – as the city’s bid to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games gathers pace.

After mooting a bid earlier this year, Liverpool mayor Joe Anderson is now in the process of appointing a project director who will oversee the bid and hire a firm to carry out a feasibility study.

The study will include a detailed look at infrastructure compared to the requirements set out by the

“The bid will be the catalyst for regeneration, investment and raising the profile of sport”



▲ Anderson said hosting the Games would stimulate a large regeneration project

Commonwealth Games Federation. A financial appraisal will also be carried out, in which the cost of hosting the Games and the potential economic impact will be assessed.

Anderson said the bid would be the “catalyst for regeneration, investment and raising the profile of sport”.

Talking to *Sports Management* earlier this year, Anderson said Liverpool had all the “infrastructure needed to bring people in” highlighting its international airport, hotel capacity and sporting infrastructure, which includes the Wavertree Sports Park and football grounds.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=Z8W4H>

One-third of British sports service exports purchased from within the EU

A third of all British sport service exports are purchased by organisations in the European Union – highlighting the importance of the common market to the sector amid the nation’s Brexit decision.

According to figures published by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), British firms made £601m (US\$785.5m, €708.3m) – 33.5 per cent – of export revenue as a result of transactions with partners in the trading bloc.

While this was outweighed by the £1.2bn (US\$1.6bn, €1.4bn) exported

to the rest of the world, deals made with EU businesses generated the most amount of income compared with other continental blocs, with £573m (US\$748.7m, €675.3m) and £355m (US\$463.9m, €418m) of services exported to Asia and the US respectively.

While the status quo around trade and free movement will remain as Britain attempts to divorce itself from the EU following the 23 June vote, what the landscape will look like thereafter remains a mystery.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=f8W7B>



▲ UK exports services like coaching





▲ Crouch took part in various events and discussions while attending Rio 2016

Crouch wants diversity improvement

Tracey Crouch has used her visit to Rio de Janeiro for the Olympic Games to discuss the employment prospects of females in the sport industry with fellow ministers of sport.

The Chatham and Aylesford MP took part in a Women in Sport session with ministers from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Ireland to share ideas on “what more can be done to improve the recruitment, retention and promotion of more female leaders in the sports sector”.

“Improving diversity in sport, so that it better reflects society, is an important issue to me and one that I am looking to make progress on,” said Crouch via

“Improving diversity in sport, so that it better reflects society, is an important issue to me that I want to make progress on”

her blog on the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) website.

Diversity on sport governing body boards is one of the cornerstones of the government’s *Sporting Future* strategy, with a target of making 25 per cent of those occupied in board positions female.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=w5m8V>

Archery GB appoints CEO to implement its new strategy

Neil Armitage has been chosen ahead of several dozen applicants to lead Archery GB through its latest strategic plan as chief executive.

Armitage was appointed as interim CEO last December, taking



▲ New chief executive Neil Armitage

over the position vacated by David Sherratt, and has subsequently landed the role on a permanent basis, holding off competition from 41 other applicants.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=x2Z8p>

NEWS IN BRIEF



▲ Paker joined the ASA in 2014

Paker exits Amateur Swimming Association

Adam Paker, the CEO of the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA), has left the organisation.

Paker joined the national governing body in autumn 2014 after spending three years with Commonwealth Games England.

ASA chair Mike Farrar said that Paker had left a “strong legacy”, but the ASA would not comment further on the nature of his departure.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=a1X1j>

West Brom acquired by Chinese entrepreneur

Premier League football club West Bromwich Albion (WBA) has become the latest West Midlands team to be acquired a Chinese investor after Aston Villa and Wolves.

Guochuan Lai’s Yunyi Guokai Sports Development Limited has bought 88 per cent of the club’s shares from the outgoing owner and chair Jeremy Peace.

The entrepreneur made his fortune with the development of Palm, a landscape design and construction company dedicated to eco-town development in China.

It is listed on the Shenzhen Stock Exchange with a value of £1.8bn (US\$2.4bn, €2.1bn).

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=X7b5Q>



PARTNERSHIPS

Sport England aids Manchester plan

NHS and public sector organisations in Greater Manchester have signed a strategic partnership with Sport England in a bid to reduce levels of inactivity and improve health in the region.

The grassroots sport quango will work with 37 NHS organisations and councils, which look after the 2.8m people that live in the area.

As part of the agreement, Sport England will provide strategic advice, share evidence, facilitate connections with third parties, and support

“Greater Manchester’s devolution agreement makes them a powerful partner”



▲ The quango will provide strategic advice and evidence to boost physical activity

innovative pilots and evaluations designed to improve physical activity.

According to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the area’s appetite for physical activity is “significantly worse” than the national average, with 65 per cent of adults and 28 per cent of children deemed overweight or obese.

“Greater Manchester’s devolution agreement with the government, including responsibility for health and social care, makes them a powerful partner for Sport England, and I am looking forward to working with them,” said Sport England chief executive Jennie Price.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=T7c6t>

London Sport devises ‘House of Sport’ plan

Organisations in the sector are being invited to move into the ‘House of Sport’ – a London-based office designed to facilitate collaboration and efficiencies.

The concept – devised by London Sport – will see several sport and physical activity organisations work under the same roof across three floors of an office in the capital’s Dover Street.

London Marathon has provided the space, which will be run as a not-for-profit venture, with money generated from rental income being reinvested



▲ London Sport CEO Peter Fitzboydon

in services which help the organisations “promote increased levels of physical activity and wellbeing”.

Around 150-200 people will be able to occupy the office at any one time. The facility will provide shared

networking space and “collaborative hot desking”.

Organisations that wish to apply for space in the facility must fill out an expression of interest form ahead of the office’s official opening in early 2017.

Peter Fitzboydon, London Sport CEO, said the initiative was a “landmark opportunity” for firms in the sector to collaborate and promote physical activity in London.

London Sport has its own objective of getting 1m more Londoners physically active by 2020.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=i4X7z>



▲ Irish fans at the last World Cup

Ireland’s €1.5m war chest for Rugby World Cup bid

A €1.5m (£1.3m, US\$1.7m) fund has been earmarked by the governments of Ireland and Northern Ireland as the nations prepare to bid for the 2023 Rugby World Cup.

The Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU) has also allocated money towards the fund for the 2015-2017 bidding period.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=z1j0B>

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Turn over: Why has Scottish Rugby scrapped its under-20 programme?



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FUNDING

British Cycling's £10m investment

British Cycling has ploughed £10m (US\$13.3m, €11.8m) of Sport England money into the development of purpose-built cycling facilities over the last seven years.

The national governing body's outlay attracted a further £60m (US\$79.7m, €71.1m) investment, which has helped fund the building of 24 facilities and the improvement work for seven other venues – four specialist BMX venues, the indoor velodrome at Derby Arena and the Herne Hill velodrome.

“There is still work to do to create a comprehensive network of facilities”



▲ The Sport England funding has contributed to the building of 24 new tracks

The number of closed road circuits has also risen from 14 to 25, allowing cyclists to enjoy traffic-free environments.

British Cycling's investment surpassed the £10m mark after the organisation pledged money towards a £5m (US\$6.6m, €5.9m) cycling development at the University of Leeds.

Ian Drake, chief executive of British Cycling, said there was “still work to do in order to create a comprehensive network of facilities”, but expressed his gratitude to the “local councils, authorities and organisations which have recognised the benefits of building new facilities”.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=V8b9k>

Sport England makes the case for School Games – with recommendations

The effectiveness of the School Games has been backed by Sport England following a six-month review – although several recommendations have been made to “future-proof” the initiative.

Sport England's report concluded that the School Games is “well placed to make a strong contribution” in delivering the outcomes of the government's *Sporting Future* strategy, and quango's own blueprint, *Towards an Active Nation*.

However, to “maximise its contribution”, Sport England has made 17 recommendations such



▲ School Games funding will be maintained until 2020

as updating the School Games mission to measure its impact against *Sporting Future's* desired outcomes.

School Games was launched in 2010 as part of

the government's attempt to generate a legacy from hosting the London 2012 Games by “reviving competition sport in schools”. The government

is now keen to use sport as a catalyst for improved mental and physical health, as well as social inclusion.

The report said that it was important that School Games increased the “number and diversity of children taking part”, with more effort and resources devoted to students who are not physically active.

Sport England has recommended that delivery agent, Youth Sport Trust, and School Games Organisers (SGO) create more interest using social media.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=i4d9l>





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ELITE SPORT

‘The best high performance system in the world’

Team GB’s medal achievements during Rio 2016 demonstrates the superior training and preparation, says UK Sport

Team GB’s record-breaking exploits at the Rio 2016 Olympics demonstrates the nation’s place as “best high performance system in the world”, according to UK Sport.

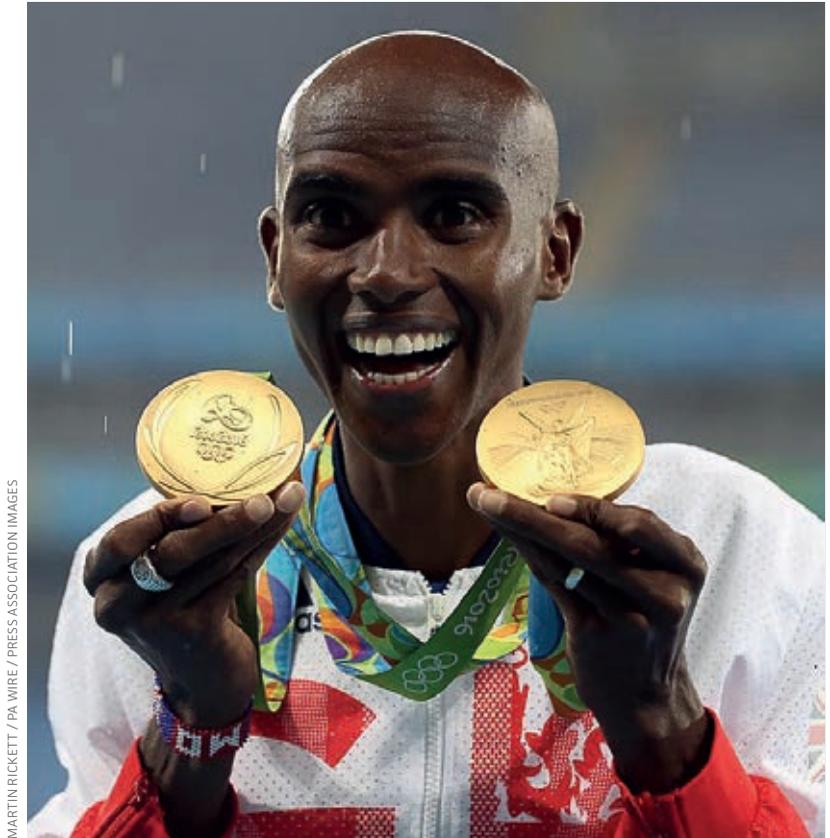
Great Britain became the first country to surpass the number of medals it achieved at its home Games in a subsequent Olympics, with its Rio 2016 haul of 67 shading the 65 that athletes won during the London 2012 Games.

The team came second in the overall medals table with 27 gold, 23 silver and 17 bronze, finishing second only to the USA and beating China.

Simon Timson, UK Sport’s director of performance, said there was “no doubt” that Britain had the best system in the world when it came to training and preparing athletes – backed by £274m (US\$356.6m, €316.7m) of government and National Lottery funding.

“While this wouldn’t be possible without consistency of funding, I see on a day to day basis the exceptional work of the people behind our athletes, and they are truly world leading,” he added.

Medals were won across 19 sports – more than at London 2012 (17) – meaning that a number of sports matched or surpassed their medal targets. Cycling, gymnastics, swimming and diving beat their maximum target goals, while badminton won an unexpected bronze.



▲ Mo Farah’s two gold medals contributed to the overall haul of 67

“While this wouldn’t be possible without the consistency of funding, I see the exceptional work of people behind the athletes”

However, rowing – which counted on the largest grant over the 2013-17 cycle (£32.6m, US\$42.4m, €37.7m) – failed to hit its minimum target of five medals.

UK Sport chair Rod Carr credited the government for its sustained investment. Speaking to the BBC following the Games, he said the elite sport funding quango would need to make some funding decisions going into the next cycle ahead of Tokyo 2020, based on its ‘no compromise’ system which focuses money on sports that have the best chance of medalling at Olympic Games.

A record number of female medallist (59) was also something for UK Sport to cheer, with chief executive Liz Nicholl saying that she hoped the feat would make “young girls feel empowered to make sport a fundamental part of their lives”.

“I congratulate everybody involved in this herculean effort – the athletes, coaches, physios, nutritionists and all at UK Sport and the British Olympic Association,” said sports minister Tracey Crouch.

“Rio 2016 has built on the legacy of London 2012, surpassing our achievements of four years ago.”

However, similar success in Tokyo in four years time may be challenging to achieve. While the government committed more money to UK Sport during last year’s autumn statement, new chancellor Philip Hammond may have different ideas to George Osborne. Timson has also suggested other nations are catching up with Britain’s performance system.

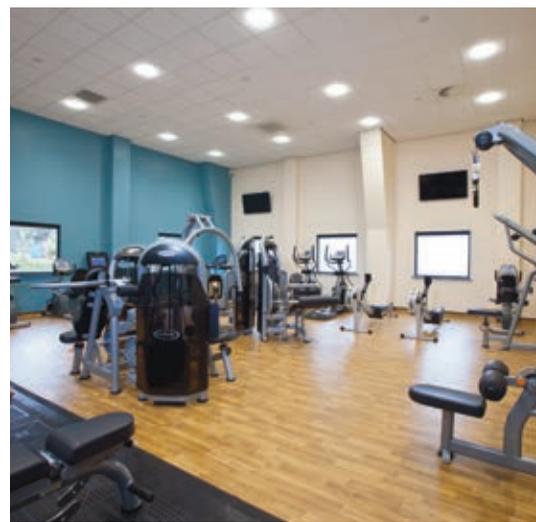
Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=D5D8J>



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EVENT BIDDING

UCI road race gets £24m state backing

The government has followed through with its commitment to bid for the UCI Road World Championships – and has set aside £24m (US\$31.5m, €27.8m) to host it in Yorkshire.

The proposal was first revealed in last year's Autumn Statement as part of chancellor George Osborne's Northern Powerhouse strategy, in which rugby league was also pledged financial backing and a 2021 World Cup bid.

Welcome to Yorkshire put the bid together in association with British

“We can promise a gruelling but spectacular range of routes and huge crowds”



RENA SCHILD / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

▲ The road race will take in all parts of Yorkshire if the bid is successful

Cycling and UK Sport, although the Treasury has “guaranteed to underwrite the full cost of the event”.

North, south, east and west Yorkshire will all feature in the race route, and the competition will take place over three days with the full road race and races for under-18s and under-23s.

The county hosted a stage of the Tour de France in 2014, generating millions of pounds for the local economy.

“We can promise a gruelling but spectacular range of routes and huge crowds,” said Sir Gary Verity, Welcome to Yorkshire chief executive.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=n8Z2K>

Ex-Olympic minister: Coalition government ‘destroyed’ 2012 legacy

The coalition government “destroyed” the chance of creating a participation legacy following London 2012 after scrapping ring-fenced school sport funding, according to the former Olympics minister.

Tessa Jowell said that the government elected in 2010 was “misguided”, and that participation had declined as a result of the move.

“What the coalition government did was really destroy the School Sport Programme that was on course to seeing the majority of children playing at least five hours of sport a week, choosing from 14 different sports, with



▲ Jowell was Olympic minister between 2005 and 2010

renewed facilities and proper coaching,” said Jowell.

“In 2002 25 per cent of children were playing two hours of sport a week. By the time we got to 2010 and

the change of government, 60 per cent of children were playing five hours or more, with 98 per cent playing two hours of sport. That was the infrastructure to drive this

generation through sport and the coalition government dismantled it.”

Jowell also called for funds to be ring-fenced specifically for school sport “and beyond”.

Statistics published in the DCMS's *Taking Part* report in July revealed that 69.8 per cent of 5-10 year-olds had taken part in sport in the week before the data was captured compared to 77.8 per cent in 2010. However, 90.1 per cent of 11-15 year-olds had participated in 2016 compared in 88 per cent in 2010.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=n4J3q>



Turn over: Team GB's successful Rio campaigning down to ‘best system in the world’

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POLICY

CSPs leadership needs improvement

A number of County Sports Partnerships (CSP) will have to improve their “strategic leadership” capabilities and work with a wider range of partners to fulfil the government’s strategy for sport, according to Andy Reed.

A review published by the Sports Think Tank director and former Labour MP revealed that while leadership was strong among several CSPs, others “failed to provide strategic leadership in their locality” and need to be more “robustly” held to account by Sport

“There is a clear role for a network of local partnerships and CSPs can be at the heart”



▲ Reed oversaw the review as part of the government’s sport strategy

England, from whom they receive the majority of their funding.

Strategic leadership and working with organisations from the health, private and charitable sectors will be crucial in achieving the desired outcomes of the government’s *Sporting Future* blueprint.

Reed said there was a “clear role” for CSPs in the delivery of the strategy, although he suggested that Sport England would have to create a “core specification of services” for the CSP to be measured against when it came to accountability and funding decisions.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=W3y4I>

Duty of Care Group to submit October report

The group that has been tasked with shaping the government’s Duty of Care strategy will submit its recommendations to sports minister Tracey Crouch in the autumn.

Chaired by Paralympic gold medallist Tanni Grey-Thompson, the Duty of Care Working Group is examining issues impacting both grassroots and elite sport, and will deliver its findings in late-September/early-October following a number of meetings.

Education and support for athletes,



DAVE HOWARTH / PRESS ASSOCIATION IMAGES

▲ Working Group member Jason Roberts

the prevention and management of medical issues, mental health support, and considering the needs of women, ethnic minorities and the disabled are among the themes that have been discussed – and will also

be addressed in the final report document.

Shaping the recommendations alongside Grey-Thompson in the working group are: British rowing chair Annamarie Phelps, John Amaechi, Baroness Sue Campbell, Mind CEO Paul Farmer, Anne Tiivas, former Premier League footballer Jason Roberts and ex-rugby union player Brian Moore.

Stakeholders had been able to submit their own recommendations for the group to consider as part of a consultation in April.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=y3S3f>



▲ Wasps CEO David Armstrong

Ricoh Arena renames hall in Ericsson tech deal

Wasps’ new netball team will play its home games in the renamed Ericsson Exhibition Hall as a result of a “seven-figure” deal between the Ricoh Arena and the technology giant.

As part of the deal, Ericsson will improve the performance of wifi coverage, both in the indoor arena and the outdoor stadium.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=r8U6L>



Turn over: Who thinks the coalition government destroyed the London 2012 legacy?

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Powerleague eyes growth in Holland

British five-a-side football operator Powerleague has established its second facility in the Netherlands as it eyes growth outside the UK.

The new Powerleague site has been developed in Utrecht's Sportpark Oud Zuilen – a multi-sport facility just north of the city centre. Land has been leased by the city council, with Powerleague investing in two five-a-side pitches, changing rooms and a bar area.

In May, the company unveiled plans to launch 13 new centres in the UK,

“We're keen to continue expanding across Europe and are looking at other sites”



▲ CEO Rupert Campbell is keen on expanding further into continental Europe

with £40m (US\$52.5m, €47.2m) of investment from owner Patron Capital. The Utrecht facility is separate to that particular expansion plan.

Powerleague launched its Amsterdam operation in 2015. According to the operator the pitches are “at full capacity during peak time”.

Rupert Campbell, chief executive of Powerleague, said these statistics demonstrated a “strong market for our offer in the Netherlands”.

“We're keen to continue expanding across Europe and are currently looking at other potential sites,” he added.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=0x7n5>

AECOM to transform LA facilities as part of the city's Olympic bid

AECOM has taken on the project of renovating Los Angeles' Memorial Coliseum as part of the city's bid to host the 2024 Olympic Games.

The US\$270m (£205.1m, €241.7m) revamp will be funded by the University of Southern California, which uses the stadium as the home ground for its Trojans American football team.

Sports, training and media facilities will be upgraded, while the track surface which will be used for the event can be removed following the Paralympic Games to make the stadium suitable for football. The Memorial Coliseum was the venue

for the opening and closing ceremonies for the 1932 and 1984 Olympic Games, and is part of the Downtown Cluster – that also includes the Staples Center, Microsoft Theatre and LA Football Club's stadium, Exposition Park – which is being proposed as part of the bid.

In addition, AECOM will “transform” USC's Dedeaux Field, which is home to the university's baseball team, into a purpose-built open-air swimming facility, making up the LA 2024 aquatics venue.

The city is competing with Budapest, Paris and Rome to host the Games.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=o8LOR>



▲ LA 2024 chair Casey Wasserman

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▲ Beijing 2022's Wang Hui

Beijing transforms 2008 venues for 2022 Games

Beijing is preparing to transform the facilities it built for the 2008 Olympic Games to accommodate other sports ahead of the 2022 Winter Olympics.

China's capital city will host the Games in six years time, and organisers are planning to reuse venues created for the 2008 showpiece rather than build more expensive facilities.

The Water Cube Aquatics Centre – which has been converted into a public water park since the Games – will be renovated to host the curling events, while the National Indoor Stadium, designed by the Beijing Institute of Technology Design, will stage the Olympic ice hockey tournament.

Wang Hui, Beijing 2022's spokesperson, said that the 2008 Games left a "profound legacy" with "facilities and assets which have been operating effectively since".

Beijing spent around US\$2bn (£1.5bn, €1.8bn) on 31 new venues for 2008, and Hui said the reuse of these facilities was "sustainable" and "significantly cut the cost" of hosting the 2022 Winter Games.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=R4z6e>



ANNA GOWTHORPE / PARCHIVE / PRESS ASSOCIATION IMAGES

▲ The US made its first appearance at the Rugby League World Cup in 2013

US bids for the 2021 Rugby League WC

The US has thrown its hat into the ring to host the 2021 Rugby League World Cup – putting England's bid and the promise of infrastructure funding in jeopardy.

Sports marketing agency Moore Sports International has submitted the bid on behalf of the nation – a bid that had been welcomed by the boss of the Rugby League International Federation (RLIF).

Chief executive David Collier said the RLIF was "working diligently" to have rugby league "recognised as one of the world's leading sports". He added that the bid from the US "affirmed" the governing body's belief that "greater opportunities lie ahead".

"The opportunity for player development and the growth of rugby league in the US is second to none"

If the US wins the bid, it will represent a real chance to grow the sport, according to Matt Elliott, who guided the US team to the 2013 Rugby League World Cup.

"The opportunity for player development and the growth of rugby league in the US is second to none," he said.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=5Z7Y9>

AS Roma appoints facility manager for yet-to-be-built stadium

Italian football club AS Roma has partnered with a US-based facilities management company – despite the fact that construction won't begin on its new stadium until next year. AEG Facilities has



▲ AS Roma president James Pallotta

signed a "long-term agreement" with the Serie A team to manage all of its event programming, such as vendor venue services and sustainability consulting.

Read more: <http://lei.sr?a=T5A5n>

ALESSANDRA TARANTINO / AP / PRESS ASSOCIATION IMAGES



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Working together for a brighter future



Tim Hollingsworth

With the Rio Paralympics and the launch of an ambitious new strategy, 2016 is shaping up to be a busy year for the British Paralympic Association. The chief executive talks to Matthew Campelli about what lies ahead

London 2012 was a watershed moment for the Paralympics and para-sport in general. While the trajectory of the Games in terms of quality and interest had been on an upward curve for some years, the impact of London 2012 set an entirely new benchmark for disability sport.

Shortly after the conclusion of the London Games, International Paralympic Committee (IPC) board member Miguel Sagarra commented that 2012 was a “landmark year”, adding: “Never has the profile of sport for persons with a disability and its athletes been higher.”

In Britain, public service broadcaster Channel 4 recorded some of its biggest audiences in over a decade after winning the exclusive rights to air the Games. The

interest even cajoled US broadcaster NBC to acquire the future rights to the Paralympics after the London 2012 Games were ignored by America altogether.

The movement is undoubtedly growing, and the quality of performance at the upcoming Rio Games is expected to surpass London four years ago.

READY FOR RIO

Team GB, according to UK Sport, should be one of the nations looking to step up a level, despite bagging an impressive 120 medals in London. The elite sport quango has set an upper target of 165, although somewhere between the two numbers is more feasible.

Overseeing the team’s preparations as they set their focus on making history

Hollingsworth became part of Paralympics GB in 2011. Here with Ellie Simmonds



IMAGE © ANNA GOWTHROPE / PRESS ASSOCIATION



IMAGE © STEVEN PASTON / PRESS ASSOCIATION

Wheelchair athlete Hannah Cockroft is among the Paralympians to have become household names

is Tim Hollingsworth, CEO of the British Paralympic Association (BPA) – the organisation which selects and prepares Team GB athletes for the Games.

While Hollingsworth experienced the joy that was London 2012 after joining the previous year, he is in the process of treading new ground, leading a team of 258 athletes to an away Games for the first time.

However, he appears calm and utterly focused on the task at hand. “I’d say we’re feeling confident in our preparation, but there’s not a complacency about the outcome,” he tells *Sports Management*.

“I’m choosing my words carefully, but we’ve never done more to prepare for an away Games than we have with the whole Paralympic set-up, including the BPA, the national governing bodies (NGBs), UK Sport or the commercial organisations involved.

“I think it’s unquestionable that the increase in funding provided by UK Sport for the Rio cycle has

driven the NGBs to have a greater sense of their ability to professionalise and run world-class training programmes for their athletes – and we’ve overlaid that with a far greater focus on team preparation.”

Hollingsworth has his feet on the ground, however. He knows sport is “an unknown” and that “you can never be certain of success”, particularly when the standards of Paralympic sport are rising rapidly and more athletes are becoming professional.

“To be complacent would be a folly,” he adds matter-of-factly, “because you simply cannot take anything for granted. I could sit here and say it would be extraordinary if Hannah Cockroft was beaten over 100m in her class – and I think it would be – but you still can’t say for certain that it won’t happen.”

The rise in standards of British Paralympic sport is part of a wider surge in quality following the injection of millions of pounds of public and National Lottery money following the poor showing at the Atlanta 1996 Games. Funding created a world-class sporting system which elevated Team GB and Paralympics GB to third place at London 2012. UK Sport director of performance Simon Timson has previously stated that the success is not going unnoticed, and that “copycat systems are springing up all over the world”. A similar thing is happening in the world of preparation.

We’ve never done more to prepare for an away Games than we have with the whole Paralympic set-up



34 INTERVIEW

Hollingsworth says: "I think the British Olympic Association (BOA) would reflect that as well. We have a proud sense of our place in the Paralympic movement. We are its birthplace, and we had the ability through the London Games to get a step ahead with our system and funding.

"We are looked at by other Paralympic nations – those looking to replicate our approach," he adds. "It's an interesting one because actually 98 per cent of me is delighted, as I want the Paralympic movement to be professional. Two per cent of me wishes they weren't because we want to win all the medals."

The rapid progress of other nations has forced the BPA to step it up a notch, which is reflected in the aims of its latest five-year strategy *Inspiring Excellence*, which was published in July 2016.

One of the five desired outcomes was to refine the organisation's 'best prepared' approach to Paralympic events, with an emphasis on developing an "optimal Games preparation strategy" to help athletes perform at their peak when it matters most.

WIDER BENEFITS

While Hollingsworth drives home the point about giving athletes the best chance of picking up medals, he's keen to mention the benefits to wider society.

"The performances put the Paralympics at the vanguard of a more positive and inclusive society and challenge perceptions about disability," he says.



Above: Jonnie Peacock will return to Paralympic action at Rio this month to defend his 100m T44 title

"It creates a positive agenda more than any other competition." When the former UK Sport executive was handed the role five years ago, he spoke of the organisation and the 2012 Paralympics as being the catalysts in driving better quality facilities, coaching and opportunities for disabled athletes, despite not being funded to take on those responsibilities.

"What we're trying to do is create impetus through excellence, and that is where the virtuous circle in sport comes from, where the more success you have at the top drives people to participate, which creates the next generation of athletes," he explains.

"By raising the profile of the Paralympics we can create within government, funding agencies, societies, communities and local authorities a more receptive audience, and have them thinking about whether or not they're delivering at that level."

To crystallise his point, Hollingsworth highlights the increased opportunities and facilities being provided by disability-specific sports clubs over the last four years, with wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby



Left: Dame Sarah Storey, Britain's most successful Paralympian of the modern era, will take part in her seventh Paralympics at Rio 2016



The government understands the Paralympics is part of mainstream sporting excellence in this country

and boccia all coming to the fore. However, the chief executive concedes there is “still some way to go” in terms of physical accessibility within mainstream sporting infrastructure, and more worryingly, a “lack of cumulative evidence” to suggest a change in perception at mainstream sports clubs for disabled participants.

GETTING GOVERNMENT ONSIDE

Looking to the future, Hollingsworth is confident that the legacy of London will improve the landscape in that respect, and he’s heartened by the publication of the government’s new sport strategy, which puts the engagement and participation of inactive individuals – such as disabled people – at the very heart of its future outcomes and priorities.

While *Sporting Future* appears to be clear in its ambition of making sure sport has a genuine social impact, the BPA’s strategy had earmarked one of its key pillars as “consistently demonstrating the positive impact of para-sport to governments”. But following the overwhelming success of the elite

Paralympics GB has set itself an ambitious medal target of 160 for the Rio Games

athletes during London 2012, and proven health and social benefits at grassroots level since, hasn’t the case already been emphatically made?

“Government is a permanent business of reinforcement,” says Hollingsworth. “You can’t simply assume – circumstances change.

“One of the things you have to do, first of all, is build a reputation for credibility when seeking to influence government policy on key issues.

“We’ve shown that we’re able to do that. I think that’s definitely happened over the last four years – in fact, since we won the bid in 2005.

“The government sees the Paralympics as part of mainstream sporting excellence in this country.”

To illustrate his point, he reveals that secretary of state for disabled people Penny Mordaunt will be joining sports minister Tracey Crouch at the Games in Rio, partially demonstrating the government’s cross-departmental approach to sport and physical activity.

So who, according to Hollingsworth, should Crouch, Mordaunt and the millions of other viewers, be looking out for as potential medal hopefuls

“We won medals in 13 sports in London, and if I have to make one confident prediction I think if things go according to plan we’ll have more medals across more sports,” he says. “The target is one more than 120 so, to be frank, everyone has to deliver.” ●

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Rio success is masking underlying issues

The medals may have come thick and fast, but sport needs to coordinate itself better to safeguard its future

As the warm glow of our success at the Olympics starts to mellow into the longer autumn evenings, it does feel as though we've lived through the most extraordinary summer for sport and sports politics.

Starting in June with Brexit, and the quick succession of our new PM and her cabinet, followed by the Olympics and Paralympics, it has been easy to forget the day-to-day reality that shapes our local communities and the sport and physical activity agenda we all aspire to deliver.

The warm glow created by our amazing Rio success has led to many from outside the sector assuming all is well if Team GB can come second in the medals table ahead of China. Yet many commentators and practitioners are keenly aware that of course there is still work to be done.

There has always been one ask from the sports lobby – and that is for a joined up approach from government in its sport and physical activity strategy and inter-departmental working inside government. This is much tougher to achieve than many believe, but I now worry that Rio success masks a series of tough underlying issues which could impact on long-term success.

THE ISSUES

The long awaited **obesity strategy** was launched during the recess and in the middle of the Olympics in Rio. This timing smacks of burying bad news. The strategy has been universally underwhelming and seen as a missed opportunity.

In my June column I said I was surprised by the interventionist tone taken on the Sugar Levy and by George Osborne's strategy in the Budget.

Our new PM signalled her intention early on – by sacking Osborne – that it won't be business as usual and the watered down strategy is our first sight of what a May government might look like.

Elsewhere, the sports system needs to offer **better coordination** – from early years physical literacy, and fun experience of sport, to a competitive structure and decent levels of PE which extend through Key Stage 4.



Change is needed to create a community, school and elite legacy. All are dependent on each other

My CSP review found very few people committed to the delivery of excellence in primary school PE and sport.

A PE teacher friend told me recently his hours have been cut and he'll be teaching information and communication technologies for half of his time this year.

This kind of uncoordinated and unstructured approach doesn't create a solid foundation – especially if the amount of investment is to be doubled in 2018 by the Sugar Levy.

In **local communities**, facilities and clubs will 'struggle on' this winter against a backdrop of further local government cuts. These may not actually be in sport, but youth service cuts are putting a strain on other areas of public expenditure.

Like cutting sports spending, these are false economies and mean other parts of society have to pick up the pieces.

So we should celebrate our elite Rio success for what it was – investment in a system to deliver gold medals – but the challenge ahead will be to use this inspiration to garner support in Whitehall for the changes needed to create a proper school, community facilities and elite legacy. All are dependent on each other. ●



IMAGE © JULIEN BEHAL / PRESS ASSOCIATION

Investment in medals is masking problems in school and community sports provision

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Governing for prosperity

We need to make sure we get governance right at all levels to ensure our success, says Sport & Recreation Alliance CEO Emma Boggis

Many things contribute to Team GB and Paralympics GB performing at their very best – investment from UK Sport, the National Lottery and the exchequer and the hard work of the athletes.

As we've heard many of them say over the last few weeks, the athletes also recognise the support they get from their support teams – whether it's their individual coaches, national governing bodies or organisations like the British Olympic Association, British Paralympic Association and national institutes of sport.

All these organisations need to be well led in order to be effective and there's an important development coming up that will seek to improve the leadership of the sport and recreation sector.

The government's new sports strategy, *Sporting Future*, set out the intention to

introduce a UK Sports Governance Code, and this is due to be released this autumn.

We've been leading on improving the standards of governance for sports organisations for years, with our *Voluntary Code of Good Governance* launched in 2011 and refreshed in 2014, so we don't need to be convinced of the subject's importance.

To coincide with the release of the UK Sports Governance Code, we'll be exploring what the challenges and opportunities are around embedding good governance in a sports organisation. Our *Governance and Workforce Month*, launching at the beginning of October, will feature a series of blogs and articles to provide our members with expertise and guidance on good governance. We've also teamed up with the Governance Institute (ICSA) to offer a qualification to equip individuals with the knowledge



and skills around sports governance, so they can start to champion the topic and take ownership of driving changes to governance from within.

These kind of activities are all part of our drive to help the sector navigate its way through a changing social and political landscape. In May 2015, the SRA launched its *Fit for the Future* programme of work, designed to identify and consider the opportunities and challenges facing the sector and how we can work together to make sure sport and recreation thrives.

The release of the government's

The government is introducing a UK Sports Governance Code this autumn

strategy and Sport England's *Towards an Active Nation* report, published earlier this year, gave us more information about these opportunities and signalled a significant shift in how the value of sport and recreation is measured, marking a very clear departure from simply equating success with participation.

With these shifts comes inevitable change, and at our Leadership Convention in November we'll be looking at how to implement change within the sector.

It's an exciting time to be involved in the sport and recreation industry and we're focused on making the most of the opportunities that lie ahead and helping our members do the same. ●



IMAGE © REBECCA LACKWELL

The success of Team GB relies on good governance and support every step of the way

What are the opportunities and challenges involved in designing facilities for both sport and entertainment?

Mixing sport and entertainment is becoming increasingly popular. The NFL Super Bowl half time show is now such an iconic affair that it sometimes detracts from the main event, while opening and closing ceremonies at Olympics have become a method of “sending out a message”.

At Beijing in 2008, a £65m ceremony which “outdid all of its predecessors in

numbers, colour, noise and expense” was designed to show that China means – and is open for – business.

Four years later, London used less money but arguably more emotion to come up with “Isles of Wonder” – a love letter to Britain directed by Academy Award-winner Danny Boyle.

This year’s opening ceremony in Rio, meanwhile, might have cost a fraction of

its predecessors’, but boldly tackled some sensitive issues – such as climate change – at a time when a part of its population had been protesting against the Games.

But what is the value of opening ceremonies and other entertainment at sporting events? What do they require from the architects who design the venues? How can ceremonies be made better? We asked the experts.

Jerry Anderson

Senior principal and global board chair
Populous

Most major stadiums are now designed to stage various events as a part of their business plans. Stadium developments can’t usually depend on 12 to 15 major games or matches per year and still expect to be economically viable.

Because of this, stadium designs – especially Populous designs – take into account the elements of flexibility and infrastructure which will support future events such as concerts, alternative sports, and various exhibition shows. We also evaluate the internal spaces which support artists, such as tunnels for wheeling the shows onto the center field, PowerPoints for extravaganzas, rigging points for overhead requirements including décor, display, or lighting, as well as audio and video board features.



FRISO GENTASCH / PRESS ASSOCIATION IMAGES

Populous designed the London Olympic stadium which hosted the opening ceremony

We design for flexibility. If we’re designing an American football stadium, we make sure the entranceways can convert to larger openings for big displays, and can be made smaller to provide more seating when space is not needed.

Naturally, trends change over time, so it’s not always possible or sensible to design the stadium for just a few specific types of shows or events. This is where we’re able to use our knowledge of the different events, as we’ve worked with them at dozens of Super Bowls, World Cups, Olympic Games and the like, to anticipate what the future might hold.

It’s also true that there are successful designs established for singular spectacular events. In particular, the opening and closing ceremonies for the Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup, the Rugby and Cricket World Cups, and the Asian and Commonwealth Games have required us to design major elements of the stadium hand-in-hand with the show elements. These design features are carefully considered, not only for the shows themselves but also for the legacy of the stadium and how it is used and embraced in the future; this process has shaped many of our main stadium designs.

Peter Ayres

Director for building & places
AECOM

Opening ceremonies at events like the Olympic Games showcase the host city and country to the world. But they are often also the first opportunity to reveal a new and much-anticipated venue.

While the ceremonies are no doubt a memorable experience for those in attendance, the real audience is sitting at home. How the show will be broadcast to the world will be a primary focus when the ceremony is devised, not least because the event is an opportunity to highlight the host country as an attractive destination. The influence of

these types of ceremonies is so significant that they are often considered during the design phase of a venue.

Opening and closing ceremonies play an important role in capturing the euphoria of



VIT SIMANER / PRESS ASSOCIATION IMAGES

Rio tackled sensitive issues, such as climate change, with its opening ceremony

the Games, often after a turbulent lead-up. They are also becoming braver at tackling serious issues such as human rights, equality and diversity. Rio's opening ceremony highlighted the important issue of climate change.

This theme was pertinent not only because Brazil is a country on the front line of the impacts of climate change, but also because sustainability has been

woven into the design of the Rio Olympic Park and its sporting venues. AECOM's masterplan for the Park focused on creating a lasting legacy for Rio and post-Games it will become one of the city's most sustainable districts.

Opening and closing events embody the unique characteristics of their host. They show off national pride and are grounded in the country's culture and lifestyle.

David Zolkwer

EVP & director of public events
Jack Morton

We need to make ceremonies work harder. They're traditionally a platform for the host city to celebrate the unique qualities of its particular time and place; engage communities, create enduring memories, to capture and convey unique city-brand stories, and in the process leave behind a meaningful social and economic legacy.

And, of course, they should recognise and celebrate the sporting events they herald.



That's all good – but there's even more value to be mined here. While it's easy to think of a ceremony as a chance to offer a 'celebratory snapshot' of a people and a place, more and more these days I'm asking "Really? Why? Who cares?".

In an increasingly conflicted world, I think there's an opportunity to place more of the value of a ceremony in its power to serve as a vehicle to celebrate what we have in common rather than what sets us apart, to explore universal dreams

and aspirations – what we can be rather than what we are; to look outwards and forwards rather than inwards; to explore the human condition; to connect.

These occasions are global broadcast events, a convening of a wildly diverse global community bonded by sport. What can we say and do in these 'real time' moments that no other medium or genre would allow? For me, it's in the answer to that question where the true value of these occasions lies. ●

In a conflicted world, there's an opportunity for ceremonies to celebrate what we have in common, to explore universal dreams and aspirations – to connect.



West Ham's Olympic dream

The Premier League club waved an emotional goodbye to Upton Park, trading it in for the modern surroundings of the Olympic Stadium. Matthew Campelli assesses the move



West Ham United co-owners David Gold (left) and David Sullivan (right) have batted away criticisms about the move

IMAGE © NICK POTTS / PRESS ASSOCIATION

In several decades time, when football fans look back and reminisce about some of the greatest games to have occurred during the Premier League's 'golden generation' – when the division was awash with money and world-class talent – few will spare a thought for West Ham United's sluggish 1-0 win over AFC Bournemouth which opened the 2016-17 Premier League season.

That particular match, however, is likely to remain poignant for fans of the East London club for many years to come. It was, after all, the team's first home league match away from Upton Park since 1904.

Upton Park – also known as the Boleyn Ground – was considered one of the jewels of English football. An imperfect, gritty jewel, but a jewel nonetheless. Its pitch provided a stage for the likes of England World

The Olympic stadium's size, structure and location mean West Ham FC stands to benefit from a significant commercial uplift

Cup winners Bobby Moore and Sir Geoff Hurst, the homegrown talents of Trevor Brooking, Joe Cole and Rio Ferdinand, as well as foreign stars such as Paolo Di Canio and Carlos Tevez, over the years.

Iconic moments such as the Italian's unbelievable scissor-kick volley against Wimbledon, the 1-1 draw that foiled Manchester United's march to the title in 1995, and several satisfying league, cup and European wins were witnessed inside the old ground, which is set to be demolished and replaced with 700 flats.

The victory against Bournemouth may not live long in the memory like those moments, but it gave a glimpse of the potential for success on and off the field for one of London's best supported clubs.



IMAGE © NICK POTTS / PRESS ASSOCIATION

For a start, the ground's capacity of 57,000 – which West Ham is trying to upgrade to 60,000 – is a significant increase on the 35,000 spectators who packed into Upton Park every week. The stadium's size, structure and location mean the club stands to benefit from a significant commercial uplift.

CONTROVERSY

Although the future looks increasingly bright for West Ham, its journey to the stadium – which was built to host the London 2012 Olympics – was far from smooth, with very public opposition from a number of stakeholders.

The details of the deal the club struck with the stadium operators, London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), caused significant controversy when it emerged that West Ham was paying just £2.5m per season in rent and only £15m towards a total of £272m worth of renovations to turn the stadium into a football ground – despite the club taking a significant slice of the Premier League's record-breaking £5.1bn domestic television deal from 2016.

While a fans' coalition and former Leyton Orient chair Barry Hearn cried foul and called the deal an insult to the taxpayer – whose money built the stadium originally – West Ham co-owner David Sullivan labelled the naysayers "jealous" and said it was a good

Above: Fans walk to the stadium via its spacious surroundings in a far cry from the tight streets around Upton Park

Below: Populous' Mark Craine



deal for everybody, including those living in the surrounding areas and taxpayers in general.

No matter what side of the fence you sit, West Ham's occupation of the Olympic stadium at least means it won't become a white elephant and will be able to sustain some form of legacy following the Olympic Games four years ago.

MAKING IT FOOTBALL-READY

Populous, the architect that designed the arena, was brought on board by the E20 Stadium LLP – a joint venture between the LLDC and Newham Council – in 2013 to transform it into a modern, fit-for-purpose football stadium suitable for the Premier League.

However, the venue is still expected to host various other events, including rugby matches and high-profile concerts and music events, making the logistical practicalities challenging to say the least.

Track and field will also be accommodated to keep the legacy of the 2012 Games alive, with the stadium becoming the national competition centre of athletics.

Annual Diamond League meetings will be held at the venue, and it's also scheduled to host the IAAF World Athletics Championships in 2017.

For the football, spectator seats have been moved forward onto the track area, which was graced by Jessica Ennis-Hill and Mo Farah



during Team GB's Super Saturday at London 2012. The closeness creates an atmosphere akin to traditional football grounds – to sacrifice this, for a club like West Ham which made Upton Park a cauldron of noise at times, would have been a great loss.

To accommodate fans sitting closer to the pitch, the stadium roof was completely replaced, and is twice the size of the original, complying with FIFA guidelines to cover every seat. At 84m it is the largest-spanning roof of its type in the world.

"The roof is designed to enhance the atmosphere," Populous principal Mark Craine tells *Sports Management*. "As well as keeping the fans dry, it also keeps the sound inside the bowl. The atmosphere inside is amazing, but the new roof also keeps the noise from leaking out into the residential areas that are part of the 2012 Games legacy."

The surrounding area of the stadium is more conducive for a pleasant matchday experience than the tight residential streets that surrounded the

club's for Upton Park home. Supporters can travel to the ground from five train or tube stations and wander up the vast spaces of the Olympic park.

Towards the end of last season, violence marred West Ham's final match at Upton Park against Manchester United when supporters damaged the visiting club's coach with glass bottles and various other objects. During this year's *Daily Telegraph's* Business Conference, West Ham co-owner David Gold said the episode demonstrated the need to move to the Olympic Stadium, claiming infrastructure problems had a bearing on the scenes.

"It was clear evidence of what we've been saying all along – to fans that are saying 'we want to stay at Upton Park, let's develop it'. You can't develop West Ham any further," he said during the May conference.

"It was completely at its capacity – 35,000 is all it can cope with, and you saw that. There were 45,000 fans there and they gridlocked the East End of London. I'm sure that was a contributing factor."

On matchdays, spectator seats will be moved onto the track to generate an electric atmosphere





Despite the move away from its traditional East London roots, Craine stresses that community is still at the heart of the project, and claims that West Ham's move to the new stadium has the "ability to transform and reenergise" the entire community.

MONEY SPINNER

Some doubted that West Ham could fill a stadium double the capacity of its previous abode. However, the club confounded the critics by selling more than 50,000 season tickets and selling out all its corporate seats. There's also a waiting list developing for future season tickets, which bodes well for the future.

Extra revenue generated from the stadium will be ploughed into the team's playing squad, according to club executives

As well as the extra revenue from ticketing, the move has created opportunities for the club to generate income from increased food and beverage sales and wider sponsorship opportunities.

Of the latter, the club recently signed a "record" three-year deal with gaming firm Betway – the largest sponsorship agreement in its history – with the extra space for signage within the Olympic Stadium cited as a key factor in the successful conclusion of the deal.

The agreement didn't include a naming rights clause, and at time of writing West Ham has so far declined to finalise such a deal, despite much speculation. If any naming rights deal was concluded the LLDC would keep the first £4m (and a subsequent 50/50 share), although deals of this nature can hit the £150m mark – like Arsenal's tie-up with Emirates – and could mushroom further to mirror the growing interest in Premier League football globally.

LLDC also takes a share of F&B sales, with the operator benefitting from the first £500,000 of catering profits and a 70/30 split thereafter. But West Ham will still benefit as a result of the increased footfall, not to mention the opportunity to exploit retail sales with up to 40 tills in operation in the club shop on matchdays.

West Ham vice chair Baroness Karren Brady has gone on record to say that the extra revenue generated will be ploughed back into the playing squad to make the club competitive at home and in Europe. If that commitment is fulfilled, then the Hammers faithful can hope for many more happy memories in its new home. ●



The club sold more than 50,000 season tickers for its maiden campaign at the stadium, and has opened a waiting list for following seasons



FEED INTO FITNESS

eGym helps clubs create effective feedback loops and boost members' performance in the gym

Despite best intentions, it can sometimes be difficult to produce results for the majority of gym members. In fact, we barely 'touch' a significant proportion of them. Understanding how effective digital tools can be more proactive in providing positive feedback is a key factor that will help increase training performance and improve member retention.

FEEDBACK

In a way, it's the fault of human behaviour. Most of us are just not very good at keeping to what we say we're going to do. Even when we look at science, our success has been very limited. Part of the problem is that we have ingrained feedback loops that perpetuate less than ideal behaviours (that last piece of cake is very difficult to resist). At eGym, we recognise the key to keeping customers and producing better fitness results is driven by ease of use and meaningful feedback.

To be effective, feedback loops need to meet certain criteria. Firstly, a specific behaviour has to be captured (in as near to real time as possible), measured and stored. That information needs to be given to the individual in an appropriate and relevant manner and

must highlight one or more possible responses and actions. And finally there is an opportunity for the individual to make a choice and act. This last action can be measured and the process continues with every action stimulating new behaviours that move the individual closer to their goals.

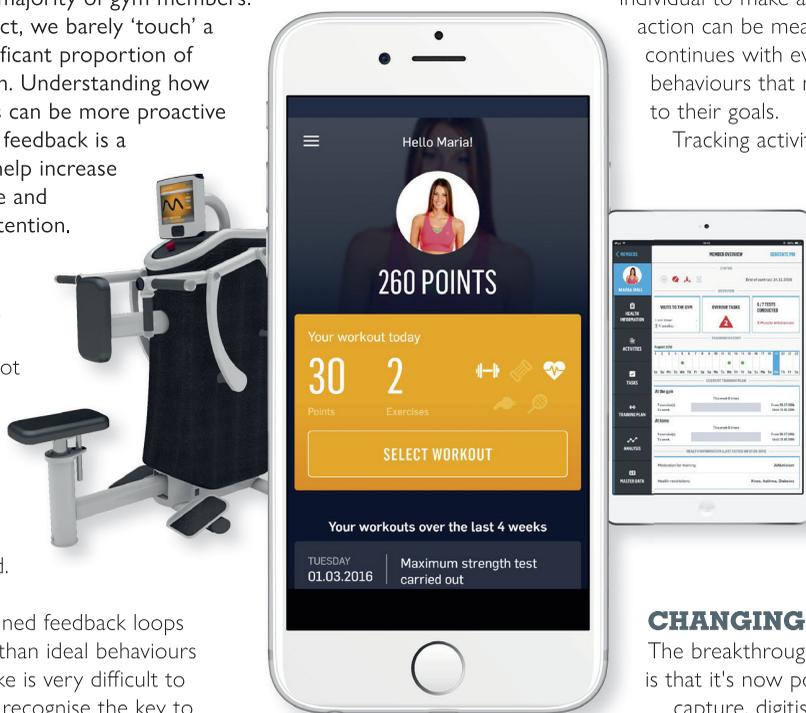
Tracking activity is not new and the original pedometers pre-date the noughties. But like the 'Quantified Self' movement, they never had mass appeal.

The NikeFuel band was really the first tracking device to engage the weekend athlete - but Nike buried it in 2013. The Achilles heel of most of these devices is still the question of accuracy and valid data.

CHANGING BEHAVIOUR

The breakthrough for the fitness sector is that it's now possible to automate data capture, digitise it, transform it and deliver it back to the gym user in a way that stimulates and reinforces the new behaviour.

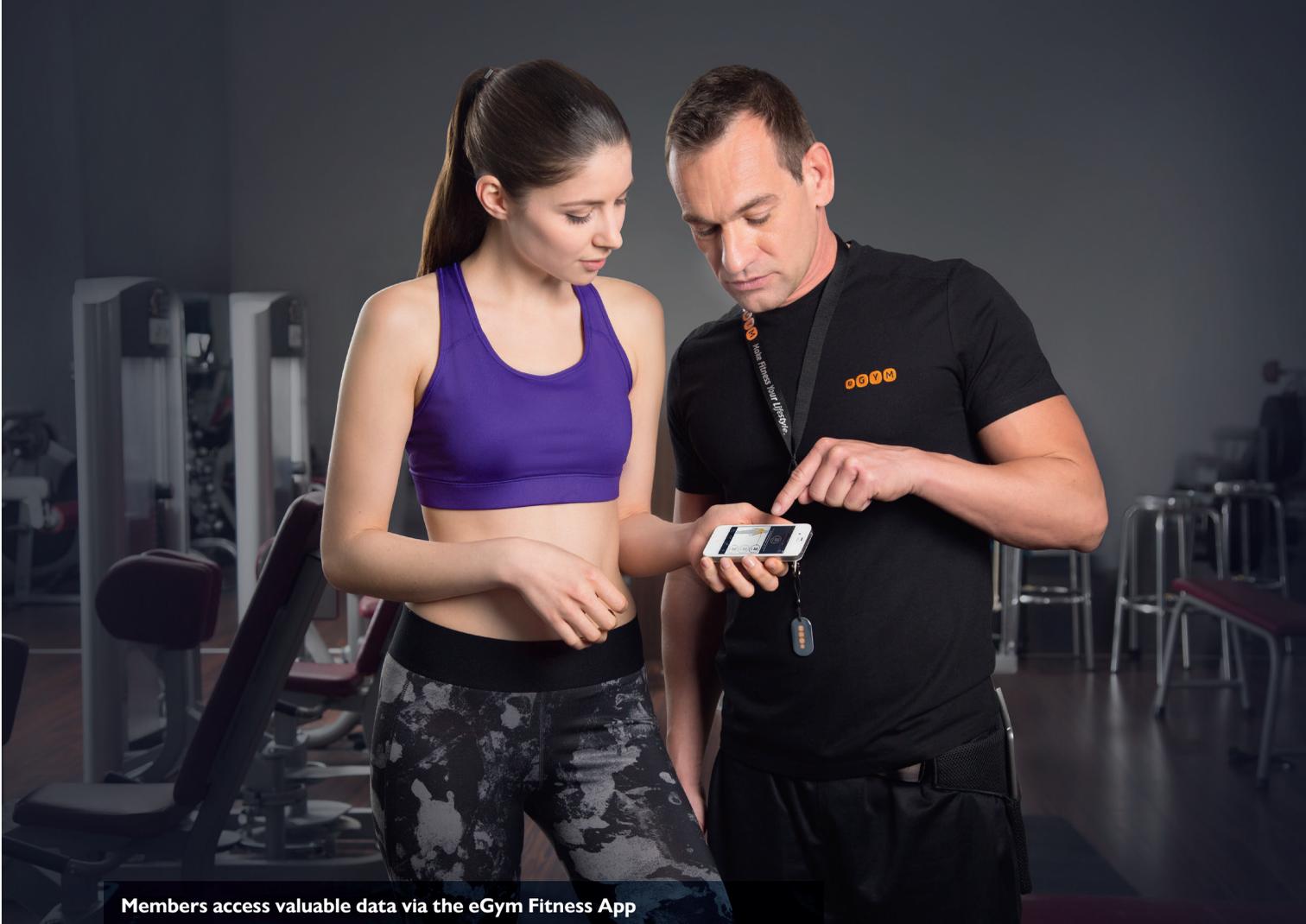
eGym uses a number of automated processes invisible to the user to optimise their performance, such as automated progression and visual cues to ensure proper form. The process starts with pre-set loads based on an initial strength test. Performances against targets



eGym users can gain rewards

eGym has helped my members to manage their own workouts and removed a lot of the hurdles that instructors have with progressing individual training programmes in the right way. eGym really manages the customers better and for customers it's perfect because it's proving and showing their success and motivating them to keep working hard

Dan Morgan, Director at Blue Leisure Management, Oakwood Sports Centre 



Members access valuable data via the eGym Fitness App

are immediately available via a front-facing display and recorded to the eGym cloud. It is also important to note that workout intensity is automatically set at a level to enable on-going progression for members.

GAMIFICATION

A members workout data is accessed directly via the eGym Fitness App, which is easily shared to the gym's trainers – who can then choose to interact immediately, providing encouragement in-situ or remotely. A popular feature of the Fitness app that provides immediate visual feedback, simple challenges and rewards for your workout is the eGym activity points. It's a great gamification element that is proven to motivate members. When members regularly work out they'll climb up the activity rankings and may even pass their friends on the points leaderboard, this in itself generates a sense of internal satisfaction.

The most used elements of the eGym Fitness app is the 'Biological Age' feature. Based on the maximum strength calculation, the biological age provides an on-going assessment of the members current age of muscle groups; so members can continue to compare to their actual age and see improvements in their results.

Jochen Michaelis, managing director UK at eGym states: "There's a lot of science and solution-driven considerations that goes on behind the scenes of our app, which the member never sees.

"That's how we like it. The eGym habit is proving to get members hooked. Our customers are now interacting better with their members and are seeing them attend more often"

“ eGym is easy to use, time efficient and fits with the overall philosophy of The Hurlingham Club. The combination of eGym machines along with the Trainer App is perfect for both our trainers and customers. In just the first 7 months, we saw a 20% increase in overall gym activity. ”

David Lester, Supervisor at The Hurlingham Club

CHALLENGE EGYM TO A STRENGTH TEST

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European Campaigns

Each year, a European Capital of Sport and a number of European Cities of Sport are chosen in recognition of their commitments to promoting sport.

We look at how they use their time in the limelight

The Capital of Sport title is available to any European city with more than 500,000 inhabitants. The scheme was launched in 2001 by the European Cities and Capitals of Sports Federation (ACES Europe). Alongside the capital of sport, a number of cities of sport are also chosen.

ACES Europe is a non-profit association based in Brussels and recognised by the European Commission. Winners are chosen much like Olympic hosts. A bid document is filed to ACES, whose assessors then conduct at least one site visit to the candidate city.

For a city's application to be successful, it has to demonstrate it has used – and plans to further use – sport and physical activity to improve the quality of life and enhance the wellbeing of its citizens.

According to Gian Francesco Lupattelli, president of ACES, the purpose of the initiative is for cities to use

Gian F Lupattelli, president of ACES Europe (above) says the organisation wants cities to produce a programme of 365 days of sport

the designations as badges of honor in recognition of the work they do in improving both lives and economies through sport.

“Cities receive no direct financial reward for the title,” says Lupattelli, “but it allows them to highlight the ways in which they’re using sport to improve health and wellbeing and advancing social inclusion and integration within their communities.”

With the titles come responsibilities. ACES Europe wants cities to use the accolade to drive increased levels of sports participation among residents.

“When awarding the titles, we look at the way cities are providing sports for all at grassroots level – from children to seniors and to people with disabilities,” Lupattelli says. “Our main goal is to help people who live in cities become more physically active by getting them to produce a programme of 365 days of sport.”



Cardiff used its Capital of Sport title to promote its credentials as a destination for major sports events



He adds that the main differences between the capital of sport and the cities of sport is their size. “Those chosen as cities of sport are smaller – they must have less than 500,000 inhabitants – but their ambitions to use sport for social good should be no less than those of the capital.

“And while there is only one capital of sport, the number of cities of sport has risen each year since 2001. In 2016, we have 18 across the continent.”

BENEFITS

Cities which have put the title to good use in recent times include Antwerp in Belgium – capital of sport during 2013. Figures show that during the year, there was a 10 per cent jump in grassroots sports participation, an increase credited directly to activities undertaken under the European Capital of Sport banner. The positive results also led to the City of Antwerp pledging to continue the increased levels of investment in sport for two further years, ensuring a lasting legacy from the campaign.

Another city to have held the title recently is Cardiff in Wales.

Czech beach volleyball legends Barbora Hermannová and Marketa Slukova are helping to raise the profile of the sport and encourage participation



The city used its tenure as Capital of Sport to attract interest in existing campaigns.

“The major benefit was having the title itself,” says Peter Bradbury, cabinet member for community development at Cardiff Council. “It highlighted the fact that Cardiff is a sporting city.

“At the time we were Capital of Sport, Cardiff City Football Club was playing in the Premier League, the city was bidding for the Euro 2020 football championships and we were preparing to host games at the 2015 Rugby World Cup.

“Having the title really added value to everything we did and helped us with the campaigns, programmes and the individual events we’re holding – particular at grassroots level. It was very useful to be able to badge the events with the ‘European Capital of Sport’ title. For example, we used the title as part of our campaigns to increase participation – and we know that really worked well.”

CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

This year’s Capital of Sport is the Czech capital Prague. For the past decade, the city has used the hosting of major sporting events as a catalyst for economic regeneration and to boost inbound tourism. Events hosted by Prague include the IIHF Ice Hockey World Championships in 2015 and it also made a bid to host the 2016 Olympic Games, but ultimately failed to make the shortlist for final voting.

According to Petr Dolínek, councillor for sport at Prague City Council, the city saw the opportunity to become Capital of Sport as a way of further strengthening its profile as an emerging destination for major events.

“In recent years, Prague has experienced a boom in new sport infrastructure and has attracted a number of big international events,” Dolínek says. “That was one of the reasons we applied for the title of Capital of Sport – to build on the momentum we had created.

“We recognised that elite sport is important to the city, but we also wanted the year to be about grassroots sport. One of the things we did was to create a new sports portal on our website www.praha.eu, where people could more easily find events to attend in and around the city.” [continued...]



Stoke has used the City of Sport title to bring investment into the region

An anatomy of a City of Sport – Stoke 2016 Terry Follows, cabinet member for leisure, Stoke-on-Trent City Council

What did Stoke want to gain from the title?
Our aims in becoming City of Sport 2016 were to improve the health and wellbeing of the local population and to support the city's ongoing regeneration by helping to create a positive external image.

To support these aims, a number of objectives were outlined, such as working with the city's entire network of providers to increase the volume and range of high quality opportunities available for the public to participate in physical activity.

We also set out to attract additional visitors to the city through opportunities to participate in or attend sporting events or use high quality sports facilities located within the city.

What have the benefits been during 2016?
The city's profile has increased due to significant media exposure from national, trade and local media and there has been a positive economic impact – events, activities and programmes are contributing to the city and wider county economy, supporting local jobs and businesses.

In financial terms, the designation has helped secure a significant level of support, including £3.5m in city council funding to facilitate the programme of events and activities, as well as attract further investment from partners and funders.

There has also been around £750,000 worth of external funding to secure 'ParkLives' status and fund the delivery

of sport, health and wellbeing activity across 10 of the city's parks. A further £245,000 was received from the Spirit of 2012 initiative as part of the 'Get Out Get Active' programme, to fund inclusive sporting activity in partnership with the English Federation of Disability Sport.

The status is also being used as a platform to promote the city with a view to attracting new business and/or inward investment. There is also civic pride – positivity among residents and a raised level of aspiration.

What lasting effects will the title have?
All elements of the 2016 initiative have been planned and are being executed in a manner designed to help create a legacy for the city. This includes funding and resources being rolled over to subsequent years (until 2018) to help support some key events and initiatives in maturing and become sustainable.

City of Stoke's new Physical Activity and Sports Strategy will also play a key part in ensuring a legacy is delivered for the people of Stoke on Trent as a result of the city's designation as European City of Sport 2016. ●



Stoke hosted two high-profile elite cycling events during June – the Aviva Women's Tour and the Pearl Izumi Tour Series

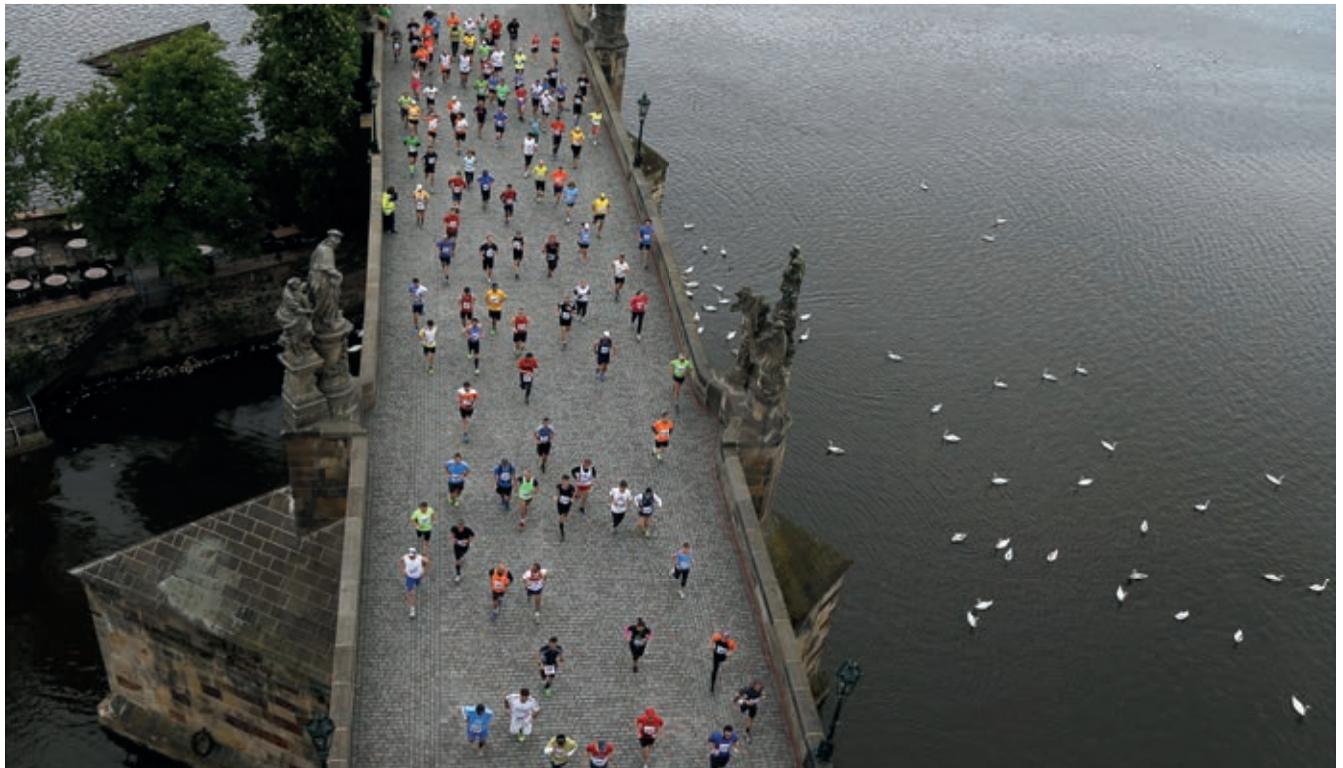


IMAGE © PETR DAVID JOSEK

[Continued...] During 2016, Prague will put on more than 400 events under the Capital of Sport banner, ranging from elite competitions, such as the Prague Marathon, to grassroots events. The city officials have also set an individual target for each resident.

“As we have already hit our previous target of having 60 per cent of the city’s inhabitants physically active, we set an alternative goal for every resident,” says Jan Wolf, Prague city councillor responsible for sport. “We want everyone to lose at least one kilogram of weight during the year”.

BRISTOL – CITY OF SPORT 2017

Bristol is among the cities whose tenure as a European City of Sport is still ahead of them. It will hold the title throughout 2017, following a successful bid by the Bristol Partnership for Sport and Active Recreation.

Colin Sexstone, chair of the partnership, said: “It’s a great honour and 2017 will be an exciting opportunity for Bristol to develop its growing reputation as a hub for sport, both nationally and internationally.

“We will use the year as a catalyst to promote the importance of healthy lifestyles, to increase participation in sport and active recreation in the city.

“We’ve got all of the main players together in this partnership, so we have got a huge amount of support, and we are ready to make sport work harder and do more for everyone who lives and works here.”

As a curtain raiser to the year, the mayor of Bristol has dedicated funding from his discretionary grants to contribute towards black and minority ethnic sport groups in the city. Focus will also be placed on women and girls. The year aims to build on the success of the Bristol Girls Can campaign and other projects aimed at encouraging more people to get active.

MARSEILLE – CAPITAL OF SPORT 2017

The capital of sport for 2017 is Marseille and according to Jean-Claude Gaudin, the city’s mayor, the official programme for the year – to be unveiled in December – will focus on three main objectives: promoting economic development; strengthening social cohesion; and investing in sporting infrastructure.

“Being Capital of Sport will be a major opportunity,” he says. “It will inject energy and dynamism into our efforts to improve social cohesion in our city.”

According to Lupattelli, Bristol and Marseille are good examples of how different cities can benefit from the initiative in different ways.

“It is down to the individual cities how much they want to benefit from the title,” he says. “Marseille has plans to invest €10m in new infrastructure and a further €10m towards activities for the year.

“Being recognised by as a capital or city of sport gives them a stamp of authority – they can say ‘we do special things here’” ●

Prague will host more than 400 events under the Capital of Sport banner this year



ANDREW JAMES

China's ambition to become a world football power is coming to fruition. Andrew James from Populous talks to Matthew Campelli about a new deal with Alisport which will turbocharge the nation's infrastructure



Fifteen years ago, architecture studio Populous dipped its toe into the Chinese sports market to work on the design of the Nanjing Sports Park, which would go on to host the China National Games in 2005 and the IOC Youth Olympic Games in 2014.

The practice has had an interest in the vast nation ever since, designing structures such as Zhuhai's International Tennis Centre.

Populous now finds itself at the centre of the Chinese government's aggressive drive towards footballing dominance and may create the blueprint for the way football facilities are designed and renovated across the country.

In June this year, Populous signed a deal with Alisports – the sports arm of Chinese global trade platform Alibaba – which has set its sights on operating “50,000 sports venues in China over the next 10 years” to build a connection with its 470 million subscribers.

As part of the deal Populous will consult on how to transform a number of “white elephant” arenas into functioning stadiums, with a focus on fan engagement and experience. The studio is also keen to pick up several projects itself to “speed up” the nation's desire to create a landscape of world-class sporting facilities.

FOOTBALL SUPERPOWER

Andrew James, Populous' Asian and Australian director, is overseeing the strategic partnership – and he is certain about what's driving China's ambitions: “There is a lot of money going into China's football Super League,” he tells *Sports*

Andrew James heads a new partnership between Populous and Alisports, the sports arm of Alibaba, which is aiming to operate 50,000 sports venues by 2026



In a lot of Asian countries, government and large private businesses seem to work hand in glove in delivering on policies

Management. “There’s no doubt it will rise rapidly over the next five years – when the Chinese decide to do something, they don’t hold back, they really do it.”

China has been unflinching in making clear its desire to become a world football superpower, with its domestic football teams spending millions on established foreign football stars and President Xi Jinping making the bold statement that he wants the nation to host – and then win – the FIFA World Cup.

While the government is driving the ambition, private companies such as Alisports are taking control, with an eye on the economic benefits a healthy football industry can bring.

“In a lot of Asian countries, not just China, government and large private businesses seem to work hand in glove,” says James. “Businesses will want to sit at the top table and they will help out on the policies the government wants to drive.”

Aside from relationships with the government, an organisation such as Alisports may see large public

Populous has had an interest in China since, designing the Zhuhai International Tennis Centre, above

venues as a way to get their advertising message across or exploit sponsorship capabilities.

To emphasise the size of the market, James says that Guangzhou Evergrande – one of the most successful football clubs in China – regularly sells out its stadium despite the fact the pitch is surrounded by an athletics track and “people can hardly see”.

He adds: “There are so many where areas they can professionalise the sport, in terms of the venue, and commercialisation. Right now money is being spent on recruiting the best players, but I expect money to be spent on coaches, and then clubs will start to be thinking about their venues and training centres.”

According to James, there are around 100,000 sporting venues in the country, with a number of them not being used at all. He expects that “99 per cent of the work” will come from renovating existing stadiums, although there has been an opportunity to design one or two venues from scratch.

One of the few big arenas that has had a “legacy project” benefitting the community is the Populous-designed Nanjing, where local people regularly use the football, swimming and ice rink facilities – a factor which helped Populous win the deal.

Populous have already won stadium renovation commissions from two clients in the industrial north

of China who want their football teams to represent the communities which surround the stadiums – in the mould of Manchester United or Liverpool. They're also working on a number of training facilities and have the aim of being involved in 10 projects in "each of the major cities" over the next five years.

CREATING EXPERIENCE AND DEMAND

However, there are a number of challenges working in the Chinese market. While in "Western cultures" decisions about stadiums and training centres are usually taken by committee, in China "decisions are still generally made by just one person".

This, says James, has contributed to a focus on the "iconic qualities" of stadiums, instead of their fan engagement and experience capabilities.

"Everyone wants a Wembley," he explains. "Not many people want that low-profile stadium that sits quietly and fits in with its neighbours. Not yet.

"We're not monument builders; we really do focus on the experiential side of design, so lots of pictures of people with smiling faces really gets us going."

James also highlights a need to shift mentality in terms of stadium size and the overall functions of a stadium. In a country as populous as China (1.4bn and counting), it's tempting to build 120,000-capacity stadiums, whereas James is keen to recommend an upper limit of 60,000 to keep experiences high quality and sustainable and to create demand.

COMMUNITY HUB

"You have to offer a great experience, particularly if you're a football club," he says. "People will come week after week. Every seat has to be great. Above 60,000 seats you have infrastructure issues to deal with. If everyone can't get a ticket then that raises demand and will be good for the bottom line."

China's emphasis on multi-use stadiums, with athletics tracks around the pitch, was something which had to be eradicated to create a better fan experience and commercial opportunities. Although, James reckons community-focused training centres could be even more lucrative than stadiums.

China has laid out plans to build 70,000 training centres by 2030 to create a thriving grassroots



Populous is already in China – here the Nanjing Sports Park, which was built for the China National Games

football landscape, as well as a technically proficient elite level game. The centres, says James, have the opportunity to become hubs for their respective communities, with educational facilities such as schools and universities, as well as medical facilities.

"We see more prospect in training facilities becoming commercial and profitable centres in the long-term than the main sport stadiums," he argues.

Aside from the development of facilities for football, James sees opportunities to design entertainment arenas and for Populous to expand its tennis stadium portfolio. But the 'beautiful game' is undoubtedly where it's all happening for China, and Populous is in a good position to set the agenda.

"We've always known China would happen one day," James explains. "It's a fantastic market for us because we can speak the language we've been speaking in Europe for the last decade or two and because we already have a reputation." ●

If seats are limited, so not everyone can get a ticket, then that raises demand and will be good for the bottom line





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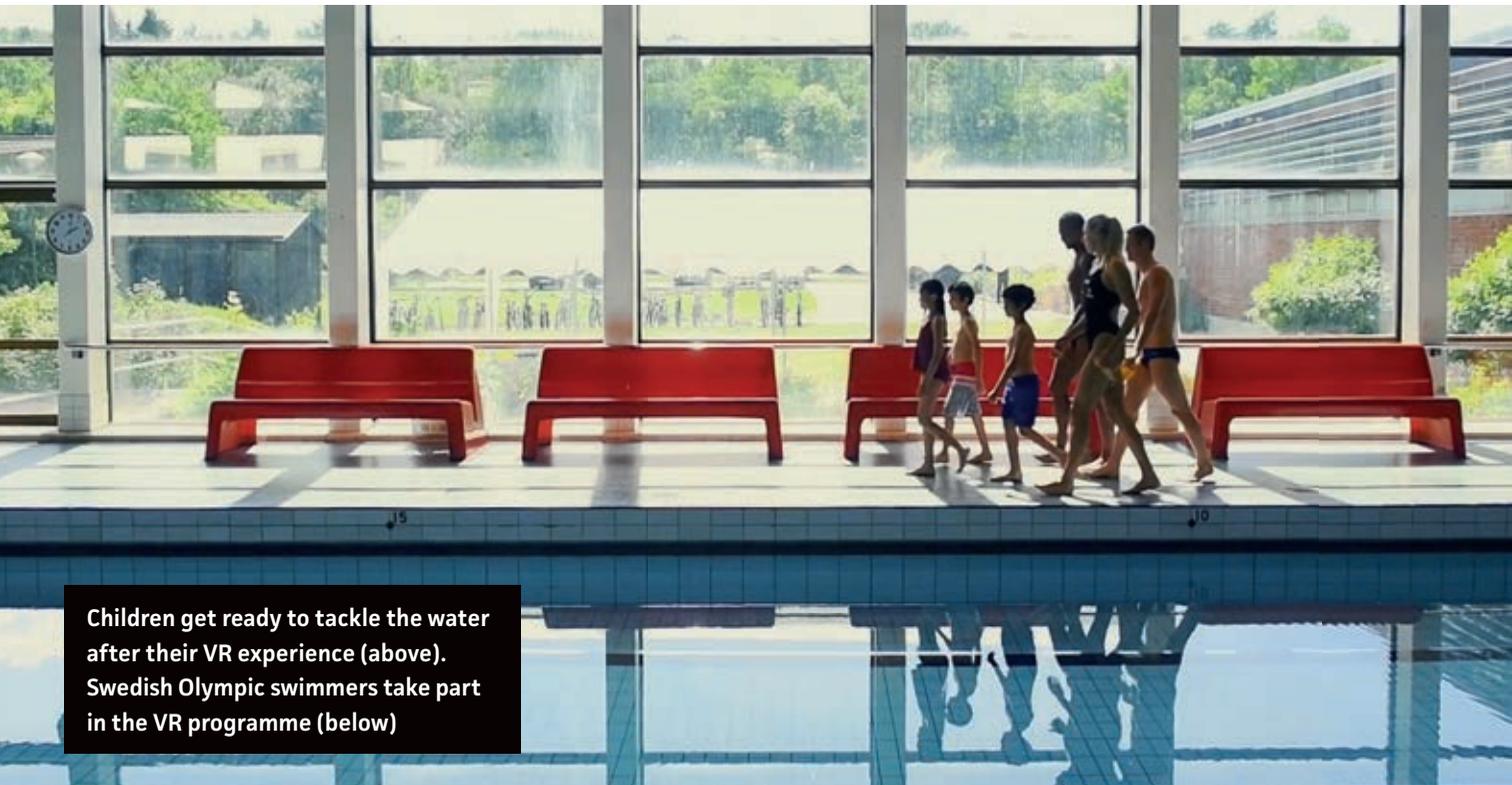
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Children get ready to tackle the water after their VR experience (above). Swedish Olympic swimmers take part in the VR programme (below)

Virtual Healing

Virtual reality is being harnessed to help encourage aquaphobic children into the pool. Tom Walker finds out more about a Swedish project looking to turn 4,000 water-fearing children into competent swimmers

Olympic champion swimmer Adam Peaty, who broke his own world record en route to gold in the 100m breaststroke final in Rio last month, doesn't exactly come across as someone who's scared of water. Yet, following his remarkable victory, it was revealed that as a child he was so petrified of water that his mum Caroline even struggled to bathe him.

"He used to scream every time he got in the bath," Peaty's grandmother, Mavis, revealed on morning TV a day after his success in Rio. "When his mum took him to the pool to learn to swim, he used to scream there too – so she had to ask a friend to take him because it broke her heart to see him like that."

FEAR FACTOR

It's clear that, as a child, Peaty probably belonged to the 2 per cent of people estimated to suffer from aquaphobia – an irrational fear of water.

The condition is particularly harmful for children, as it can prevent them from learning a crucial life skill which will keep them fit and healthy throughout life and potentially get them into sport, and for those living in an environment where there's a lot of water, not being able to swim could be catastrophic.



“One in five Swedish children can’t swim and a fear of water is one of the prime reasons,” says Karin Rosell, head of brand and marketing for energy provider E.ON’s Swedish operations. “For a land which is full of lakes and surrounded by sea, that is one in five too many. As we’re one of the main sponsors of the Swedish Swimming Federation (SSF), it’s a topic close to us and we wanted to do something about it.”

After some research and a brainstorming session – together with its creative agency, M&C Saatchi – E.ON wanted to concentrate on the 20 per cent of Swedish children who couldn’t swim, due to their fear of water. The team at Saatchi then suggested the use of virtual reality in order to help make children more comfortable with the idea of water.

PLUNGING IN

To help children overcome their fears, E.ON and Saatchi set out to produce a video to convince them that swimming was a fun and safe activity and there was nothing to worry about. Called *The Power of Swimming*, the project aims to help children clear that crucial first hurdle – to get them into the pool.

Through E.ON’s sponsorship agreement with the SSF, the project team was able to gain access to a

Virtual treatments

Virtual reality exposure therapy (VRE), uses three-dimensional computer simulation and is now an accepted method of treating panic and anxiety disorders – such as claustrophobia, fear of flying and panic disorders. The idea behind VRE is to place the sufferer in a computer-generated world in which they are able to face their

fears by experiencing stimuli related to their phobias.

Wearing a headset and stereo earphones, the “patient” can be given visual and auditory cues, depending on what is needed. As each session is monitored, the patients are then taught how to control automatic responses to anxiety-provoking situations.

(Right) 4,000 free headsets will be made available.

(Below) A promotional video shows the positive effects of the initiative





Famous swimmers Simon Sjödin, Erik Persson and Jennie Johansson produced their own VR guides to the pool

“ The project is all about getting more children to enjoy swimming and it is the largest participation project we've been involved in for many years ”

rare resource – famous faces. Three of Sweden's most successful swimmers – Simon Sjödin, Erik Persson and Jennie Johansson – were recruited, and a video was produced using VR cameras in which the trio virtually guides the viewer into the pool. Once in the pool, the swimmers coach and guide the viewer on breathing and basic swimming techniques – and even encourage them to plunge beneath the surface.

The footage – which has been made available for all iPhone or Android devices – can be viewed using

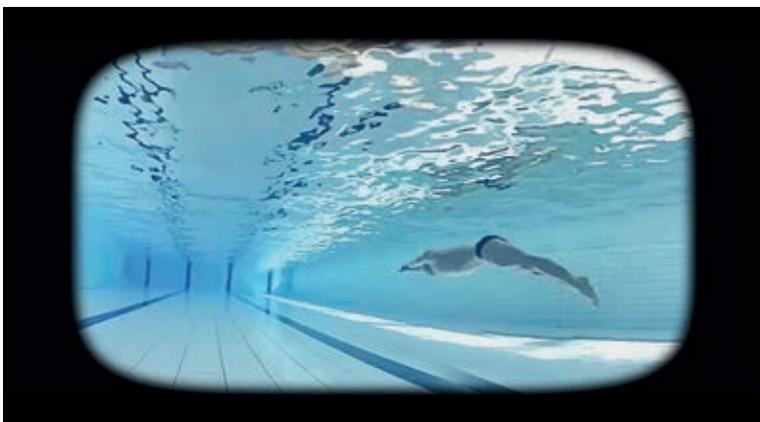
(Below) Through the VR headsets, children get to experience the feeling of plunging into a pool for the very first time

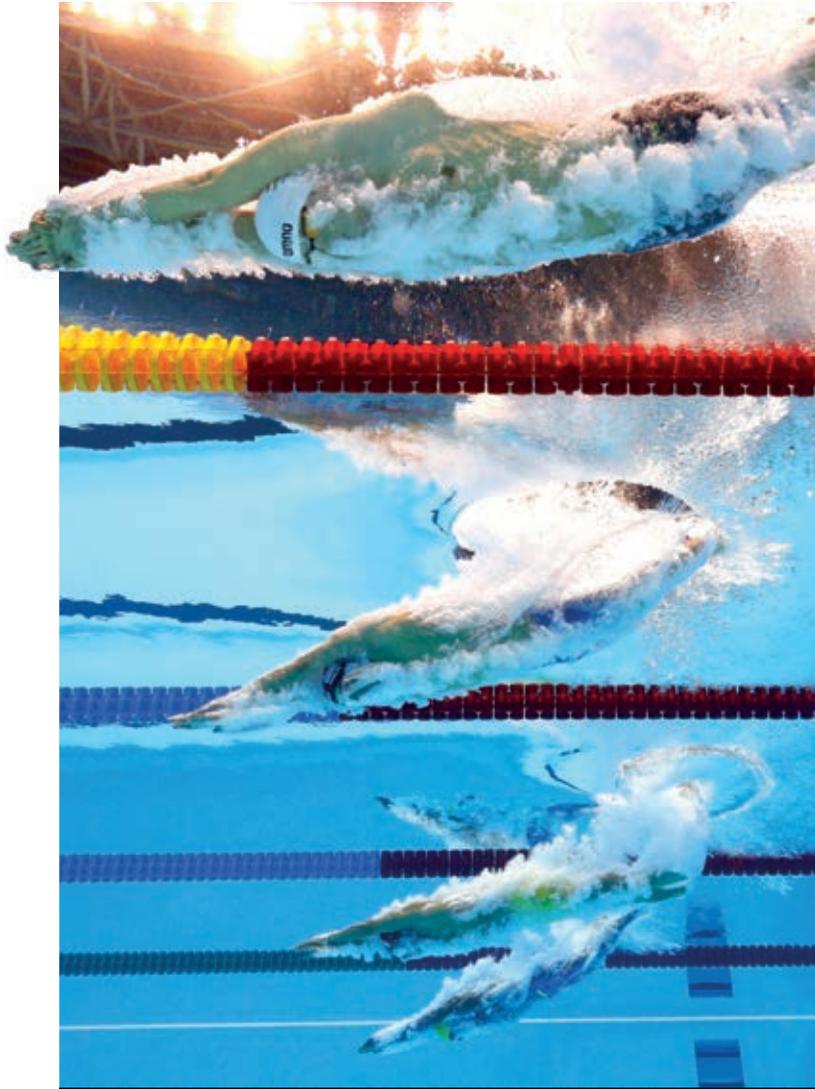
a special headset, into which the user's smartphone can be slotted, along with earphones. E.ON, which has funded the entire project, has made 4,000 headsets available for free to be distributed to children.

“The headsets can be ordered online,” says Christina Sandin, project leader at SSF. “The project is all about getting more young children to enjoy swimming. It is the largest participation project we've been involved in for a number of years.”

To raise awareness of the availability of the headsets, Saatchi has produced a promotional video, which begins with a group of young children – all with a fear of water – sharing their stories. It is very moving to watch them explain how they have suffered due to their phobia. “It makes me sad when my friends go swimming but I can't,” says one.

The power of VR is then demonstrated as each aquaphobic child sits down to try the headset and to view the footage involving the three Olympic stars. The change seems to happen immediately, as they get to ‘experience’ a swimming pool – in virtual form – for the very first time. After initial hesitations, it's obvious each child warms to the idea and by the end





The partnership with Swedish Swimming Federation allowed E.ON to use Olympic swimmers such as Simon Sjödin (far lane) in the video

Philip Lindner on VR treatment

Why is VR so useful in treating fears?

“The best way to rid oneself of fear and phobia is controlled, graded exposure to the thing that makes you scared – be it water, spiders, thunderstorms or whatever – and remaining in the fearful situation until the fear has subsided so that you learn that the fear will always subside and that it was not as bad as you thought.

In traditional exposure therapy, we use real water, dogs etc, and VR exposure therapy works according to the same principle, but we use virtual water and virtual spiders instead. As it turns out, it doesn't matter if the fear provoking stimuli is virtual or real – as long as the experience of fear is. Plus, VR also allows us to do a lot of things that cannot be done in the real world.

For example, at Stockholm University, we have recently developed a gamified self-help application to treat spider phobia that anyone can download from a digital store. The preliminary results show that it does indeed make people significantly less scared of spiders. This is pretty amazing considering that it only takes three hours to complete, there is no therapist, and that it runs on an £80 VR headset.”

of the video it seems they can't wait to try the real thing. An opportunity to do just that is then offered, as after their VR experience, the children get to meet the three swimmers in a real pool – and the results which follow are amazing as they take to the water.

The project has been well received not just by parents, but by experts in the field. Swedish psychologist Philip Lindner, from the University of Stockholm, has studied and used virtual reality in treating a number of phobias.

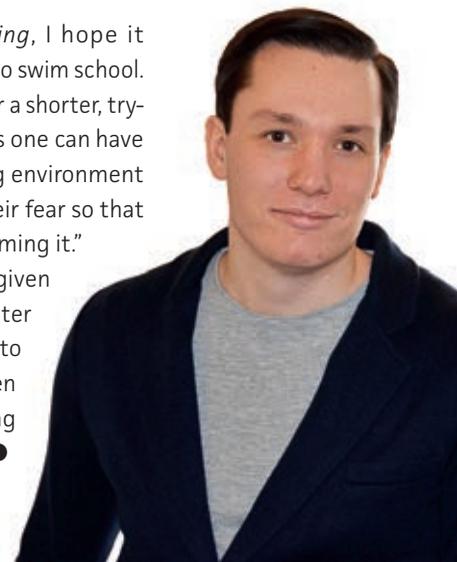
“I think the *Power of Swimming* project does a good job of showcasing the power and potential of VR technology to improve health and wellbeing,” says Lindner. “We know from two decades of research that proper VR exposure therapy is an effective treatment for a number of fears, phobias and anxieties.

“In the case of *Power of Swimming*, I hope it succeeds in getting people to sign up to swim school.

“It is an interesting question whether a shorter, try-it-out-yourself experience such as this one can have an impact by providing a safe learning environment for people to do something about their fear so that they can enjoy the benefits of overcoming it.”

Whether any of the 4,000 children given the opportunity to rid their fear of water will follow in the wake of Adam Peaty to the Olympic podium remains to be seen – but there is no doubt the pioneering project is changing lives for the better. ●

Psychologist Philip Lindner is a specialist in VR therapies



SOCIAL GAMES

The Rio 2016 Games were hailed as the first Social Media Games in history. Tom Walker looks at how the biggest tech players embraced the Games and influenced the way the sporting action was consumed

Four years is a long time in technology and since the London Olympic Games, the social media landscape has changed dramatically. Google, Twitter and Facebook still rule, but have had to adjust by adding video and other functionality to keep up with a new breed of social media platforms which have popped up since 2012.

It's been easier for existing market leaders to absorb newcomers than compete with them: live video streaming app Periscope, founded in 2014, gained traction and was acquired by Twitter in 2015, while Facebook bought photo sharing app Instagram.

In total, a staggering 1 billion more people have gained access to the internet since 2012 – mainly in developing or emerging countries. Looking at internet traffic stats, it's clear what has driven this growth – mobile internet usage, which by itself now exceeds the amount of total internet usage in 2012.

The emergence of video, live streaming and picture sharing – made possible by advances in hardware and 4G networks – means the way fans follow live sport away from events they attend is rapidly changing.

There's now less sitting in front of the TV and more use of mobile devices while out and about.

While this changing tech landscape offers opportunities, it also poses threats to broadcasters who invest huge sums securing rights with the aim of getting a return via advertising revenues. These fears were summarised ahead of Rio 2016 by Steve Burke, CEO of NBCUniversal – the US broadcaster which paid US\$12bn (€11bn, £9bn) for Olympic TV rights.

"We might wake up someday and find ratings down," Burke said. "If that happens, my prediction would be millennials were in a Facebook or Snapchat bubble and the Olympics came and went and they didn't realise."

The way viewing habits have changed was in clear evidence during the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. Digital research company eMarketer estimates that more than 2.85bn video streams of Olympic action were viewed online over the duration of the Games – trebling the number seen during London 2012. These streams varied from those posted by official broadcasters to those uploaded by fans, athletes and people working at the Games, such as journalists.

How then, did the leading tech companies approach the Olympics and embrace changes in the way people consume sports content? We look at how they innovated to captivate and engage fans.

Athletes have embraced social media more since London 2012

IMAGE © ANDREW MEDICINI / PRESS ASSOCIATION

More than 2.85bn video streams of Olympic action were viewed online over the duration of the Games

TWITTER

The micro-blogging platform enabled fans to follow country-specific content

Twitter had a dedicated section in its “moments” function which featured content and stories unfolding during the Games. The moments function was geographically tailored for Twitter’s primary markets – such as Australia, France, Japan, the UK and the US. It meant people in these markets were able to follow country-specific Moments. By tapping to follow a country Moment, relevant Tweets were added directly into the timeline during the Games.

In addition, Twitter created hundreds of new emojis for users to tweet during the Games – including 207 team flags – one for each competing nation.

This is the most the company has ever released for one single event and when users tweeted a country’s Olympic initials (GBR for the UK, for example), the miniature flag appeared in the relevant tweet.

Twitter also created mini icons for each Olympic sport, so users who were tweeting about #Swimming, #athletics or #WrestlingGrecoRoman got the appropriate sport logo attached to their tweet.

During the Games, tweets including the hashtag #Rio2016 were viewed 75bn times and, in total, more than 187m tweets were sent about the Games.

- #FRA 
- #GAB 
- #GAM 
- #GHA 
- #GEO 
- #GBR 

Twitter created 207 team flags and these were automatically added to tweets which contained Olympic country codes such as GBR



Facebook worked with Olympic broadcasters, and became one itself, via massive use of Facebook Live

FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM

Facebook and Instagram used their new video capabilities to engage users

The biggest advance Facebook has made in the four years since London 2012 is the way it has embraced video. That meant during Rio 2016, fans could share and view medal-winning footage and other highlights on their timelines.

On a corporate level, Facebook was keen to engage official broadcasters. It teamed up with more than 20 licensed TV companies and National Olympic Committees in order to secure firsthand content for its website and its photo platform Instagram.

In the US, Facebook struck a deal with NBC – the rights holder for the Olympic coverage – which saw the official broadcaster publish exclusive highlights directly to Facebook and Instagram.

Interestingly, NBC – along with many other broadcasters – also tapped into Facebook Live, the live-streaming video tool, transmitting interviews with athletes and commentators directly to Facebook. NBC also partnered Facebook for the creation of a “Social Command Center” on-site in Rio, which saw NBC producers capture Facebook Live content, including interviews with NBC commentators and athletes. However, NBC limited actual competition footage to the broadcast networks.

According to Gary Zenkel, president of NBC Olympics, the move was about reaching out and bringing in new viewers for the NBC coverage. “The partnership was about fueling the Olympic conversation and driving interest in watching the Games,” he said. “And it’s a natural outgrowth of our mission to share the stories behind the athletes.”



IMAGE © TWITTER



IMAGE ©: GOOGLE

GOOGLE

Olympic stats were given alongside every search, while Street View gave 360° feeds

Search giant Google added several new features for Rio 2016 which allowed users easy access to information about the competition.

During the two weeks of the Games, Olympic-related searches on Google automatically brought up event schedules, medal counts, athlete information, and TV schedules alongside other searches.

Google Maps was also enhanced and put into Games mode, thanks to a pioneering partnership between Rio 2016 and Google. Users were able to virtually explore different parts of Rio de Janeiro and the Olympic venues by 'entering' the venues via Google Street View, where they could get a 360-degree view of the stadiums, arenas and pools.

To capture the footage, Google used its 'Trekker' – a 18kg backpack, fitted with 15 sophisticated cameras and carried around the venues by a technician.

"Street View gave users a chance to see the venues from the same perspective athletes had during the Games," said Rio 2016 comms director Adriana Garcia.

The Google team used 'Trekker' to capture footage of the Olympic venues which was shared on Google Street View and Google Maps



SNAPCHAT

Rio 2016 launched a Snapchat account which followed the Olympic Torch relay

While final engagement and viewer figures were still to be confirmed at the time of going to press, it was clear one of the newer kids on the social media block had performed well on its Olympic debut. During the first seven days of the Olympics, 49 million viewers had turned to image messaging platform Snapchat to watch some form of coverage from the various sporting event.

During Rio, Snapchat's Live Stories option – compilations of "Snaps" from users which disappear after 24 hours – showcased video snippets of sporting action and crowd reaction, adding a unique take on the more traditional competition footage.

While Snapchat secured a deal with NBC to post licensed content on its Discover section, its biggest coup was signing an agreement with the Rio Organising Committee. The deal meant Rio 2016 launched an official Snapchat account which followed the Olympic Torch Relay across Brazil. As the Games began, the coverage switched to a first-hand look at the "mood" of being in Rio every day. ●

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Bringing rugby to Brazil

Rio 2016's rugby 7s tournament may have been the sport's first competition of note in Brazil, but Premiership Rugby is keen to be the catalyst in growing the game's presence there. Matthew Campelli reports

On 11 August 2016, Fiji thrashed Great Britain by 43 points to seven to become the first Olympic rugby 7s champions following the sport's inclusion at the Rio Olympic Games. It was a significant moment, not only for Fiji but for hosts Brazil, which had never organised a rugby match of this magnitude before.

A team was entered by Brazil for its home Games but struggled, losing all three group matches to the eventual champions, the USA and geographical rival Argentina, finishing as the lowest ranked nation.

Making any sort of headway in the competition was always going to be a tough ask for a country

The Try Rugby programme is a joint venture between Premiership Rugby and the British Council

which values football above anything else. However, while the Os Tupis (the nickname for the Brazilian rugby team) was playing for pride and little else, a handful of British coaches living in Rio and beyond are working to grow grassroots rugby and competing against football for the affection of local youngsters.

Dom Caton was one of those young British coaches who went out to Brazil almost four years ago as part of Try Rugby – Premiership Rugby's joint venture with the British Council which is teaching Brazilian children the game of rugby and its core values.

Back then, Caton was representing Aviva Premiership club Exeter Chiefs as one of 12 coaches





Dom Caton was part of a cohort of rugby coaches who arrived in Brazil in 2012 as part of the Try Rugby initiative

6 Giving Brazilian children something to aspire to is crucial, especially in deprived areas. The Try Rugby programme – sponsored by Jaguar Land Rover – is about using sport for social change 9

who were flown out to Sao Paulo to coach in 12 cities, particularly in SESI schools, where pupils struggle with learning, language or emotional challenges.

Now Caton heads up the programme as Premiership Rugby's international development manager and the project has come a long way, expanding into five different locations: Sao Paulo, Minas Gerais, Santa Catarina, Rio Grande do Sul and Rio de Janeiro.

The latter was the latest to be added to the initiative in March 2015, thanks to financial and pastoral backing from British car maker Jaguar Land Rover, which got on board with the project after opening a factory in the region.

A HERO'S WELCOME

With 18,000 participants playing every week, and around 70,000 young people and adults taking part in coaching sessions, Try Rugby has doubled the rugby playing base in Brazil over that period. It's an achievement Caton is proud of being a part of, and he talks with enthusiasm about his experience during the initiative's embryonic stages.

"It was amazing going into these schools," he tells *Sports Management*. "A lot of the kids hadn't seen a foreigner and some of the guys had celebrity-status welcomes. They had bands, they had flares going off, they had assemblies with 1,000 children singing songs and their national anthem."

Over his three year stint in Brazil he lived in Sao Paulo and Rio, helping the schools implement rugby as part of their curriculum, delivering rugby sessions and educating teachers and volunteers so they could carry on the work once the coaches left.

While the SESI schools were at the centre of the scheme, Caton reveals that the programme varies from state to state depending on the needs of certain communities. For example, finding traction in

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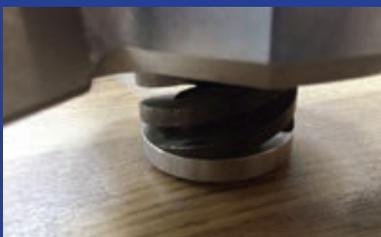
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IMAGE © JÄGERGEN KEÄLER / DPA IMAGES

Sao Paulo was slightly easier because it had a number of clubs in Brazil’s elite rugby league and it borders rugby-playing Argentina. Rio, in contrast, is more football dominated and its mountainous landscape made it difficult to find flat land to play on.

GETTING THEM MOTIVATED

Finding good facilities to play rugby in general is a challenge, he adds, but if coaches introduce non-contact rugby they could play on concrete basketball courts or the beach – anywhere to keep kids playing a sport that wasn’t familiar to them.

“The hardest thing was introducing them to rugby,” Caton admits. “There was a real hunger and desire to play football and it’s difficult to try and motivate someone to want to play something they don’t know anything about, or that they aren’t very good at.”

Caton says the coaches make a point of making

Brazil is looking to match the rugby success enjoyed by its neighbour Argentina

sessions fun, and have teamed up with stakeholders in the surrounding community like universities to help with the sessions and launch events, and festivals to keep the momentum going. The project has also been backed by the Federation of Brazilian Rugby – the sport’s national governing body – which sees this as a way of fostering the next generation of talent.

“If they don’t enjoy it, they’re not going to carry on,” he says. “It’s all about having a laugh and making sure they want to come back to take part in the next training session. Then the children realise they’re quite good and want to make something of it.

“With the level of competition out there it’s hard to become a professional footballer, but if kids can become good at rugby they might have a slightly less competitive route to reaching the top.”

One of the children who came through the programme has made the under-19 squad for Brazil, but Caton emphasises the



IMAGE © JÄGERGEN KEÄLER / DPA IMAGES

Appetite for rugby is growing in Brazil, especially among the young

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need for iconic role models in rugby – like Neymar in football – to inspire and create a “goal or aspiration”.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Giving children something to aspire to is crucial in a nation like Brazil, particularly in deprived areas such as the favelas in Rio. SESI's Try Rugby programme in the city is all about using the sport for social change “using the core values of rugby – discipline, respect, teamwork and enjoyment”.

“These are transferable skills, and we have had some fantastic outcomes here and hopefully changed a lot of people's lives who live here,” Caton says.

Jaguar Land Rover's backing for the Rio project came following the move to build its Resende factory in the city and is part of the firm's corporate social responsibility programme which uses rugby to engage with the local community.

“The employees at the factory have formed a rugby team and take part in regular coaching sessions with one of our coaches,” Caton explains. “They also deliver support to our coaches in the programmes they do – in terms of funding and day-to-day operations.”

There are now eight coaches in five states, with each working with 15-20 volunteers and coaches

From small beginnings, the Try Rugby initiative has now grown to cover the entire country

with a view to growing beyond its current reach. Caton explains that the aim is to expand the current network and get more coaches in to coach more children, as well as upskilling existing coaches to make sure participants get the best possible experience.

A similar model was launched in neighbouring Argentina two years ago, based on Premiership Rugby's Hitz programme which uses rugby to counter crime, unemployment and general disillusionment.

Jaguar Land Rover is also involved in that project, which helps youths with behavioural problems with employability and social skills. Caton hopes both projects are the beginning of something bigger.

“We have plans to expand this further to many more countries around the world,” he reveals. “It's about sharing best practice and it may even have a knock-on effect in promoting Premiership Rugby within the countries that benefit.”

So, could we eventually see one of those Brazilian children play for the likes of Wasps and Saracens in the UK to complete the virtuous circle?

“That is not our primary objective, but it would be fantastic to have some Brazilians in the Premiership. It's a country of more than 200m people, and as you can see they've gone from strength to strength.” ●

Six benefits of participating in team sport

The Department of Health recently published its 'Childhood obesity: a plan for action' designed to help reduce childhood obesity through healthier choices.

The report suggests a number of measures, including: introducing a levy on soft drinks, helping businesses make their products healthier through innovation and reducing sugar in products by 20%.

Another recommendation says that every primary school pupil should engage in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day – 30 minutes delivered in school, with parents and carers responsible for the remaining 30 minutes.

With many children spending their free time in front of a screen and far less on hands-on activity, it is understandable why almost a third of 2 to 15 year old children are classed as overweight or obese.

The new initiative will provide children with regular exercise and contribute to their overall physical health. They will also learn valuable social and teamwork skills.

Below are some of the great benefits participation in team sports can bring to young children:

Benefit #1 Builds confidence

Children have the opportunity to really enjoy an activity that they are good at. They can also practice and exercise their skills, learn their strengths, develop their weaknesses and gain greater self-awareness. It's a real confidence booster.

Benefit #2 Trying their best

When playing a team sport, children gain the experience of winning and losing and how to deal with both emotions. They also learn that things are not going to go their way all of the time, but all that's important is that they tried their best.

Benefit #3 Helps to develop relationships

For many children, making friends can be quite a challenge. By taking part in a team sport, children have many opportunities to practice and develop their social skills and build friendships with their peers and coaches.

Benefit #4 Teaches respect

Through team sport, kids learn the importance of respecting authoritative figures, like their coaches and referees, but also the opposition and their teammates.

Benefit #5 Provides a platform to excel

Getting involved in a sport provides children with the platform to realise their sporting goals and ambitions. Whether they go on to become the next Olympian or just take part for fun, it can stay with them for life.

Benefit #6 Develops vital communication skills

Team sport places children in situations where they need to communicate with their peers and coaches – who may or may not be their friends. This can help them become more sociable in different environments and overcome shyness.



O'Brien Sports delivers natural and artificial pitches for rugby, football and cricket





Young people are being encouraged to get into sport via the Obesity strategy

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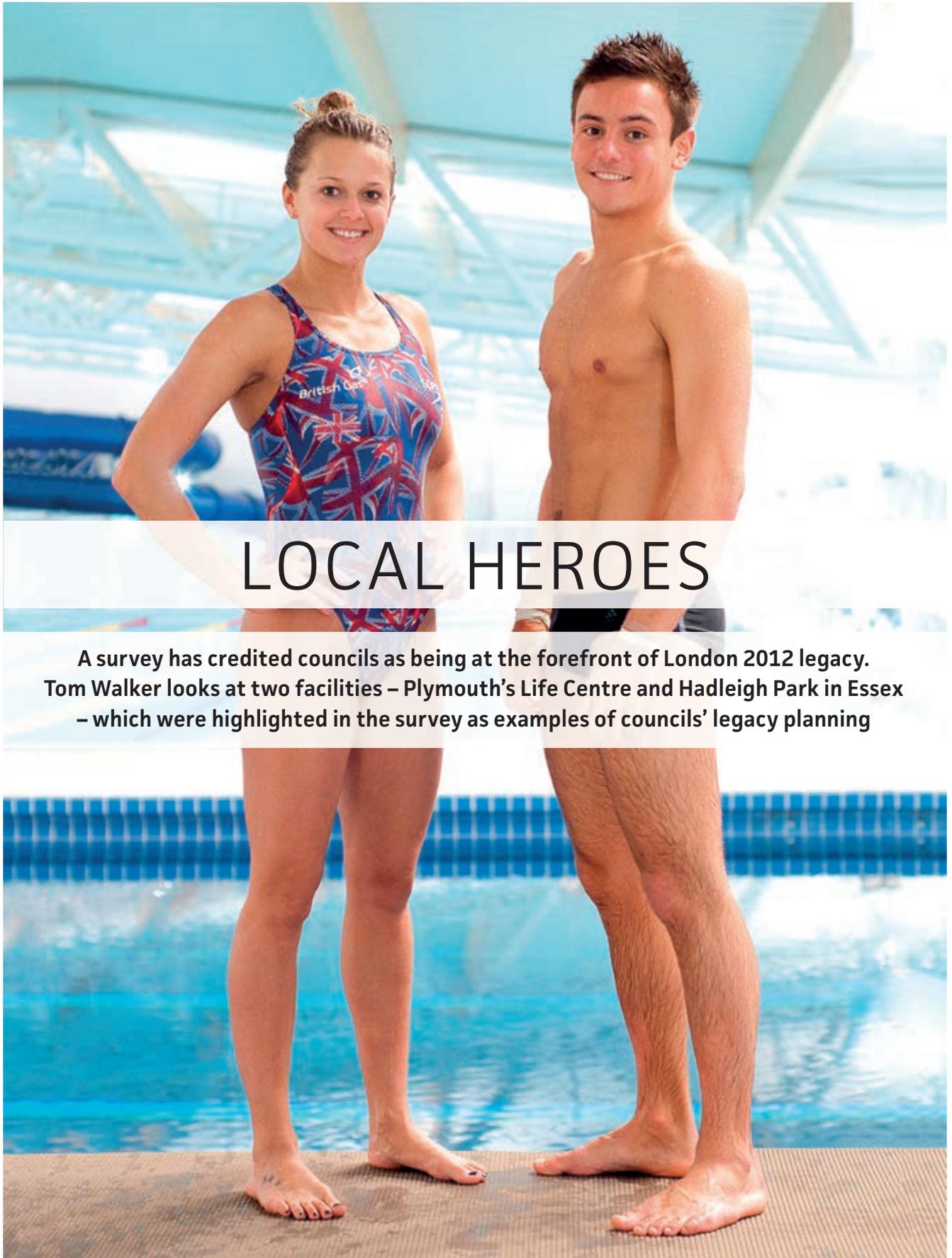
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Turn over: Local government legacy





LOCAL HEROES

A survey has credited councils as being at the forefront of London 2012 legacy. Tom Walker looks at two facilities – Plymouth’s Life Centre and Hadleigh Park in Essex – which were highlighted in the survey as examples of councils’ legacy planning



IMAGE © NICK IPTIS / PRESS ASSOCIATION

A snapshot survey of 16 councils, undertaken by the Local Government Association (LGA), has found that authorities in the UK are to thank for much of the increases in participation following the London 2012 Olympic Games. Praising the “transformative legacy” created in the past four years, the report claims any advances in sports participation figures – however small – owe much to investments made at local authority level.

Unsurprising findings perhaps, as one of the LGA’s roles is to highlight and promote the work councils do. But there is more than a morsel of truth in the report. Local authorities remain the biggest public sector investors in sport and physical activity, spending around £1.4bn (US\$1.8bn, €1.6bn) per year on facilities and other provisions.

There is also no doubt that councils who invest in sport do so despite tough financial constraints. While budgets are cut, many keep investing as they recognise the value of sport in improving lives. Take the St Helens council, which is investing £3m (US\$3.9m, €3.5m) in upgrading a sports ground, despite last year announcing plans to cut services by £23m over the next two years. The facility is due open in 2017 and is expected to attract more than 100,000 visitors annually.

In Suffolk, the county council is facing savings of £34.4m over the next financial year, but it has not deterred it from hosting the Tour of Britain and the

(Above) Tour of Britain generated around £6m for Suffolk’s local economy

(Opposite page) Olympians Tom Daley and Tonia Couch are among the athletes to have trained at Plymouth’s Life Centre

Women’s Tour road cycling events in the region. The council also organised the Great East Swim, an open swimming event in a reservoir near Ipswich.

The events were estimated to have generated more than £6m for the local economy from people participating or spectating – and resulted in more than 3,500 inactive people taking up sport.

DRIVING THE LEGACY

According to councillor Ian Stephens, chair of the LGA’s culture, tourism and sport board, councils up and down the country have been at the “forefront” of creating “tangible and lasting transformation of grassroots sport and participation” since 2012.

“Councils have been upgrading leisure facilities, organising their own mini ‘Olympics’ and ensuring major sporting events, such as the Tour de France, boost local economies – benefiting local businesses as well as getting people fit,” Stephens says.

“It is local authorities which have played a key role in the 2012 legacy as it’s their services people often rely on as they find private facilities prohibitively expensive. It’s essential governing bodies of sport, councils, local sports clubs and community groups keep working well together to maintain this enthusiasm and make getting involved in sport as easy as possible for communities everywhere.”

As a sign of the increased cooperation, Stephens points out that in future, councils will be able to bid

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for public money through Sport England funding if they can demonstrate initiatives that marry with the outcomes from the government's Sporting Future sport strategy – such as physical wellbeing and social cohesion. Sport England will also make place-based investments, with the idea of partnering councils with local County Sports Partnerships (CSP), NHS Trusts, charities and private sector organisations to increase physical activity across the region.

FACILITY COMMITMENTS

The report argues that it is the investment in facilities which is making the biggest difference. It highlights two facilities that opened in the Olympic year and have since become the central pieces of legacy planning in their regions.

In Plymouth, the £46.5m Life Centre – which launched just weeks before the London 2012 opening ceremony – houses world class aquatic facilities and has become a centre of excellence for British Diving. It was designed to increase participation by replacing three ageing facilities and bring swimming services under one roof – and has so far exceeded expectations.

Meanwhile, Hadleigh Park in Essex, which hosted the men's and women's mountain biking events at London 2012, has now opened in legacy mode and grown into a hub for cycling and other sports, following a £3m investment by the council.

HADLEIGH PARK

Hadleigh Park, home of the 2012 Olympic mountain bike track, opened its doors to the public in legacy mode in April 2015. Since London 2012, Essex County Council, along with Active Essex, has been developing the site into a multiple-sports venue, with one the UK's best mountain bike courses at the heart of the plans.

Visitors can now experience the original Olympic mountain bike course, which has been retained and developed with a new and wider network of trails and paths to suit all abilities and ages. While the track attracts elite competitions – it hosted a world governing body Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI)



£3m has been invested in Hadleigh Park since it hosted the mountain bike events at London 2012

event in July – its primary function is to be a venue for people to try a new sport and get more active.

"In the past 12 months we've had more than 130,000 visitors to the park," says councillor Ray Gooding, cabinet member for education and lifelong learning at Essex County Council. "I think that speaks for itself – it's been very successful.

"What also makes it unique on a global scale is that it's the only Olympic mountain bike course that has been kept open following the Games. The one used in Rio this summer, for example, is a temporary venue and will be dismantled later this year."

Gooding adds that the strategy has been to use the park's mountain bike element as an anchor to add a wide range of other activities. As well as the Olympic tracks, the park offers trails for walkers, joggers and families to explore. It also has a busy programme of water-based activities, with open water swimming, kayaking, sailing and paddleboarding. There's also an outdoor parkour facility.

"We have people who come for a day out with their children," Gooding says. "Youngsters who want to

What makes it unique on a global scale is that it's the only Olympic mountain bike course that has been kept open following the Games

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mountain biking for the first time on our trial tracks – but also people who want to do many of the other things we now have on offer.”

LIFE CENTRE

The other facility highlighted in the LGA report is Plymouth’s Life Centre. The £46.5m complex is managed by Everyone Active on behalf of Plymouth City Council and includes an Olympic-size 10-lane, 50m competition pool and diving pool with diving boards at 3m, 5m, 7.5m and 10m.

Acting as a regional aquatic hub thanks to its elite diving facilities, it has become one of three centres of excellence for British Diving and is home to Olympic divers Dan Goodfellow and Tonia Couch, who can be seen training there most days. It is also the training base for a number of Team GB swimmers.

According to the centre’s general manager David Greenwood, the presence of Olympians has helped attract interest in the sport among the local youngsters – while offering a very tangible legacy.

“There’s no doubt that the success of athletes who train at the centre has inspired kids locally to get involved,” Greenwood says. “It does help that the athletes are a visible presence.

“The divers in particular are fantastic, interacting with the children attending their first diving lessons.”

The Life Centre in Plymouth opened its doors in 2012

The results in terms of increased participation have been nothing short of remarkable. The three facilities which the Life Centre replaced – the Mayflower Centre, Central Park Swimming Pool and the Pavilions Fun Pool – had a combined total of 660,000 visitors each year. The Life Centre gets 1.4 million each year.

Greenwood credits the increase in numbers partly to a learn to swim system he describes as “near ideal”. “What we’ve put in place is a pathway,” he says.

“We have more than 3,000 kids on the learn to swim programme each week at the Life Centre, which is a truly phenomenal number. Following on from the swimming lessons, we have excellent working relationships with two resident swimming clubs – Devonport Royal and Plymouth Leander.

“We work with the coaches from the clubs who help to signpost the children coming through the lessons to the right club for them. There is a system in place to spot children who could be the next Ben Proud or Ruta Meilutyte, but importantly there is also a route for those children who want to swim competitively but not quite at such a high level.”

“The clubs swim at roughly the same time as the swimming lessons, so as a parent you can see the entire pathway in front of you as you watch your child swim – the Stage 1 lessons at one end of the pool and Olympic athletes at the other end of the complex.” ●

SMART MOVE AHEAD OF COIN CHANGE

With a new £1 coin due in early 2017, there's never been a better time for UK health clubs to switch their locker, access and vending systems to a cashless GANTNER smart card solution



With the clock ticking on the introduction of the new £1 coin and all the changes that will entail, it's the perfect time for health clubs to install

a cashless system. GANTNER's range of access, locker and payment systems not only reduce costs for operators, but also greatly enhance the customer experience

As the Treasury prepares to launch the new 12-sided, £1 coin in March 2017, UK businesses have just six more months to get their coin-operated systems such as lockers and vending machines in order.

But rather than go through the costly process of replacing equipment or upgrading software so that your facility can accept the new coins, now is the perfect time to consider switching to a cashless system from GANTNER.

Smart card technology can reduce operational and staffing costs, while at the same time greatly enhancing convenience for your members

With patented NFC (near field communications) locker and access systems designed for all the needs of modern health clubs and leisure centres, GANTNER has enabled leading brands such as Virgin Active, Fitness First, Fresh Fitness, Hard Candy, McFit and Holmes Place to make the switch to cashless quickly, easily and economically.

A GANTNER NFC system, used with swipe cards, smartphones or wristbands, can be installed as a new system or retrofitted into existing technologies.

Customisable to a health club's branding and logo, the smart card technology can reduce operational and staffing costs, while at the same time greatly enhancing convenience for your members in key areas of the health club – most notably the changing rooms, reception and access areas, and catering areas.

SECURE CHANGING ROOMS

If your current lockers can only accept coins, then now is the ideal time to change to a battery-powered or fully-networked GANTNER locking system.

Operating with NFC-enabled smart cards, the system provides a status display showing which lockers are available or in-use.

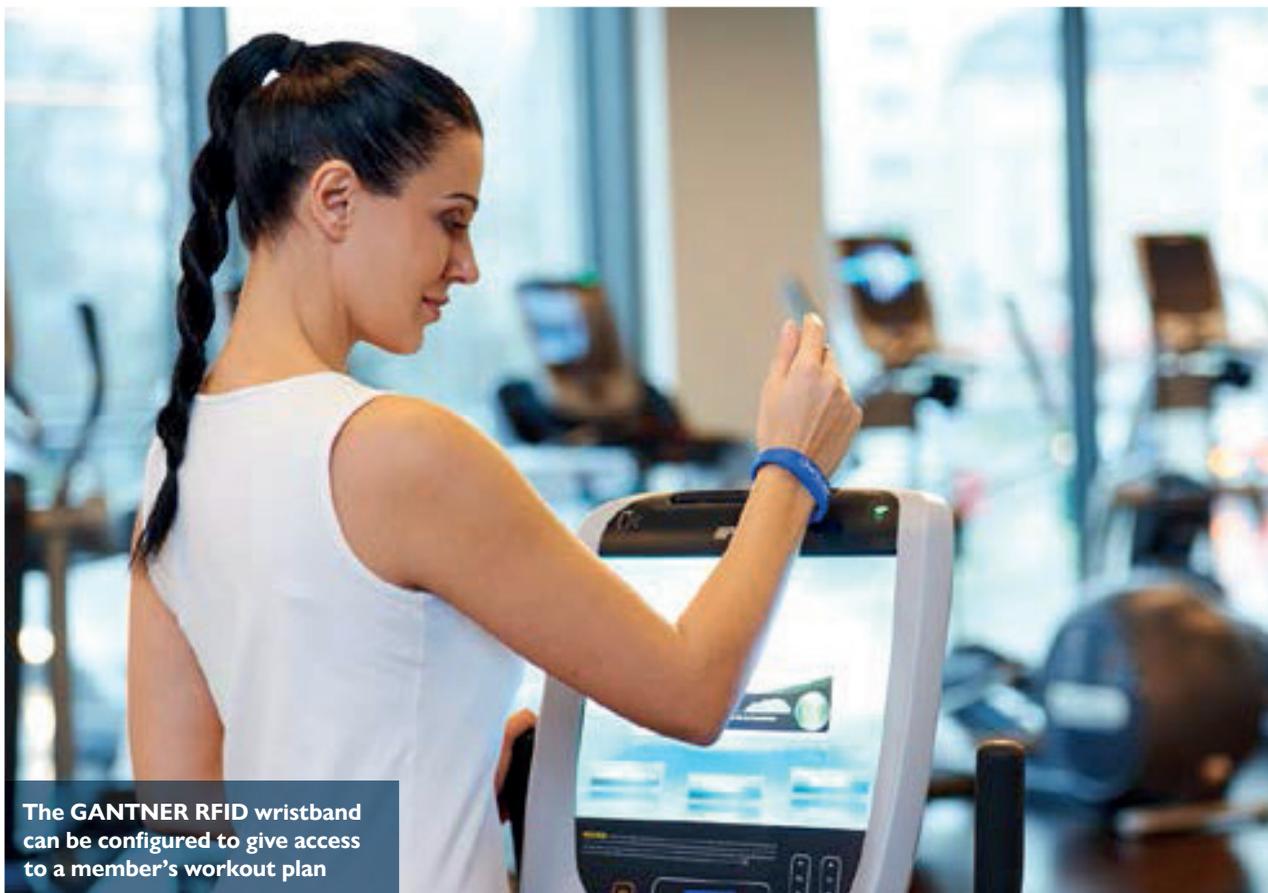
Multiple locker modes provide operators with the flexibility to make all lockers available or to individually assign or rent lockers for a defined time period. For enhanced security, all locker openings and closings are recorded, meaning operators can easily track who is using them.

If a member forgets which locker they used, information terminals in the changing room can display their locker number, requiring no call-out time from staff.

Health and fitness clubs can eliminate the usual maintenance costs associated with lost keys and forgotten PINs, failed locks, theft, members claiming lockers for long periods of time, as well as valuable time spent managing lockers.



A GANTNER secure access and locker system reduces the workload of your frontline staff, and delivers a seamless service to your members



The GANTNER RFID wristband can be configured to give access to a member's workout plan

ACCESS CONTROL

GANTNER's NFC applications – including access control and cashless payments – create an integrated solution that allows members and visitors to have a seamless experience through your club.

This integrated system allows members to gain access, check-in, use a locker or a gym's networked fitness equipment and make a payment in the shop or café all with just one membership card.

One club to offer all these benefits to customers with a single smart card is the recently opened Alex Fitness in London's Chelsea. The club has installed GANTNER's networked locking systems, access systems, and networked fitness with the Technogym Key. The latter enables users to track and record all their fitness progress, as well as synchronise with all their favourite fitness apps.

FULLY-AUTOMATED CARD SOLUTION

To make life even more convenient for both operators and customers, GANTNER has also recently introduced its new card-dispensing machine – GAT CardDispensing Station, which is ideal for 24/7 leisure facilities.

The station can automatically produce tickets and membership cards, reducing the need for continuous staffing of reception desks, as well as cutting peak-time traffic queues and administrative expenses.



Members can use their smart card or wristband in the cafe



GANTNER's technology means no more lost locker keys or PINs



Members can simply sign-up online to receive a pin that they enter at the GAT CardDispensing Station to pick up their new smart card.

The robust yet compact dispensing machine can be loaded with NFC cards and customised with a facility's own logo, colours and design.

BOOSTING SPEND

GANTNER technology can also be linked to your vending machines and café and retail payments, meaning that members need not carry any cash in the facility at all. Cards can be pre-loaded or linked to a verified customer account.

Cashless systems have been shown to substantially boost in-club secondary spend by increasing convenience, as well as impulse purchases.

Contact GANTNER about its many secure cashless technologies designed for the health club and leisure market, to stay one step ahead of the competition...and the Royal Mint's next coin change.

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LIW2016

We look ahead to the UK's largest trade event for leisure professionals, now entering its 28th year

A single word sits on the tip of every leisure operator's tongue: skills. And that – the continued development of the leisure workforce – is inextricably linked with the availability of top-class education, both through key delivery partners and the events calendar.

Leisure Industry Week (LIW) is keen to contribute to this agenda. Backed by a sector-specific marketing campaign, as well as partnerships with key delivery organisations and a world-class speaker line-up, LIW 2016 will deliver six education streams.

HEALTH

Backed by sporta, the national association of leisure and cultural trusts, the health education stream will focus on the impact of physical activity on the nation's health, as well as the role that the sport and leisure industry is able to play in driving change.

The health education stream will focus on everything from paediatric wellness through to GP referrals and increasing exercise programmes for our ageing population.

The seminar programme will also highlight the benefits of integrating physical activity into everyday life, and how the industry can benefit commercially from an increased emphasis on health practices such as physiotherapy, chiropractic treatment, rehabilitation and more.

The link between leisure, physical activity, health, medicine and fitness should be closer than ever – and the health education stream will deliver a programme that should ensure a stronger bond exists between all the relevant industry professionals.

FITNESS

Listen and learn from the industry's finest educators, coaches and professionals: fitness professionals of



Practical Coaching: Workshops for fitness professionals

any level will come away from LIW with practical knowledge and skills that can be applied in their role.

The fitness stream consists of three pillars: The Fitness Business School, Practical Coaching, and the Gym Operators' Conference.

Fitness Business School

Designed to build business acumen among fitness professionals, The Fitness Business School allows delegates to learn from the most prominent coaches and educators – with more than 200 years' of experience between them – who have developed their own businesses successfully and are ready to share.

It will enable delegates to develop and shape their careers thanks to high-quality advice, round-table discussions and cutting-edge information.

Delegates will be offered a rounded view of the industry, exploring some of the available career paths and gaining an understanding of how to drive



a fitness business forward. Topics will include how to gain more clients on a commercial gym floor; understanding social media; and how digital media has broadened the scope of opportunities that are available to fitness professionals.

Practical Coaching

Targeted at fitness professionals, including PTs, fitness managers and nutritionists, Practical Coaching at LIW will deliver a world-class line-up of industry figureheads discussing the practical application of training and nutrition.

Via a series of two-hour workshops, delegates will learn from people such as nutrition and behavioural change specialist Gary Mendoza; fitness entrepreneur Jamie Alderton; and the founder of Mac-Nutrition, Martin MacDonald.

Practical Coaching is designed to address and improve industry standards from beginner to advanced level, with a clear focus on the implementation of evidence-based information to improve performance on a day-to-day basis, whether in a facility or online with clients.

LIW's Sports education stream will focus on encouraging sports participation and developing facilities

Operators' Conference

The Operators' Conference will host top speakers discussing broader industry issues and trends, such as retention, digital marketing, team management, secondary spend and business performance.

In a packed two-day schedule, attendees at the conference will hear from the likes of Raja Saggi, head of B2B marketing at Google; Nick Eastwood, deputy chair at Wasps Rugby Club; and Sol Orwell, a seven-figure entrepreneur and co-founder of Examine.com, a resource on nutrition and supplements.

The Operators' Conference should be top of the list for any operator wanting to improve workforce development, boost profitability, drive down costs and stay abreast of industry trends and developments.

SPORTS

The sports education stream will focus on two main themes: encouraging sporting participation and developing sports facilities.

Delegates will discover workshops with a host of leading brands, providing practical tools and tips for increasing sports awareness and participation via new groups and demographics. The programme will also tackle the often daunting process of facility development, offering advice on planning, material selection and multi-use considerations.

The sports education stream is ideal for people working in the sports industry or looking to add sports to their business. The seminars are designed to attract delegates from National Governing Bodies, schools, universities, sports clubs, sports facilities, local councils, gym chains and golf clubs, as well as functional training specialists, strength and conditioning coaches, groundskeepers and sports coaches.

LIW speakers (l-r): Nick Eastwood of Wasps Rugby Club, Google's Raja Saggi and entrepreneur Sol Orwell





PLAY

Delegates interested in the play education stream will come from varied industry sectors, including hotels, campsites, schools, councils, visitor attractions, country parks, adventure parks, activity centres, academies and many more areas.

This education stream will tackle the issue of inactivity through the medium of play, offering practical insight into how play businesses can become a primary outlet for physical activity with both children and adults.

Delegates can explore seminars on differentiation, branding, market diversification, safeguarding and training needs. The play education stream will explain the importance of play to all ages and backgrounds, as well as the need to create facilities for active and game-based play. It will also provide operators with the tools to attract new audiences and boost profitability.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Delivered in partnership with the Facilities Management Forum and Sport & Leisure Facilities Forum, the facilities management education stream is devoted to aspects of the design and layout of facilities.

Delegates will leave armed with the knowledge they need to drive down costs and increase operational efficiency in their own facilities, as well as with case studies and examples they can draw on to improve customer experience.

Featuring topics and discussion on entry systems, energy efficiency, booking software,

lighting, flooring, layout and planning, the facilities management education stream is ideal for facilities managers, procurement teams, architects, interior designers, specifiers, pool maintenance professionals, IT professionals, cleaners and operations managers.

SPA & WET LEISURE

With its focus on increasing swimming participation and improving operational efficiency, the spa & wet leisure education stream targets pool operators, gyms, waterparks and spas, as well as leisure trusts and councils, coaches, pool designers, pool maintenance professionals and engineers. In partnership with STA, RLSS and SPATA, the stream will deliver seminars on swim class programming, water treatment, filtration and more. ●

The Spa & Wet Leisure stream will focus on increasing swimming participation and improving operations

ESSENTIAL SHOW INFO

Opening times

Tuesday 20 September: 9:00am – 17:00pm

Wednesday 21 September: 9:00am – 17:00pm

Venue

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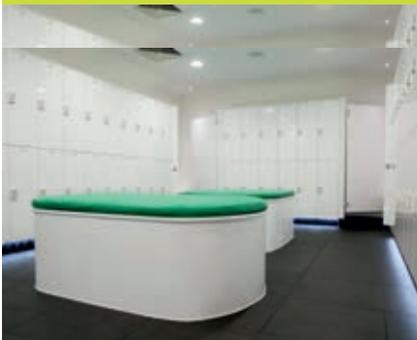


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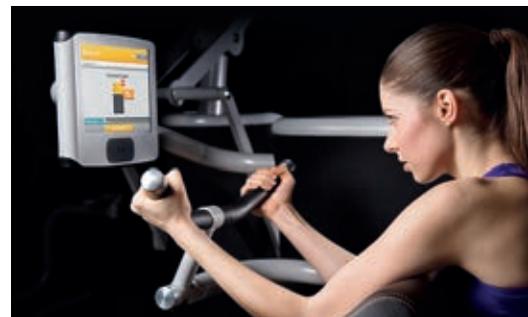


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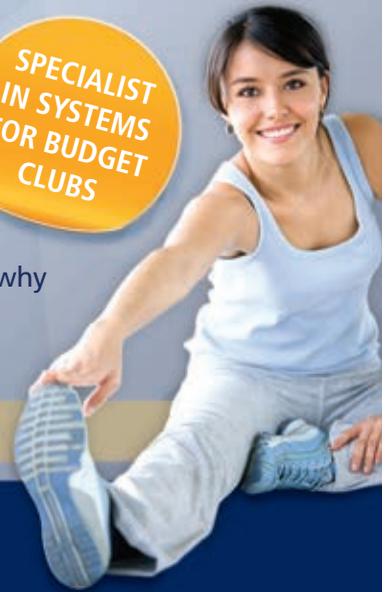


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Facilities Management Forum – celebrating 20 years at the heart of the business – makes its most-anticipated return yet. The industry-renowned event returns in 2017 with keynote speakers, leading brands and some of the most innovative product and service providers in facilities management.

Taking place on the 30th-31st January 2017 at the Radisson Blu Hotel, London Stansted, the event is the ideal platform to discover what's new in the industry, learn how to cut costs and make profitable connections.

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**Physical Company****+44 (0)149 476 9222**www.physicalcompany.co.uk

Physical Company, provider of complete fitness solutions, is unveiling 16 new products on Stand E20 at Leisure Industry Week 2016, with fitness professional and award winning PT, Katie Bulmer-Cooke, demonstrating the products on the stand and putting visitors through their paces.

Physical Company will be unveiling their new PU Fractional Plates alongside a newly designed set of Olympic Rubber Bumper Plates. They will be showcasing new Olympic Bars with the launch of the 6ft Elite Women's Olympic Bar,

Competition 7ft Olympic Bar and a 7ft Olympic Hex Bar – not to mention a Swiss Bar and Olympic Bar Holders.

The team is expanding its already extensive Functional Training lines by launching the PBX PowerBag, a new mini Kamagon Ball, and redesigned Slam Balls with better grip. Physical Company will be also showcasing new Battle Ropes alongside its Heavy-Duty Resistance Tubing, new wrist and ankle weights and adjustable hurdles.

Witnessing a trend in power enhancing products, Physical Company will also be unveiling the Sprinter Harness, designed to help athletes accelerate quicker alongside a 3-in-1 Soft Plyo and the 3-in-1 Wooden Plyo Box.

**Core Health & Fitness****+44 (0)149 468 8260**www.corehandf.com

Since Core Health & Fitness consolidated all of our brands – Star Trac, StairMaster, Nautilus and Schwinn – in 2015 we have launched more than 70 new products, some of which will be seen at this year's LIW. Under the Star Trac and StairMaster brands we have launched new cardio screens with OpenHub technology – allowing users a variety of connectivity options including fitness tracking, HDMI and Bluetooth connection.

All new Star Trac Studio bikes the Studio 3, 5 and 7 combine user-focused features with best-in-class biomechanics. The StairMaster AirFit Upper Body, a brand new Upper Body Ergometer allows

the user to get their heart rate racing in a high performance fitness centre or rehabilitation exercises using the convertible crank arms and comfortable grips.

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Wattbike, creator of the preeminent indoor bike, will be at LIW showcasing the popular, innovative Wattbike 'Zone', which has helped operators bring the motivational atmosphere of the studio environment out onto the gym floor.

The Wattbike Small Group Training classes will be in action throughout the show and the Wattbike Power Cycling Software will also be on display, which takes group indoor cycling to a completely new level.



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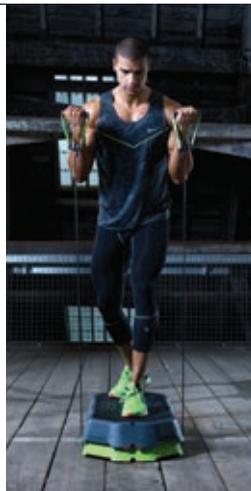


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Game changers

A look at the technology and innovation currently making waves across the world of sport



The hackathon attracted people from more than 40 countries to get involved

Manchester City hosts world's first data hackathon

English Premier League club **Manchester City** has held the first ever football data hackathon, which looked to uncover new ways of drilling into – and using – data collected from live matches.

The #HackMCFC received almost 400 applications from more than 40 countries, from which a final group of 60 were selected to take part.

Participants were then divided into 14 working groups and given unprecedented access to performance analysis systems, as well as detailed player and match data provided by the Premier League and its official data partners, tech companies **OptaPro** and **ChyronHego**. Using the data, the “hackers” were able to uncover new insights on player performance.

The winning group developed a machine learning algorithm which focused on decision making in games. The judges praised the solution's effectiveness and potential for future implementation.

The winning team – which consisted of Ben Low, Ben Blackmore, Steven Hassall, Paul Robinson and Lasse Folkersen were given a £7,000 cash prize.

David Eccles, head of ChyronHego's Tracab player tracking system – and one of the judges – said: “The insights extrapolated from the data by the hackers has proven that we are only just beginning to fully understand the power big data can have on tactical performance and analysis.”

www.mancity.com



The virtual kits on sale through Rawr

Chelsea puts the fantasy into shopping

Chelsea FC has become the first professional sports club to start selling virtual items of clothing online, after linking up with the rapidly-growing **Rawr Messenger** platform.

Rawr is an avatar-based messaging app, which allows users to chat to each other in traditional text format – as well as create a personalised 3D avatar that can be dressed and equipped with items.

Chelsea will launch an official digital store on Rawr, which will allow users to buy the official kit for their avatar to wear – as well as a range of other items of clothing – such as scarves and hats.

It is the first time ever that 3D wearable items are available to purchase within a messaging app and the first relationship between Rawr and sports.

Chelsea FC chair Bruce Buck said: “This ground-breaking relationship puts us at the front of the pack when it comes to digital innovation among professional sports clubs, and we cannot wait to see how Chelsea supporters interact with each other, and their other friends, all over the world.”

Products on Rawr – including the Chelsea kits – can be purchased with in-app currency, which can be bought outright or accrued over time.

www.chelseafc.com

Adidas to open robot-powered “Speedfactory” in Atlanta

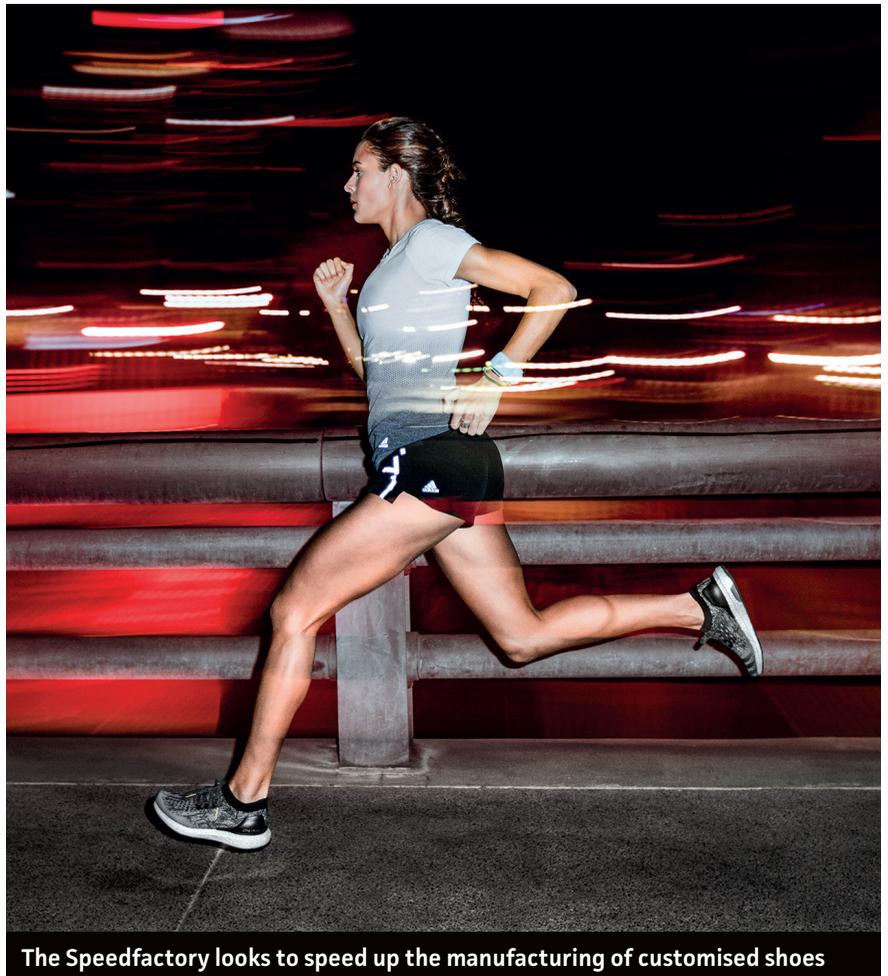
Germany-based Sportswear giant Adidas has announced plans to open a factory with a difference next year – using the latest in robot technology as it aims to speed up the production processes of its iconic running shoes.

The company’s new “Speedfactory”, due to open in Atlanta, US, during late 2017, is designed to produce up to half a million pairs of shoes.

Glenn Bennett, Adidas Group executive board member, described the new factory as “industry-defining” as the use of robots will allow unprecedented customisation of high-performance products for “discerning customers” – without the delays associated with custom-made products.

“Speed is far more than a business strategy for us,” Bennett said. “With Speedfactory, we’re combining some of the world’s best technology and manufacturing processes to give our consumers access to constant newness.”

www.adidas-group.com



The Speedfactory looks to speed up the manufacturing of customised shoes

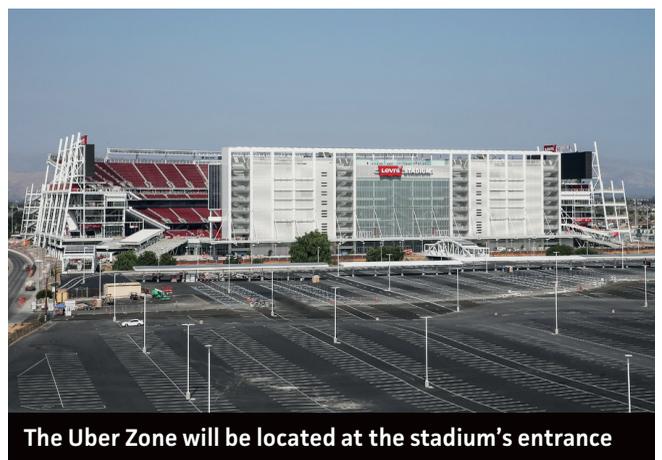
49ers partner with Uber for exclusive travel zone

National Football League (NFL) franchise San Francisco 49ers has partnered with the Uber driver service app to create an exclusive “Uber Zone” at its Levi’s Stadium.

The first-ever dedicated curbside Uber Zone for a stadium will be activated for all major events at Levi’s Stadium and was trialed during the 49ers’ 2016 pre-season opener against the Houston Texans on 14 August. According to 49ers president Al Guido, the area will provide guests

with a “seamless drop-off experience” before games. When leaving the game, riders can exit out of a separate gate and get to the Uber Zone before requesting a ride using the app.

“We’re excited to partner with Uber to continue to offer Levi’s Stadium guests with convenient, alternate modes of transportation,” Guido said. “With our stadium in the heart of Silicon Valley, partnering with a local technology company that is a global



The Uber Zone will be located at the stadium’s entrance

leader in rideshare tech was a natural fit.”

The move is part of the club’s strategy to encourage fans to limit the use of their own cars. Earlier this

summer, a partnership with the city’s Valley Transit Authority saw the launch of an Express Light-Rail service to the stadium.

www.49ers.com

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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

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Golf Services Supervisor

Location: Edwalton Golf Centre,
Nottingham, United Kingdom

Salary: Dependant on experience
and contracted hours

Closing date: 30 Sep 2016



The Parkwood Family of companies consists of two groups, the Alston Group and the Parkwood Leisure Group with combined revenues in excess of £130 million. Glendale Golf resides under the Alston Group and is an integral part of the Group's 'green' services division. Glendale Golf operates and manages eight municipal golf courses under long term leases, including the prestigious Richmond Park Golf Course.

The size of the Parkwood Family of companies provides ample opportunity to progress.

Edwalton Golf Centre includes two 9 hole golf courses, a practice range, indoor teaching facility and a clubhouse with function and conference facilities. Heralded as one of the top ten public courses in the UK for its individuality and quality, Edwalton is renowned for its relaxed, tranquil and friendly atmosphere. Having recently extended the contract to 2015 to manage this golf centre, Glendale Golf has an exciting programme of investment in place in 2016 and 2017, to upgrade the facilities

Duties include:

- Managing the Golf Services Department with responsibility for the day to day running of the clubhouse front of house team.
- Managing tee booking and till systems.
- Administering the staff rota.
- Developing membership and society sales.

- Ensuring the clubhouse and driving range is well presented.
- Managing the golf retail department.
- Managing the driving range and academy course.
- Assistance with bar & restaurant duties.
- Improve and develop sales/service skills within your team.

The role is permanent and working hours are average of 25 hours per week in the clubhouse, including weekends and evenings. Basic salary is £9750k , plus additional income from golf lessons and the company green fee and membership bonus scheme if applicable. Excellent benefits package including complimentary golf at all Glendale Golf Courses. There are excellent opportunities to progress your career through Glendale Golf/Glendale Managed Services.

If you are interested in applying for this role, we suggest that you do so at the earliest opportunity to avoid disappointment as interviews will be held throughout the process. Please note that if you have not received correspondence within 21 days then please assume your application has been unsuccessful on this occasion.

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Assistant General Manager

Salary: £25-30k depending on experience
Company: Ilkley Lawn Tennis and Squash Club
Location: W Yorks, United Kingdom
Reporting To: General Manager

Role:

The overall aim is to support the General Manager to run a successful, efficient, customer focused sports club and event venue.

To demonstrate skills in sales & marketing with a clear passion for website management & internal/external communication through many media streams.

The Aegon Ilkley Trophy is the highlight of our event Calendar and a superb event for players, members & volunteers. The Tournament takes over the club for a 2 week period. You would be required to assist the Tournament Director in the operational management of the event and take responsibility for the sales, marketing and promotion of the event.

Key responsibilities include:

Management

- To support the General manager in the day to day running of the club
- To establish themselves as a strong number 2 to the General Manager and seen by all staff and members as a point of contact to deal with any arising issues or

- queries
- To lead the club in consistently delivering excellent customer service
- To be the direct report for the Reception Supervisor & Cafe Bar Manager
- Full responsibility for the operational, financial and customer service of Reception & Cafe bar
- To lead the club in service excellence by inspiring others and striving to consistently deliver a friendly, welcoming and family environment for all our members.
- To carry out quarterly staff reviews with the Reception Supervisor & Cafe Bar Manager

General:

- To actively resolve any issues, complaints or maintenance issues as they may arise.
- Understand situations from the perspective of the member so that the appropriate and relevant solution can be identified and implemented.
- Promotion and selling of all activities and services at the club.
- Duty manager responsibilities on a rota basis with other key personnel.
- Support The Reception Supervisor & Cafe Bar Manager in the recruitment of reception & cafe bar staff
- To lead and train the team in fire and safety procedures and reception responsibilities concerning these.
- Any other duties that may be reasonably requested by the General Manager.



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Becky Adlington SwimStars Regional Co-ordinator

Salary: Up to 19k-23k plus PRP
Company: Becky Adlington's Swim Stars
Location: Manchester, United Kingdom
Reporting to: BASS National Account Manager
Hours: 37.5 Hours
(including weekends and evenings)

Summary of Role

We are seeking a highly motivated individual to join our Becky Adlington SwimStars Team who will coordinate the Learn to Swim provision for a cluster of sites in Cheshire region including primary schools. The successful applicant will be expected to increase learn to swim and swimming participation opportunities to cover all age ranges and promote the teaching programme to a wide audience.

Applicants will possess a Level 2 Swimming Teacher Qualification and Current RLSS National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches or equivalent. With previous experience of the delivery of aquatic initiatives, you should be able to prioritise your workload, have good organisational, planning and communication

skills, be educated to a high standard and have good experience of partnership working. The successful applicant will be required to undertake an enhanced check via the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS).

Person Specification

We are looking for an enthusiastic, confident, self-starter with the ability to inspire and deliver exceptional results. You are passionate about sport and the way in which physical activity can change people's lives. Most importantly, you are focused and driven to deliver on time and within budget without ever compromising the Becky Adlington Swim Star's experience. You are a natural leader, a person who leads by example and demonstrates good judgement at all times.

General Requirements: Full UK Driving License, Flexible approach to work and hours needed.



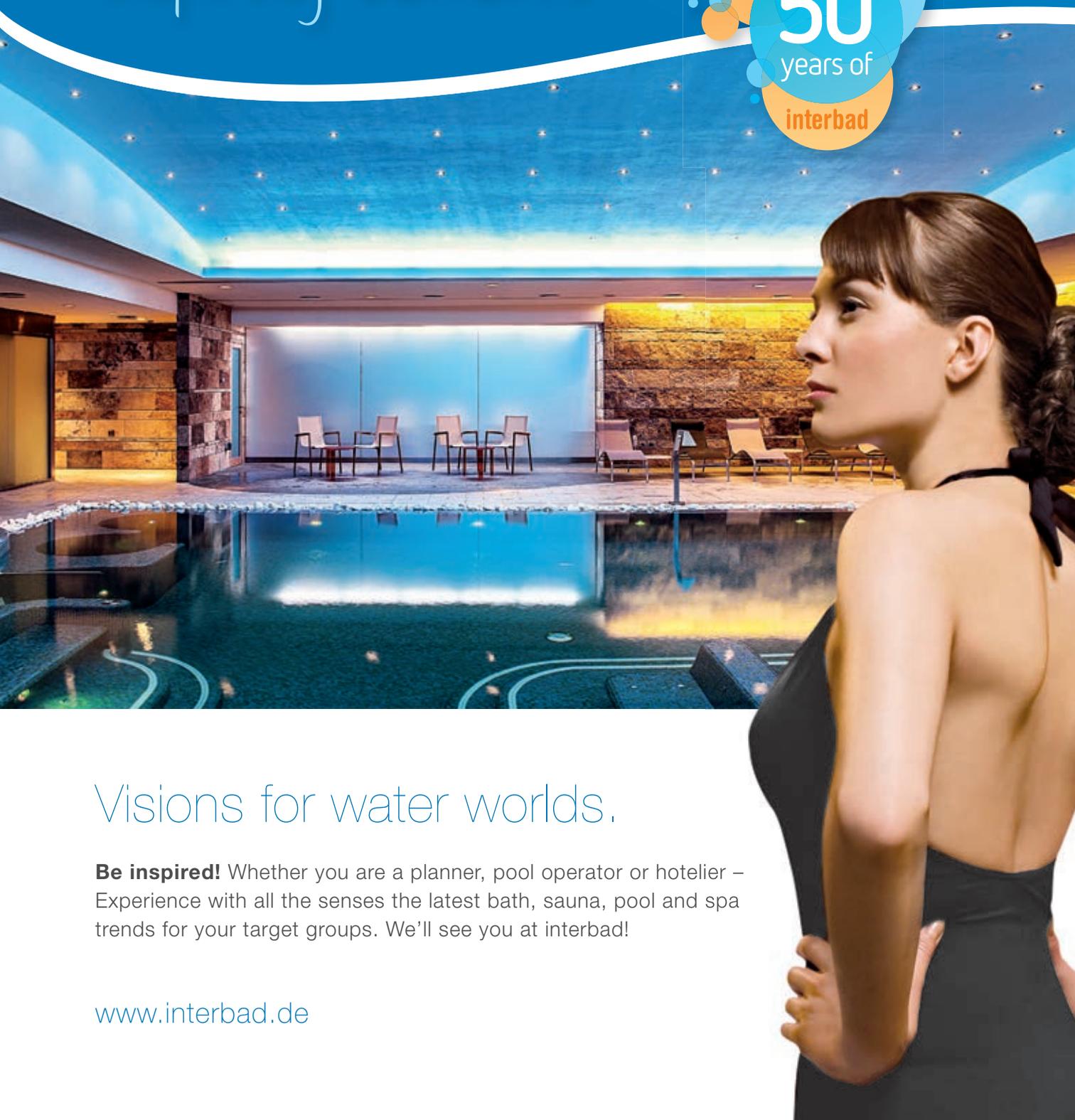
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